

# MAD Evangelism Training

## Week 3 - How Do I Share My Faith?

- 1) Last week we looked at a couple of simple gospel outlines that will help us to know what to say when we are sharing what we believe. Share with the group any opportunities you may have had to use the outlines learnt, or how you have become more confident in sharing your faith over the past few weeks.

*Again if no-one has anything, get them to think about opportunities that they may have missed or passed up.*

- 2) Get into pairs and quickly practice sharing what you believe using the gospel outlines you learnt last week. (You might like to use the space below to draw what you are saying!)

*Use this opportunity for the kids who were there to teach one or both of the outlines to the kids who may have missed learning the outlines last week.*

### Discussion Time

- 3) As a large group, discuss what you think of the following statement:

***‘Speaking to your non-believing friends and family members is the only way to share your faith.’***

*Get them thinking about the fact that we do not have to ‘say words’ to share our faith effectively. There are many other ways of sharing what we believe which are also effective.*

- 4) Write down as many ‘styles’ of sharing your faith that your group can think of.

*Some examples:*

- *Confrontational / Intellectual (ie apologetics)*
- *Instructional (ie teaching with gospel outlines)*
- *Testimonial (sharing your personal story)*
- *Relational (simply bearing witness through your life)*
- *Communal / service / hospitality (selflessly serving others for God’s sake)*
- *Invitational (inviting people to events)*

- 5) Which ‘styles’ of sharing your faith do you most often find yourself using?

*They most likely use ‘invitational’ most often. Push them to see the other ‘styles’ as also very important.*

## Reading Time

Read the extract 'How To Tell Others' from 'Hanging In There' by John Dickson.

- 6) How has reading the extract changed your understanding about how we are to share what we believe with others?

*A chance to discuss the extract.*

- 7) In the extract Matthew 5:16 is quoted (read that point again). If our actions can help us to share our faith, in what ways do you think our actions may also prevent us from sharing our faith?

*When we are doing things that are not in line with the way God wants us to be living, we will not be very effective witness for the message of the gospel. Get them thinking generally about this here. If your group has things which as a group are preventing this get them to talk about it here (it will be applied personally in the next question).*

## Personal Time

- 8) Write down three ways in which you personally need to change your actions that at present are preventing you from sharing your faith.

*Hit your kids up with areas that are particularly relevant to them in their situation. Some examples may be: drinking at parties, picking up at parties, swearing, obeying their parents, actions on the sport field, mucking up at school, attitude to 'outsiders' at school / youth group, importance of being popular etc etc.*

- 9) One 'style' of sharing your faith is by telling your personal testimony. Your testimony is simply your own story about how God has worked in your life, and brought you to the point you are at today. Use the 'Guidelines For Sharing YOUR Story' booklet and write out your testimony in point form below.

*Spend a good amount of time guiding them through the 'Guidelines' booklet before you get them to write out their testimony in point form. Make sure they understand that there are two basic types of testimony – 'before and after' and 'always believed'. A lot of the 'always believed' kids will feel that their testimony is boring, unexciting and not worth telling. Point out that God never does anything that is boring, and the story of how he has worked in **anyone's** life is exciting and important. Give them a reasonable amount of time to properly think through their testimony.*

## **Summary Time**

- 10) Brainstorm some ways that you individually, and as a MAD group can begin to use some of the various 'styles' of evangelism that you identified in question four.

*Get the kids to think about ways in which they can be sharing their faith in their everyday lives. Some of this will be invitational, which they will be used to (invite friends to TMF / FNL, organise a BAF MAD group night etc etc – help them to understand that 'invitational' evangelism doesn't just leave the leaders to do all the work, but that they can organise invitational events too). Get them to be creative in thinking of ways they can use the other 'styles' of evangelism. Remember that they can work together to do this – their efforts don't have to be individual.*

## **Prayer Time**

It is important that we continue to pray that God would help us to put into practice what we have learnt over the past few weeks. Spend some time praying now. Think particularly about the people on your group's network chart, the gospel outlines you have learnt, and the various 'styles' of evangelism that we can use.

## **For Next Week...**

Have a go at writing out your testimony in full. Try to find an opportunity to share it with someone – not by forcing it upon them, but through a natural and normal conversation.

