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Go & Make

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Go & Make

What is *Go & Make*?

The aim of *Go & Make* is to help us to 'be' disciples ourselves as we go and make disciples of others, just as Jesus called us to 'do'.

Go & Make is, therefore, made up of two different kinds of session that focus on either **being** or **doing**. 'Being' sessions focus on how we can be transformed to be more like Jesus, becoming the people God always created us to be. 'Doing' sessions focus on considering and growing in the practical things that Jesus has called His followers (disciples) to do.

Being and doing have got to go hand-in-hand. What we do flows out of who we are – being leads to doing. As we invest in growing our love for Jesus, surrendering more of our lives to Him, we allow the Holy Spirit to fill us more and help us become more like Him. And as the Holy Spirit is transforming us to be more like Jesus, He also gives us the power and the strength that we need to do what Jesus has called us to do. Our doing can be empowered by our being.

How to run *Go & Make*?

If we follow these four steps, we can set ourselves up for success:

1. **Pick a day, time and location that works best for the size of the group expected.** We recommend a group size of no more than seven; more than that and it would no longer be a 'small group'! If you find there are more students than this wanting to be involved, you could divide the group and have multiple groups running at the same time. You could meet in an open café setting; on campus or in a homely environment. Each session has been designed to run for about 60 minutes. It might help to communicate this to your group beforehand to help them to plan *Go & Make* into their schedule.
2. **Invite other students who might be interested to follow Jesus and make disciples** (a 'disciple' is simply someone who's committed to following a teacher; Christians are disciples of Jesus).
3. **Prepare well!** Take time to look over each session in advance. If there are other leaders joining you in facilitating the groups then help make sure they're also prepared. And crucially, pray!
4. **Have fun**, make new friends and get excited about what God wants to do in and through you! Remember that you're not alone, God is with you, loves to empower you with His Spirit and wants to show up in your life and the lives of those around you.

Set up of a session

Every session is designed in a way that you can share about your life, discuss a topic together and be accountable in following Jesus and making disciples. Sessions should be 60 minutes long. To dig deeper in the Bible, we have a recommended YouVersion plan you can do together as a group or individually.

Elements of a session

Look back	Reflection on the last week, and a time for accountability (for any action steps that were chosen).
Look up	Prayer and looking at the Bible together.
Look forward	A time to choose personal action steps in response to the current session and steps for sharing Jesus with others.
Digging deeper	A YouVersion plan to go through as a group or individually.

Part A
1. Knowing Jesus
Forgiven, free and loved

Welcome to *Go & Make*! This resource is for groups of students that want to grow in following Jesus and being faithful to His Great Commission, as He said: '***Go and make*** *disciples of all nations...'*

In these sessions we'll encourage each other to take steps in being and making disciples, we'll pray for each other and open the Bible together. Let's enjoy the journey together with Jesus!

Look back

Discuss together

- How have you seen God at work this last week?
- Did you have any conversations with others about Jesus? How did they go?

Pray

- Thank God for who He is and what He's doing in your lives.
- Pray for each other and ask God for what you need.
- Bless this time of study and fellowship.

Look up

Being a disciple of Jesus means believing in Him, spending time with Him and inviting others to discover who He is too. In this series, we'll journey with our discipleship group to encourage and challenge each other to know Jesus, walk in His way and connect with others and help them discover more about Jesus. First, we'll spend some time discovering what it means to know Jesus for ourselves.

Discuss together

- Share in 2 minutes how you started to follow Jesus and why.

1 John 5:9-13 *We accept human testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. 10 Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. 11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.*

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we asked of him.
- NIVUK

The author of 1 John is writing to reassure and strengthen the faithful community of believers and to warn them to continue resisting false teachers. In these verses, John writes about how God's testimony (His Word) is greater than the testimony of humans and that His testimony gives us assurance. He really wants us to know we have eternal life now, because we believe in Jesus.

