

ICE BREAKER

Introductions gone wrong. Discuss together examples you can think of when introductions have gone wrong.

ENCOUNTER:

We are thinking about sharing our faith with others & Jesus commands us in Matthew 28 v 19 to, “Go, Therefore...” In the context of making disciples which often starts with us sharing our faith with those around us. For most of us, someone has shared Jesus with us and sometimes introductions can go badly wrong (as discussed above). Share together how Jesus was introduced to you? Was it done well? What did you learn?

FOCUS:

How to share our faith with others. Acts 17:16-34

Q1: Paul’s conviction to share. V34 – While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply troubled by all the idols he saw everywhere in the city.

Paul was bothered by the sin he saw around him – idols in the city. What sins dominate our society/culture? How sensitive are we to these sins? Does sin bother us? Is there a danger that we can become used to them & they doesn’t bother us anymore? What can we learn from Paul here?

Q2: Paul’s courage to share. V17, 18 & 19 tell us of the various people who Paul shared with.

Paul was courageous when it came to sharing his faith. He shared with many people in the passage – Jews, Gentiles, Epicurean & Stoic philosophers, Athenians & tourists. He even went before of the local council (Areopagus). Look at the different people Paul witnessed to, he didn’t pick and chose who he would share with – he shared with those who were in front of him. Do we have a tendency to pick and choose who we share Jesus with? Why? What can we learn from Paul?

Also consider God’s words to Joshua in Joshua 1v1-9. Joshua had been given a high call to lead God’s people following on from the death of Moses. We are given a high call by Jesus to share our faith with others. Let’s use God’s words to inspire us & be courageous for him.

Q3: Paul's confidence to share. V23 – 31.

Paul stood at the Aeropagus & shared Jesus. This is significant because the Aeropagus was a prominent hill in Athens around 400ft high & was associated with the Greek god of war. Paul is sensitive to the culture and even quotes the local poets in his address in v28. Paul confidently shares about the one true God. A huge moment in front of so many people and officials too. Paul's confidence is in his Lord as he shares. His confidence isn't in his own ability or how he can draw a crowd, but in his Lord and Saviour. When we share our faith with others our confidence needs to be in the one we are sharing about – Jesus. Why do we feel inadequate at times to share our faith? Are we trusting in ourselves too much?

Q4: How people respond. V32 – 34.

We are called to share our faith with others and not force an outcome. As Paul shared:

Some laughed

Some wanted to hear more

Some believed

It's important for us to remember that the Holy Spirit convicts people of their sin and draws them to Jesus. Our role is to share Jesus with others and not to be discouraged by those who aren't interested (continue to pray for them) be encouraged and follow up with those who want to hear more, delight with those who come to believe

ACTIVATION:

Our Focus in the second year of our vision is:

EACH ONE

REACH ONE

PLEASE GOD

Who is that one person whom God has laid on your heart to reach out to? Take time to pray for that person now or ask God to lay someone on your heart.