*Encourage them to actually do this. Next week will provide them with an opportunity to share their testimony in group time.*

Extract from 'Hanging In There' by John Dickson (chapter 14)

## HOW DO YOU TELL OTHERS?

Some time ago, I passed a bloke in the main street of Sydney who was preaching his heart out. He was shouting about Hell and reciting Bible verses at the poor unsuspecting shoppers. I felt quite embarrassed as I passed by, but decided to listen in on an argument that broke out between him and three other blokes who just happened to be walking past.

As I listened in, it became clear these guys didn't have major problems with Christianity as such, but with the way the guy had been Bible-bashing them at full volume. I got to speak with these guys after the argument had died down and my hunch was confirmed. These guys were actually quite interested in the Christian Faith, they just objected to the way it had been put across.

Situations like these have convinced me that there is a way *to*, and a way *not* to, explain the message of Jesus.

Here are four things that might help if you want to share your faith with those around you.

### 1. Know The Message

Some Christians find it hard to know just what to say when the opportunity arises to talk about Jesus. Imagine going to a doctor who didn't know much about medicine. What good would they be to you?

Being confident of your topic is a great asset. Spend a bit of time working out what you would say (in your own words) if the chance came up.

### 2. Live The Message

Lifestyle speaks louder than words. There is nothing worse than someone who says one thing and does another.

Jesus once said:

*'Your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in Heaven.'* (Matthew 5:16)

If we are kind, honest, hard-working and reliable, people will notice. They'll be far more interested in our God than if we are selfish, dishonest, slack and unreliable.

Remember, though, don't just 'put on' these attributes. There's no point in faking it, because people see through that kind of act very easily.

As you strive to obey God, he'll give you the strength you need to live a life that brings him honour.

### **3. Tell The Message**

This does not mean 'Bible bashing'. Whenever there is an opportunity at school or work or uni, simply explain what you know. Jesus never shoved ideas down people's throats. He spoke lovingly, honestly, clearly and often simply answered questions. If we do the same, we will be a great benefit to those who want to hear.

A couple of years ago, I caught a taxi home from hospital after visiting Elizabeth (now my wife) who was due for a very serious operation on the brain. I soon got talking to the driver about death and tragedies in general. He was very open to talk, but to be honest I felt tempted to leave the conversation without going any deeper. I had to decide whether or not I would talk about my faith and the hope it gives in the face of death.

All of us, from time to time, will get into conversations like this, where we will have to make a decision: "Will I mention my faith in Jesus, or won't I?" If we see these conversations as opportunities God has brought your way, it is often easier to take that exciting step, and say something about our great God.

### **4. Use 'God-Talk'**

A book I recently read urged Christians to include God in their ordinary conversations with people. The writer described it as 'God-talk'. The more I've thought about it, and tried it, the more I'm convinced it is a very important way of passing your faith around. Let me give you a few examples of what I mean. Saying "God bless!" when you say good-bye to someone (or at the end of a letter / card) may seem like an old fashioned thing to do, but because it is so uncommon now-a-days, it stands out to people and might raise their awareness that at least some people still think God is involved in our lives. Or, suppose a friend shares some hard experience they're going through at the moment. Apart from offering any help you are able to give, you could also mention that you will remember to pray for them. Another example of 'God-talk' might be saying "God willing" when you're describing your career or travel plans to someone.

Of course, I'm not saying we should yell "Hallelujah" every five minutes – some religious words are plain unhelpful for non-Christians. All I am suggesting is that we mention God and our faith in him in our casual conversation. It's not going to change the world but will show people around you that some people think God is worth including in their lives.

### **5. Pray**

God hears prayer and is keen to give us our requests. He wants people to become Christians even more than you want them to become Christians.

There was a man named George Muller who lived last century. He was a very respected church minister who spent a lot of his time praying for others, that they would become Christians. By the time of his death, all but two people on his 'prayer list' had decided to follow Christ. Those last two became Christians some time after his funeral.

Now, not all of us can find the time and energy to pray as much as George Muller did, but we do have the same God and he is just as keen to answer our prayers. We should ask God to work in the hearts of the people we talk to, as well as for opportunities to share him with more people.