Discuss together

Observe:

- What promises does John make about what we can trust God for?

Reflect:

Promise 1:

'God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony.'

- How easy do you find it to believe God's testimony?

Promise 2:

'God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.'

- Where do you stand in light of these verses?

Promise 3:

'This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we asked of him.'

- How confident are you that God will hear you?

In the rest of 1 John, we're pointed to other sources of assurance including the Holy Spirit's presence in us (4:13), our obedience to God (2:3) and our love for one another (3:14).

In **Romans 8:1-2**, the Bible tells us:

1 There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free...
- NIVUK

We're forgiven, free and have eternal life in Jesus!

John 17:3 says:

3 Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
- NIVUK

It teaches us that the life we're assured of in Jesus starts now, through knowing Him!

Pray

- Ask God to give you a deep assurance of His goodness and love.
- Ask Him to help you trust His promises.
- Pray for another.

Look forward

Discuss together

- What did you pick up from this study?
- What would you like to do to get to know Jesus more in the next week?
- How do you feel about the prospect of helping others know Jesus after this study?
- In the coming week, in what ways might you help others to know Him, too?

Digging deeper

Go through our YouVersion Bible plan about Knowing and Loving Jesus.

2. Following Jesus

Be His disciple, and the importance of community and the local church

Look back

Discuss together

- How did you spend your time with God last week?
- What have you experienced with God since our last session?
- What opportunities did you have to share or show Jesus to the people around you?
- What do you need prayer for?

Pray

- Thank God for who He is and what He's doing in your lives.
- Pray for each other and ask God for what you need.
- Bless this time of study and fellowship.

Look up

At different places in the Bible, Jesus calls us to leave everything behind and follow Him: to become His disciple. He wants us to live our lives in such a way as if He were walking in our shoes.

Another definition of 'disciple' can be found in **Matthew 4:19**:

> *19 And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."*
> - ESVUK

In this Bible verse, we find three important aspects of discipleship:

1. **Follow me** – Leaving our old lives behind to start a completely new life.
2. **I will make you** – Our lives are changed and renewed by Jesus.
3. **Fishers of men** – Our lives are characterised by the mission of Jesus (fishing for people).

When we combine these three elements, we find the definition of a disciple:

> *A disciple is someone who truly follows Jesus, is changed by Him and is committed to the mission of Jesus.*

Discuss together

- What do you think of this definition?
- What appeals to you? Or what is not attractive for you?

Following Jesus together
God doesn't want us to live our Christian lives in isolation. As C S Lewis put it:

> *Several coals blaze brightly together but put one on its own on the hearth and its fire soon goes out.*

When we invited Jesus into our lives, we were born into God's family (**John 1:12**). He's our Father, and other believers are our brothers and sisters. This community is at the heart of God's eternal plan.

We belong to one another and need each other to grow as disciples of Jesus. That's why we're journeying together, exploring what it means to be disciples at university. But it's equally important is to be connected well in a local church.

The book of Acts in the New Testament gives us some wonderful pictures of what life was like in the early church:

> ***Acts 2:42*** *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.*
> - NIVUK

Discuss together

- What do we learn about the attitude of the Christians in Acts 2?
- What do you think your contribution can be to a local church?
- When have you experienced help from other believers in the past?
- In which areas of your life do you see a need for input from others?

It can be useful to have some pointers to help us find a good church. Firstly though, we must realise that no church is perfect; even the churches described in the New Testament had their problems. The New Testament does give us some things to look out for, though:

- The leaders affirm that Jesus is God in human form (**Colossians 1:15**).
- The Bible, not just the opinion of the preacher, is the authority for teaching (**2 Timothy 4:2-4**).
- People have real, honest friendships and look out for each other. (**1 Corinthians 13**).
- People are serious about praying, seeking and enjoying God (**Luke 11:1-4**).
- There is a concern to make Jesus known to others (**Matthew 28:18-20**).
- The overall environment is one where we can be challenged in our spiritual growth and be given opportunities to serve others in church and in our local communities.

