

LifeGroup Study
GOING VIRAL: Good News?
2022-02-06
Leader Notes

OVERVIEW:

Welcome to our LifeGroup study – “GOING VIRAL: Good News?” When Jesus was here on earth, He commanded us to share the Good News with our world. This task of sharing the Good News is called evangelism. For today’s study, we’ll explore why evangelism is important and how it is something we are commanded to do. We’ll look at Creeksides’s evangelism strategy – Involve and Invite. We’ll pray for people in our lives who do not yet know Jesus, asking God to show us opportunities to share our faith. As followers of Jesus, we have been sent by Him to share the best news ever. Let’s dive in to the adventure!

ICEBREAKER: How I Heard About Jesus

When I was 9 years old I was struggling with fear. My mom listened as I shared, then she told me how I could give my fears to Jesus by putting my faith and trust in Him. In that moment, my mom helped me understand and know the Good News of Jesus. How about you? How did you hear about Jesus? Who is a key person (or people) who led you to become a follower of Jesus? **Share your story with the group.**

STUDY:

1. On Sunday, Pete talked about why we should evangelize. **What was a highlight for you from what Pete said?**
2. When you hear the word, “*evangelism*”, how do you feel? Motivated? Fearful? Cautious? Inspired? Share your feelings about evangelism with the group. **What has shaped the way you feel about evangelism?**

LEADER NOTE: Your group members likely have a variety of feelings about evangelism. Some may feel fear or hesitancy. Encourage your group members to share their stories about why they may feel hesitant to share their faith. Others may feel motivated and inspired to share their faith. Encourage those members to share how they have gotten there. Regardless of what each of your members feels about their role in evangelism, God can grow each of us to have a vital part in bringing the Good News to our world.

WHY EVANGELISM IS IMPORTANT

Sharing the Good News of Jesus is of paramount importance to us as His followers. Through our love, our words and our actions, God can use us to invite people in our lives to a real and life-changing encounter with Jesus.

3. READ Matthew 28:18-20 The Great Commission

“Jesus came and told his disciples; ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” NLT

- Evangelism is important because Jesus commanded it when He said – “ ... go and make disciples ...” **What does this look like for us in Canada today?**

LEADER NOTE: The way we do evangelism, the methods we use, changes over time. As followers of Jesus, we should be students of our culture so we can choose methods that are effective in our context. Ask your group members to brainstorm some creative ways we can share our faith today. Examples might include – taking the time to listen to someone’s story, caring for someone who is hurting, offering to pray for/with someone.

- **What does Jesus say in these verses that encourages you when you think about evangelism?**

LEADER NOTE: Jesus encourages us with His *authority* – “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.” When we go into this world to share our faith, we go in the authority and power of Jesus. Jesus encourages us with His *presence* – “And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” When you share your faith, you’re not alone. Jesus is right there with you.

4. READ: Matthew 5:14

“You are the light of the world – like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house.” NLT

- These words of Jesus remind us He has created us to be a light in our world, a light for Him. **How does seeing yourself as a light impact your view of evangelism?**

LEADER NOTE: The attractive quality of our lives can be a light God uses to draw other people to Him. As people see our love for God and for them, God can use our example to show them Jesus. Seeing ourselves as a light can inspire us in the area of evangelism. The fact that we are a light can motivate us to look for opportunities to shine for Him.

INVOLVE AND INVITE

At Creekside our key action for evangelism is Involve and Invite. We encourage followers of Jesus at Creekside to be involved in the lives of people who are not yet Christians, and, as God opens doors, to invite them to check out the claims of Jesus for themselves.

5. READ: 1 Peter 3:15-16

¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.” NIV

- “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks ...” If someone is giving an answer, someone must have asked a question. **How can you live your life in such a way that it motivates others to ask questions?** Have you ever known anyone with this quality? If so, talk about that person—**what made their life provocative?**

LEADER NOTE: A key to evangelism is to live our lives in such a way that others are motivated to ask us questions. Questions like – “How do you have such peace when you’re going through hard times?” “You seem happy and joyful. Why is that?” “There’s something about you that’s different. What is it?” We motivate others to ask these questions in the way we live, the way we respond to life’s difficulties, the priorities we have and the way we love people.

- **How might you “give an answer” in a way that is compelling?**

LEADER NOTE: Peter tells us our answer should be given with “gentleness and respect.” Part of the way we express our love for others is in how we share our faith. Gentleness is about sharing our faith in a spirit of humility, with thankfulness to God. We are not smarter or better than others, rather, we are “one beggar showing another beggar where to find bread.” Respect is about honouring the other person. We do this through taking time to hear their story, to understand their perspective and to love them for who they are.

- **What opportunities do you have to be involved in the lives of others?**

6. READ: John 1:38-39 Come and See

³⁸ Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, “What do you want?”

They said, “Rabbi” (which means “Teacher”), “where are you staying?”

³⁹ “Come,” he replied, “and you will see.”

So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him.

- This conversation between Jesus and two of John’s disciples culminates with Jesus’ invitation, “Come, and you will see.” **How might we invite people to “come and see” Jesus today?**

LEADER NOTE: A key part of evangelism is for us to invite people to “come and see”. Ask your group members to brainstorm ways this happens today. Encourage them to share any stories they have of how someone invited them. Creekside provides programs and opportunities for us to invite people to check out the claims of Jesus. Alpha, for example, is a wonderful ministry we can invite people to. <https://www.creeksidechurch.ca/alpha/>

THE PEOPLE IN MY LIFE

Think about the relationship circles you have in your family, workplace, school and hobbies. **Who has God put in your life who are not yet followers of Jesus?**

- Share two or three names with your LifeGroup. **How might God use you to have an influence for Jesus in their lives?**
- As a group, take some time now to pray for the people you have shared. **Ask God to work in their hearts and draw them to Him.**

MOVING FORWARD

Many of us feel nervous about the idea of engaging in conversations about faith with someone who is not a Christian. Someone took that uncomfortable risk with you and became someone that God used in your faith story. Consider writing a note, sending an email, or making a phone call to say thank you to the person or people who God used to lead you in a relationship with Jesus.

PRAYER

Please pray for Creekside Missionaries the Niemeijer Family in Southeast Asia:

- the OneStory project (aural Bible translation project) has just started its second 3 week long workshop. All 36 participants made it safely from their villages with Yajasi, the aviation partner

organization Jason works with. All 10 facilitators are present, with 4 on zoom. Yesterday we started translating our first story, Luke 8:22-25. Pray for perseverance and good health.

- Erin's involvement in the workshop is a huge commitment on top of her other responsibilities. It's a struggle.

- Huge praise. A new to us plane took its first flight last week after more than a year of paperwork and government negotiations. We were encouraged that as the aircraft arrived at the different interior villages, the people spontaneously organized prayer times dedicating the aircraft and its future ministry to God.

- There are some wonky weather systems around us. While we did not see flooding and landslides, cities on another part of the mountain did, not as severe as a few years ago, but this kind of thing does steal our peace of mind.