

# Reimagining Evangelism

## Sharing Jesus with confidence and grace

With evangelism receiving fresh focus in churches and denominations around the UK, we continue our Reimagining Evangelism series with an insight from Andy Frost on how to equip our congregations to share faith. Andy has been the director of Share Jesus International since 2008, leading scores of projects ranging from London's Pentecost Festival to national tours. At the heart of all that he does, he wants to help people follow Jesus. He presently heads up the London Mission Collective, works with Care for the Family on the Kitchen Table Project and is on the Gather Movement leadership team. He has written a range of books and resources, including *Leadiagrams* and *Long Story Short*.



We often hear talk of the 'quiet revival,' yet many of us don't feel like it's happening in our own churches. Instead of being encouraged, we can find ourselves discouraged: Why isn't God drawing people here? Why aren't we seeing new life among us?

Working with churches of all shapes and sizes, I've noticed a pattern – those seeing people come to faith often have two things in common: an expectation that people will want to explore following Jesus and an intentionality in helping them on that journey.

But for some of us, we've tried different approaches, and nothing seems to stick. We end up feeling guilty, and so we step back.

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Here are five principles to help us regain confidence and discover afresh how churches today can share faith.

### 1 Rediscover the 'why'

Sharing faith begins with remembering 'why.' The Great Commandment and the Great Commission remind us to love God, love our neighbour and make disciples of all nations. These have carried the Church through centuries of challenge and change. In the Roman Empire, Christians cared for the sick, welcomed outsiders, and told a bigger story of hope. People noticed.

But more than sharing faith because we are told to, there's also a personal 'why.' What is it about following Jesus that makes you want to share that with others? Maybe faith gives you eternal hope in the middle of difficulty. Maybe you've found forgiveness or a sense of purpose. Maybe you've experienced love you want others to know too.

Simply asking our congregations this question and giving them space to share can help them become more intentional. When we reconnect with our 'why,' sharing faith becomes less about ticking a box and more about extending the life we've already received.

I was in a church near Yeovil, Somerset, recently, and some of the congregation were reticent to share their faith. When one of the ladies remembered 'why,' a broad smile filled her face. 'I know that God loves me, and all I have to do is share that love,' she said. Later that afternoon, she had the opportunity to pray for a stranger on the street, and it was beautiful to see her 'why' giving her the impetus she needed.



### 2 Hold the tensions

We often lose confidence because we think there's only one 'right' way to share faith. But research that we carried out shows that Christians tend to lean in different directions:

**Moment vs journey:** Some expect dramatic 'Damascus Road' moments, others see faith as a step-by-step process.

**Personal vs corporate:** Some carry responsibility individually, others believe this happens primarily with the gathered community.

**Message vs person:** Some focus on communicating the gospel clearly off the bat, others start by listening and sensing what God is already doing in a person's life.

**Word vs action:** Some lead with words, others with service.

These aren't tensions to fix but perspectives to understand. When I have introduced these to church leadership teams, it has fostered greater understanding about our different leanings and helped us appreciate working together more effectively.

And when I talk these tensions through with congregations, they tend to breathe a sigh of relief! One young man shared, 'So I haven't got to do it like our vicar does it!'

These tensions remind us that we don't all need to share faith in the same way. God uses variety. But they also challenge us to step out of our comfort zone and try something different. For example, someone who prefers walking the journey with people over time might like to pray for a Damascus Road experience for someone they know!

### 3 Pray with expectation

In our churches we pray for world crises, the sick, and community concerns – and rightly so. But what we pray for reveals what matters most to us. If we never pray for people to discover faith, perhaps we've forgotten its importance.

All mission needs to be underpinned in prayer and 'pray for five' is one simple tool I love to introduce into churches. People write down the names of five people they long to see encounter Jesus and commit to pray for them regularly. You can pray in 30-second bursts, or longer. Alone or with friends. The format doesn't matter and people aren't praying that someone would become a cookie-cutter version of their own relationship with God, but that they would encounter Jesus in their own way.

It was brilliant to see this introduced in a church in Kent, where one lady began praying for five friends and then invited them all to church for the carol service and all five came! Following this, she had opportunities for conversations with them about the meaning of Christmas. And another man, when he began praying for his five, had an opportunity to pray for one of them in person, who he then introduced to the Lectio 365 App, which they regularly reflect on together as they walk around the park.

'Pray for five' is just one way. Whatever tool we use, we need to keep going with intentional prayer. As we pray, our expectations rise and our hearts become more open to the opportunities God gives.

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### 4 Create pathways, not pressure points

Yes, sometimes people come to faith instantly, but more often it's a journey shaped by many small steps. Churches can nurture this journey by creating pathways, not pressure points.

Pathways are suitable next steps for people on their journey. Pressure points are when we try to hurry people to make a decision.

Pathways can be (but aren't necessarily) events. Sometimes they're as simple as giving someone the opportunity to read through a Gospel with a friend over coffee, or inviting someone to join you in a small group where questions are welcome. Events can play a role, but they work best when they connect to a wider journey of friendship, conversation and discipleship.

The question to keep asking is: What's next? If someone comes to a community fun day, is there an invitation to something deeper? If they attend a carol service, how can they take a step further? If they say 'yes' to Jesus, what discipleship pathway awaits them?

One Baptist pastor I worked alongside now regular asks his volunteers, 'What's next?' Now every church activity has an intentional next step for faith exploration, whether it's someone using the food bank or hiring the church hall.

As we do this, we remember that everyone's journey will be different and some people will not want to take a next step, and that's fine as well! We are working with them at God's pace, not ours!

The Great Commission doesn't call us to make converts but disciples. That means patient investment: walking alongside people, creating opportunities and remembering that friendship, evangelism and structured opportunities can complement each other beautifully.



### 5 Help people to find their words

One of the biggest reasons Christians don't share faith is simple: they don't feel confident putting it into words. But testimony doesn't need to be dramatic. Everyday stories matter.

A farmer who prays for help in a tricky season. A neighbour who finds strength in faith during loss. A parent who notices God's presence in ordinary family life. These are authentic, relatable and powerful.

**Church leaders can play a huge role here. You can:**

- Use short video testimonies in services.
- Invite members to share a two-minute story as part of worship.
- Run courses or small groups that help people reflect on their faith journey.
- Model honesty by weaving personal snippets into sermons.

Over time, this builds a culture where stories are shared naturally, and people grow in confidence to speak about the difference Jesus makes in their own lives.

Jesus didn't give his disciples a strategy; he modelled a way of life, sharing about the kingdom over meals, in ordinary conversations and as he went for walks. I also love the fact that Jesus saw everyday interruptions as opportunities, like when the leper fell at his feet and the man was lowered through the roof. How often do we miss interruptions as opportunities?

The culture Jesus created shaped the disciples and carried the Early Church forward. We can cultivate the same today: through habits like praying for five, encouraging everyday stories, asking 'what's next' and learning to hold our tensions with grace.

Faith sharing doesn't need to feel forced. It can become part of the culture, woven into everyday conversations, relationships and practices. And, as that culture takes root, perhaps we'll discover that the 'quiet revival' isn't just happening somewhere else. It's happening here, among us, in the communities we love.

- Share Jesus resources that may be helpful can be found at [www.sharejesusinternational.com](http://www.sharejesusinternational.com)
- Listen to Andy talk with Melanie about sharing faith on the Roots podcast: [www.rootsforchurches.podbean.com](http://www.rootsforchurches.podbean.com)