God has designed us to share our faith journeys with other believers. If we try to go it on our own, we miss out on a big part of what God has planned for us. We're part of God's family.

Look forward

Discuss together

- What did you pick up from this study?
- How can you commit to helping others to grow in following Jesus?
- In the coming week, how do you want to show Jesus to the people around you who don't know Him yet?

Digging deeper

Go through our YouVersion Bible plan about Following Jesus Together.

3. Having conversations about faith

Look back

Discuss together

- What have you experienced with God since our last session?
- What opportunities did you have to share or show Jesus to the people around you?
- What do you need prayer for?

Pray

- Thank God for who He is and what He's doing in your lives.
- Pray for each other and ask God for what you need.
- Bless this time of study and fellowship.

Look up

When we read the Gospels (the four books about Jesus' life at the start of the New Testament), we're constantly shown about how much Jesus loved personal conversations. We read a lot about His detours or stops along His journeys in order to take time to talk to people.

In this session, we'll look at how to have spiritual conversations with our friends and other students.

Discuss together

- How would you describe the experiences you have in having conversations about God with your friends?

A typical example of the conversations that Jesus had with people is seen in His encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well. Let's see what we can learn from this conversation.

Read John 4:1-42 and discuss together

- What stood out to you whilst reading about Jesus talking with the woman?
- How does Jesus start the conversation?
- How would you describe Jesus' attitude during the conversation?
- How does Jesus make use of questions?
- When in the conversation does Jesus share His message?

This story gives us a good model to follow in our own spiritual conversations. We can draw at least five lessons from their interaction:

1. **Be open and approachable to anyone we meet**
   Jesus starts a conversation with the Samaritan woman. For two reasons, this would've been unheard of. Firstly, she was a Samaritan – Samaritans were seen as rivals of the Jewish people. Secondly, she was a woman – men wouldn't talk privately with women who weren't their relatives.

   But Jesus' love broke through cultural and social barriers. We all have people who are close to us. However, every week we meet many more people: in classes, in our halls, in the supermarket and in café's, etc. Why not see every one of them as a potential person to talk with?

2. **Talk about everyday life**
   Jesus talks with the Samaritan woman about water. He doesn't start the conversation by saying: 'Hi. I've come to talk to about the Messiah. Oh, by the way, that's Me!'

   Jesus knows that every open and honest conversation is just a moment away from a spiritual conversation. We don't have to force ourselves to start talking about Jesus right away. Relax. Share about our day. Ask the other person about their week, day, meals, books, conversations, etc.

3. **Ask questions and listen well**
   Jesus could've criticised the Samaritan woman for her senseless search for happiness in all her romantic relationships... but He didn't. He asked a question that touched her at the heart of her identity.

   Asking good questions is the key to any good conversation. By asking questions, we show we're interested in the other person. By asking a question, we invite the other person to have a good conversation.

4. **Look for the question behind the question**
   The Samaritan woman asked Jesus at which temple it was best to pray to God. Jesus didn't answer her by starting a discussion about historic theology; He saw the real question. He responded to her question about the temple by inviting her to a personal relationship with Him.

   We mustn't get entangled in all kinds of distracting discussions. Try to see what's behind the question. It could be wise to comment and say: 'Interesting question, what do *you* think?' or, 'Why is this question important for you?'

5. **Share Jesus**
   The highlight of the meeting has got to be when Jesus shared with the Samaritan woman that He is the Messiah. She was so astonished that she ran back to her village to invite everybody to also meet Jesus.

   A helpful question to ask ourselves (and the Holy Spirit) is: 'How is Jesus good news to this person?' Maybe we can share a story of Jesus or an aspect of the good news about Jesus that is relevant to the specific situation. Maybe we can even share part of our personal story of faith. When we share, we can ask the other person's response.

