

Being Real Leaders Guide

A Way of Introduction . . .

Anyone who has been around the Church for very long has heard that as Christians we must share our faith. However, what does sharing our faith mean (especially the “sharing” part)? Many cite the words of Jesus to “go and make disciples” (Matthew 29:19). But what does disciple making look like?

The “how to’s” of sharing our faith varies in opinion from person to person and church to church. Some believe you must have a set plan or program in order to be effective in leading people to Christ. Others believe that it’s about letting your light shine. That is, if you let your life be a testimony, people will want to know what’s different. This, in turn, opens up the door for you to talk about God. Still others use a strong approach of initiating conversation and, whether you want it or not, talk about their spiritual life and yours.

Most people do not share their faith because either they do not want to turn people off or they do not know how to effectively communicate with others the life-impacting relationship they have with God.

This study will help give your students a handle on the way to share their faith. It will also help your students view others, not as targets, but as people created and loved by God. Use this time to talk about and explore what it truly means to share our faith with those who need an encounter with the Living God.

In order to use this leader's guide effectively, consider the following steps.

- a. Ask students to read the chapter prior to the session.
- b. Begin with prayer.
- c. Read the chapter synopsis as a way to remind students of the chapters' central message.
- d. Ask the "Digging Deep" questions. (The "Key Verse" is designed to connect students to a Bible passage that relates to the chapters message. There will be one question that deals with the "Key Verse.")
- e. Close in prayer.

Chapter 1: A Look at Evangelism

Synopsis

Evangelism means many things to many people. People's approach to evangelism can be good, bad, and sometimes downright ugly. The authors gathered opinions on the subject of evangelism from middle school, high school, and college students, as well as a few volunteer and full-time youth workers.

Each person was asked, "*What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word evangelism?*" and "*In your view, what's the 'good, bad, and ugly' of evangelism?*"

Key Verse

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." –Matthew 29:19-20

Digging In

1. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word *evangelism*?
2. In your view, what's the "good, bad, and ugly" of evangelism?
3. What opinions from the survey surprised you?
4. What opinions from the survey didn't surprise you?
5. Read Matthew 29:19-20. How do we make disciples (share our faith) without it turning out bad and/or ugly?

6. What is the best method you have found for sharing your faith?
7. How can we share our faith without feeling like we have to become an “evangelist”?
8. What is the easiest part of sharing your faith? What is the hardest?

Chapter 2: Evangelism Through Relationship

Synopsis

Many times we do not share our faith because we believe we have to be trained or equipped properly to be effective in our witness. We may avoid sharing our faith because we think only “preachers” or people who have been skillfully trained can lead others to Christ. However, pointing people to Christ is not that complicated. It comes down to love and relationship. Sharing our faith should be as natural as running up to someone and telling them some great news that has happened in our lives.

The “sales mentality” approach to evangelism sees people as in need of a product. The Good News is not about “selling;” we don’t have to approach it as a product that we need to persuade someone to buy. Sharing our faith should be a natural outflow of our relationship with Jesus Christ.

Key Verse

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’” –Isaiah 52:7

Digging In

1. What does it mean to have a “sales” approach to sharing our faith?
2. What are the dangers of having a “sales mentality”?
3. What are the dangers of seeing others as our “personal projects”?

4. How do we begin to see others as a child of God rather than a project?
5. What should our motivation be for loving others and sharing our faith?
6. What is relational evangelism?
7. How can we practice relational evangelism in our world?
8. Read Isaiah 52:7. How can we bring the Good News and proclaim salvation to others?

Chapter 3: Imago Me

Synopsis

The *imago Dei* (pronounced “im-ah-joe day” or “im-ah-go day”) means the image of God. The image of God is in each of us. That is, God has placed within each person the capacity for deep love for Him and deep godly love for others. Each person God has created bears His image.

When we begin to realize that we are created in God’s image, we welcome each person we meet as a bearer of God’s image. This helps us share our faith from a godly perspective, rather than seeing people as objects.