Discuss together

- What good questions could you ask to open up or deepen a conversation?
- What aspect of the good news have you discovered recently that you could share with someone?

Look forward

Discuss together

- What did you pick up from this study?
- Over the coming week, who would you like to have a spiritual conversation with that doesn't know Jesus yet?

Digging deeper

Go through our YouVersion Bible plan about Having Conversations About Faith.

4. Walking in the Spirit

Who is the Holy Spirit? Being filled with the Holy Spirit

Look back

Discuss together

- How did your spiritual conversation(s) with your friend or fellow student go last week?
- What have you experienced with God since our last session?
- What do you need prayer for?

Pray

- Thank God for who He is and what He's doing in your lives.
- Pray for each other and ask God for what you need.
- Bless this time of study and fellowship.

Look up

Living the Christian life in our own strength is impossible. Jesus says, in **John 15:5**:

> *5 If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much*
> *fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*
> - NIVUK

The only way to live the Christian life is for Jesus to live in us, living His life through our life by the Holy Spirit. As we submit ourselves to the Spirit, He shows us how to live through the Bible, and His prompting, and gives us power to obey Him.

Jesus introduced the Holy Spirit in **John 14:16-18**:

> *16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another*
> *advocate to help you and be with you for ever – 17 the*
> *Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it*
> *neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for*
> *he lives with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you*
> *as orphans; I will come to you.*
> - NIVUK

From these verses we learn about the Spirit:

1. The Spirit is not a force but a personal being. (That's why Christians call the Holy Spirit 'Him' not 'it').
2. The original Greek for 'another advocate' literally means 'another advocate of the same kind'. In other words, the Spirit perfectly represents Jesus.
3. It's by the Holy Spirit coming and living in us that Jesus is with us.

Discuss together

- What do you think of this description of the Holy Spirit?
- What do you find easy to accept? What is harder?

Being filled with the Spirit

> ***Luke 11v9*** *'So I say to you: ask and it will be given to*
> *you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be*
> *opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; the*
> *one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the*
> *door will be opened.*
>
> *11 'Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will*
> *give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg,*
> *will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are*
> *evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how*
> *much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy*
> *Spirit to those who ask him!'*
> - NIVUK

Discuss together

- What promises does Jesus give in this passage? What are the conditions?
- Jesus is keen to emphasise that the Holy Spirit is a good gift. Why is this important?
- How do you feel about being filled with the Spirit?
- Do you want to be filled with the Spirit? If so, let's ask God to fill us right now.

We know from the passage in Luke that it's God's will for us to be filled by the Spirit. In **Ephesians 5:8** we're even commanded to be continually filled with the Spirit!

A simple analogy with breathing helps us see how we can live in God's power as a way of life:

> **EXHALE** – We breathe out by dealing with our sin (confessing) as soon as we become aware of it.
>
> **INHALE** – We breathe in the Holy Spirit by surrendering our life to Jesus, trusting the Spirit to fill us with His presence and power.

Discuss together

- What's been your experience of living the Christian life
- What struggles have you faced?

The Spirit's transformation of our lives is a process. Because God won't be finished with us until He completes the whole process of banishing sin and brokenness from the world, we'll continue to make mistakes and sin.

As we grow up in our faith, the critical question is not whether we make mistakes, but how we respond to them. We grow to maturity over time by walking moment-by-moment with Jesus and in fellowship with others who are walking with Him, too.

Discuss together

- How would you summarise what you've learnt about walking in the Spirit?

Look forward

Discuss together

- What did you pick up from this study?
- In what ways do you feel you are filled and led by the Spirit?
- In the coming week, how do you want to give the Spirit the chance to change you and work through you?

Digging deeper

Go through our YouVersion Bible plan about Walking in the Spirit.

5. God's love for the world

The Great Commission and all nations

Look back

Discuss together

- How did you find trying to walk in the Spirit this week?
- What have you experienced with God since our last session?
- What conversations did you have with others about Jesus?
- What do you need prayer for?

Pray

- Thank God for who He is and what He's doing in your lives.
- Pray for each other and ask God for what you need.
- Bless this time of study and fellowship.

Look up

The central purpose of human life is to know and love God: to share in His life, His heart and His purposes. In **John 15:15**, Jesus speaks of the connection between friendship with God and sharing in His purposes:

> 15 *I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.*

Knowing God cannot be separated from being involved with His work: as we share in His heart, we become more deeply concerned with His purposes.

As we become more involved with His purposes, we enter more deeply into His heart. We don't share in God's business because He needs our help, as Paul says, in **Acts 17:25**:

> 25 *... [God] is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.*
> - NIVUK

We share in His purposes to share in His heart.

We can read about Abraham being given a history-changing mission by God in **Genesis 12:1-4**. (Note: before God changed his name, Abraham was known as Abram.)

Read Genesis 12:1-4 and discuss together

- What was God's purpose in calling Abram out of his country?
- What where the practical consequences for Abram and his family?
- What can we learn from the story of Abram? How does God work today in the lives of His followers?

The call to be involved in God's purposes in the world is recorded throughout the Bible. One place it's particularly clear is at the very end of Matthew's Gospel, where Jesus' last words before He ascended to heaven – often known as 'the Great Commission' – are recorded:

> **Matthew 28:16** *Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'*
> - NIVUK

Discuss together

- We're told that the disciples worshipped but also that they doubted. Why would this be important to note?
- How do you feel about this commandment being for you as well?
- The word 'nation' means 'ethnic group', so not just political states but every tribe. What does this tell us about God's heart? What are the implications for the mission and for us?
- What has been your experience of what God is doing beyond our borders and/or your home culture?
- What is the promise for those who go? How can this help us?

God's global message of good news is a glimpse into His character – a God who graciously loves everyone, regardless of their race or background. He is inviting a perfectly diverse people –everyone! – to be with Him forever, and restoring them to the purposes for which He created them.

In calling us to make disciples from every people group on earth, He is calling us to share in what He's doing in the world. He's giving us a truly global mission.

God's desire to bring the whole world into a saving relationship with Him has been His purpose all along. In Genesis we read about Abraham and his mission, and Matthew tells us about the mission of the disciples (and us).

Although we haven't got there yet, the Bible shares glimpses of the end result in its closing pages in Revelation.

> **Revelation 7:9** *After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice:*
>
> *'Salvation belongs to our God,*
> *who sits on the throne,*
> *and to the Lamb.'*
> - NIVUK

In this passage, we see the fulfilment of God's promises. He kept His Word. All people will be blessed through Abraham.

In Revelation, we see people before God's throne from '*all nations and peoples, from every tribe and language.*' These words are echoing God's promise to Abraham from Genesis.

The whole Bible can be read as one long answer to a very simple question: ***What is God doing about the sin and rebelliousness of people?*** Genesis 12 to Revelation 22 is God's answer. And His desire for us to be part of this answer!

Look forward

Discuss together

- What did you pick up from this study?
- In what ways do you feel excited about God's invitation to join in His heart and mission? What challenges you?
- In the coming week, how do you want to put into practice what you've learnt?

Where is God calling you?

- Agapé Students is part of a global movement. There are students, just like us, trusting God to help them make disciples at their universities in over 190 countries around the world. If God has put a particular place on our heart, we can have a chat to an Agapé Students staff member about it.
- We can also visit the Agapé UK website to find out more about the opportunities to serve God around the world:
- Visit the Global Projects page to find out about the short-term (1-3 week) opportunities that Agapé Students are running this year.
- If we're studying a course that offers us a semester or year abroad as part of our studies, we can consider applying to join the Agapé UK Study Abroad Programme to help us make the most of our time studying overseas.
- If we're about to graduate and we'd like to explore the opportunity of serving God overseas long-term, or we're even just open to taking a year out before we embark on our career, we can consider applying for a STINT (Short-Term INTernational) year abroad.