Key Verse

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.’” –Genesis 1:26

Digging In

1. What does it mean that each person created is made in the image of God?
2. The word “commodify” means to treat a person like they are an object or goods to be traded. Do you think Jesus ever commodified people? Why or why not?
3. When it comes to sharing our faith, how might we be tempted to commodify someone?
4. How do we share our faith without turning people into objects?
5. Read Genesis 1:26. How does recognizing the image of God in others help us in sharing our faith?

6. How does knowing that God is already working in a person's life help us in our approach to sharing our faith with them?
7. Why is listening to the Holy Spirit important in sharing our faith?

Chapter 4: Imago You

Synopsis

We must begin to recognize, validate, and embrace the image of God in others—we must actually love them. It is one thing to love the people we know, friends, and family; it is another to love the people with whom we only occasionally interact.

Sharing our faith should not be something we do, but a way of life. It means simply being sold out to God—then accepting the invitation to share life with people that God brings across your path.

Key Verse

“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.” –

Matthew 25:40

Digging In

1. What thoughts and feelings did you have when you read the story of John?
2. Would you have acted the same way toward John as the author did?
3. Has God ever opened the door for you to share your faith with someone else?
4. Do you know a person like Jen?
5. What are the ways that Jen shared her faith with others?
6. How is God’s image revealed in and through us?
7. Read Matthew 25:40. How does this passage relate to seeing the image of God in others?

Chapter 5: Kingdom Come

Synopsis

There is a difference between going to church and living out the kingdom of God. The Kingdom is something that we live out in the here-and-now. The Kingdom is about living out Christlikeness in the world. The Kingdom is all around us—in fact, Jesus said the kingdom of God is within us (Luke 17:21). It is a part of us. We carry it inside of us everywhere we go—at work, at home, at church.

Jesus lived out the kingdom of God before the world. That's the role of the Church—living out the Kingdom. Jesus was calling people into the Kingdom. He calls the Church, the people that make up His body in belief, to live out the Kingdom in the world.

Key Verse

“The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.” –Luke 17:21

Digging In

1. What do you think the kingdom of God is?
2. Can you be in the Kingdom and not in a church?
3. Can you be in a church and not in the Kingdom?
4. What's the difference between going to church and living out the Kingdom?
5. How can we join what God is already at work doing in the world?
6. Read Luke 17:21. How is the kingdom of God within you?

7. How do we live as Kingdom people?

Chapter 6: A Story from the Road

Synopsis

In this chapter, author Mike Kipp shares how his friendship with Tim developed and withstood the test of many difficulties. Kipp offers this story as an example of friendship evangelism.

Key Verse

“If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.” –John 14:23

Digging In

1. What thoughts and feelings did you have as you read the story of Tim?
2. Have you known someone like Tim?
3. What would your response have been to Tim if you were the author?
4. In what ways did the author share his faith with Tim?
5. Read John 14:23. How does this scripture relate to the story of Tim?
6. What is the message of Tim’s story?
7. How can you share your faith with the *Tim’s* in your church, school, or home?

Chapter 7: Final Thoughts

Synopsis

We must re-think the way we view evangelism. We must be intentional in how we choose to be in the world. We can no longer expect people to come to a certain location to meet God. We must be missional. This means being lost in the love of Christ, giving without caution, serving as the only way of life, and being emptied of all but humility in order to lavish love on the world through actions of insane sacrifice.

We must become real. This means that every decision a person makes, it is their desire to follow Christ. To be Christian means all we do is marked by our identity as a child of God and follower of Jesus Christ. Being real means getting real with Jesus Christ—which utterly shapes every area of our lives. When this happens, our faith is shared easily and regularly—because it flows out of the Spirit of Christ in us.

Key Verse

“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.” –

Colossians 3:1-3

Digging In

1. What does it mean to be missional?
2. What does it mean to be real in our relationship with God and with others?

3. What are all the ways we can share our faith?
4. Read Colossians 3:1-3. What is the message of this passage?
5. How do allow God to shape our lives and direct our steps?
6. How has this book changed the way you look at sharing your faith?
7. In what ways can you share your faith so that those around you will hear the message of God's redemption and love?