Again, we can talk to an Agapé Students staff member about any of the above opportunities, or we can contact the Agapé UK Global team directly to enquire and ask questions: global@agape.org.uk.

Reflect and discuss together

- Take 5 minutes to think and pray about the above opportunities. Expect that God might put a desire in your heart for a specific group of people to hear the good news about Jesus. (It may or may not be a people group in another place or country. It may be another nation; it may be another city; it may be across the street; it may be a neighbour.)
- Share with the group what God has put on your heart.
- Abraham had to leave behind what felt familiar, what felt secure, his identity (country, city, family) to be a blessing to the world. What might you need to leave behind to be obedient to God's call?

Digging deeper

Go through our YouVersion Bible plan about God's Love for the World.

6. Sharing our story

Look back

Discuss together

- What have you experienced with God since our last session?
- What conversations did you have with others about Jesus this week?
- What do you need prayer for?

Pray

- Thank God for who He is and what He's doing in your lives.
- Pray for each other and ask God for what you need.
- Bless this time of study and fellowship.

Look up

In a previous session we read the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well (**John 4:1-42**), and we learnt some principles about having spiritual conversations.

The story continued when the woman returned to her village to share about her encounter with Jesus. Because of her story many other people also started trusting in Jesus.

Discuss together

- Which people who are close to you do you want to put their trust in Jesus?
- How could you be a part of that process?

> ***Romans 10:9*** *if you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. 11 As Scripture says, 'Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.' 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile – the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'*
>
> *14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'*
> - NIVUK

Discuss together

- What is the role and importance of words and speech in this Bible passage?

Words are an important part of sharing the good news about Jesus. But the good news isn't just advice about how to live. This is what the good news is: God reconciled the world to Himself.

A popular saying amongst some Christian is this quote supposedly from Francis of Assisi:

> *Preach the gospel at all times; when necessary, use words.*

But it's impossible to show the good news with only our actions; we must explain it! It's like saying: 'Can I have your phone number? If necessary, use numbers.' Numbers are a vital part of our phone numbers, just as words are a vital part of the good news.

Knowing and following Jesus is the best thing that has happened to us. Jesus gave us life, He's transformed us and He's continuing to change our lives each day through the Holy Spirit.

In a Christian's story – sometimes called our 'testimony' – there are three ingredients for a fantastic story: us, Jesus and the changes He's made in our lives.

If we feel like we've only noticed a few changes, or none at all, it's good to take time to ask God to open our eyes to the wonderful things He's done, is doing, or is able to do in our lives. We can open our hearts to Him and ask the Holy Spirit to give us new insights about the areas of our lives in which we can look more like Jesus. And we can also invite the Holy Spirit to help us.

A story to tell
To share our story about our journey with God, we can take different angles of approach. We can share about:

1. **A new beginning**
   If the moment we made a (new) start with God was very significant for us, we can share how we started our new personal relationship with Jesus.
2. **A change we've experienced**
   Maybe we've experienced a certain struggle or problem in our life which we needed to overcome. We could share how God used this to shape us and how he helped us in this. Any change we've experienced where we can identify how Jesus helped us through our need or question is ideal for sharing with others. Good topics for sharing about include experiences where we've dealt with: acceptance, addiction, hope, loneliness, grief, fear, happiness, depression, debt, success, pride, forgiveness, etc.
3. **Our daily life with God**
   We can share a recent experience with God. An experience (big or small) in recent days, weeks or months in which we're trusting God or we've experienced God at work in our life or in the people around us.

Reflect and discuss together

- Take a few minutes to think about your story with Jesus (what angle of approach are you going to choose?) and make sure you can share your story in two-and-a-half minutes.
- Get into a pair and share your story with each other.
- Take a moment to think and ask God with which people you can share your story. You could use the following introduction: 'The other day I was reflecting on some exciting things that God has done in my life. Can I share them with you?'

Look forward

Discuss together

- What did you pick up from this study?
- With whom would you like to share your story this week?
- Pray for each other.

Digging deeper

Go through our YouVersion Bible plan about Sharing Our Story.

Part B
1. Sharing God's story

Look back

Discuss together

- What have you experienced with God since our last session?
- What conversations did you have with others about Jesus this week?
- What do you need prayer for?

Pray

- Thank God for who He is and what He's doing in your lives.
- Pray for each other and ask God for what you need.
- Bless this time of study and fellowship.

Look up

The Greek word *euangelizo* is a composition of two words: *eu* (good) and *angelia* (message or news). Together, the word means 'the good news'. From very early on, this is the word that Christians used to describe the message about Jesus.

As a verb, we also get the word evangelising which means 'to proclaim the good news'.

Discuss together

- In what way was the message of Jesus good news for you when you first heard about it?
- Discuss why Jesus' message is still good news for you.
- What aspect of this good news do you really want to share with one of your friends or relatives?

Paul was called by Jesus to share His story. In his letter to the Romans, he explains his passion for sharing Jesus' story. For him, as a Jew, righteousness by faith alone was novel and such good news.

> ***Romans 1:16*** *For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.* [17] *For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed – a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'*
> - NIVUK

A useful resource to help us memorise and explain the gospel – good news or 'God's story' – is *The FOUR*. These are four simple symbols to help us share the good news in an easy-to-remember way.

The symbols are the following:

♥ God loves me (God's character and purpose for us)
÷ We're separated from God – by our sin (our situation)
† Jesus died for us (God's solution)
? Do we choose to live for God? (our answer)

- Take a few minutes to read though *THE FOUR* and make notes about each point, if you want.
- Practise explaining *THE FOUR* in pairs.

What makes the *THE FOUR* a useful resource:

- **It can be used in every situation**
  The simple sentences can be shared as a short summary when we've only got a short amount of time but can be elaborated on when there's more time and interest. Bible verses and examples from our personal experience can be added to help point someone to the Bible or to make it more personal.
- **It's a framework**
  Sometimes we don't know where to start or finish when we're asked about our faith. This can help us to organise our story and provides us with a basic summary. We can share more or adapt it to a specific situation.
- **It inspires interest**
  We get a chance to touch on different subjects which we might not get the opportunity to talk about everyday, creating an opportunity for people to ask questions, like:
  - How do you know God exists?
  - What is sin? I happen to think that I'm a pretty good person myself.
  - Who is Jesus?
  - How I do I know Jesus is trustworthy?
  - What is life like when you follow Jesus? What do you have to do or stop doing?

  If somebody asks these kinds of questions, offer them a drink and find a place to sit down and have a good conversation.
- **It can help you learn more about the other person**
  If you notice the other person is acting restless or is actively hostile towards your story, you can stop talking and change the subject.
- **It's simple and transferable**
  The message of the Gospel is simple: you do not have to be a super Christian to share it with your friends. You and I can do this, too!

Tips for sharing the good news:

- Be sensitive to the person. Maybe ask at different points, 'Is this making sense?'
- Go through each point slowly. Try not to be mechanical. Think about what you're saying.
- Don't force someone to listen. Watch their body language.

Challenge!

- To grow in sharing the good news, we need to do more than just talk about it amongst ourselves; we need to go out and practise it! Let's challenge ourselves to share our version of *THE FOUR* with two people before the next session.

  The aim is for us to grow in confidence in sharing. Ask someone if they would help you if there isn't an opportunity for you to share naturally.

Look forward

Discuss together

- What was your highlight from this study?
- With whom would you like to share your version of *THE FOUR* this week?
- Pray for each other.

Digging deeper

Go through our YouVersion Bible plan about Sharing God's Story.