

cell outlines
JUNE 2019

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UNPACKING THE STORY OF PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN

Acts 8:26-40

WELCOME

- * Welcome the group into the session. Encourage discussion among the group, maybe with some prepared questions for them to ask one another, so everyone gets comfortable talking.
- * **Discussion** – ask the group to share the one thing/subject which they would feel most confident explaining about to someone else, and why.
- * **Game** – have something suitable to blindfold half of the group. Have the other half of the group act as their guides. Assign each group a starting point and an end point where they need to reach. The guides must explain to their blindfolded partners the steps needed to be taken to reach the end, but they cannot help them in any other way than using words, such as holding their hands.

WORD

1. Read Acts 8:26-40 (NIV)

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, ‘Go south to the road – the desert road – that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.’ ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means ‘queen of the Ethiopians’). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, ‘Go to that chariot and stay near it.’

³⁰ Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ Philip asked.

³¹ ‘How can I,’ he said, ‘unless someone explains it to me?’ So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³² This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

‘He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.
Who can speak of his descendants?
For his life was taken from the earth.’

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, ‘Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?’ ³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

³⁶ As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?’ ³⁷ ³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and travelled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

- 🗣️ Encourage the group to turn into pairs with the person next to them, and talk to them about what they think they did and didn't understand, and if anything particularly stood out to them.

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Afterwards, ask for a volunteer to briefly summarise what happened in the passage, see if people agree, and then encourage feedback on the discussions that were had in pairs.

Say *'An angel of the Lord appears to Philip [which is already pretty exciting] and asks him to go south to the desert road running from Jerusalem to Gaza.'*

Ask the group what they think of this request by the angel, and also what they think about Philip's response.

[It would be particularly great if the group were able to pick up on two main things. The first is that the angel gave very few details to Philip. These were only partial instructions, with a road but no ultimate destination or objective. The second is that Philip, at the start of verse 27, instantly gets up and goes where he's instructed. It would be worth encouraging the group to get these things.]

Ask the group whether they would follow someone's directions somewhere, even if they didn't know where they were going, and why they would or would not.

'On this road, Philip met an Ethiopian eunuch, which means he was from the region of Cush, which was a foreign land to the Jews. This man could have been a literal eunuch [a man who had been castrated], but it is more likely from this passage that the word simply explains his position as an important official for the Queen of the Ethiopians. [Potiphar, who was Joseph's boss when he got sold into slavery from Genesis 37:36 onwards, was also described as a eunuch, and yet had a wife who tried to seduce Joseph.] We're told that the eunuch was on his way home after going to Jerusalem to worship. He was probably a Gentile [meaning non-Jewish] adherent to Judaism, and had been attending Jerusalem for a festival that people were encouraged to attend there. This demonstrates what we've looked at in previous series, that the apostles and other early Christians were scattered and preached far and wide wherever they'd gone, fulfilling Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations [Matthew 28:19].'

*'Once again Philip instantly obeys the Spirit's instruction, this time to go to the Ethiopian. He was so keen, he ran over to him! When asked to explain the passage the Ethiopian was reading from Isaiah, which we'll look at later, Philip **told him the good news about Jesus**' [v35].*

Ask the group to talk about what they would say if someone asked them to explain the good news about Jesus to them.

2. Read Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12, on the suffering and glory of the Servant [NIV]

¹³ See, my servant will act wisely;
he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.

¹⁴ Just as there were many who were appalled at him –
his appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any human being
and his form marred beyond human likeness –

¹⁵ so he will sprinkle many nations,
and kings will shut their mouths because of him.

For what they were not told, they will see,
and what they have not heard, they will understand.

53 Who has believed our message
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

² He grew up before him like a tender shoot,
and like a root out of dry ground.
He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.
Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

⁴ Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,

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stricken by him, and afflicted.
⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions,
 he was crushed for our iniquities;
 the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
 and by his wounds we are healed.
⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
 each of us has turned to our own way;
 and the Lord has laid on him
 the iniquity of us all.
⁷ He was oppressed and afflicted,
 yet he did not open his mouth;
 he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
 and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
 so he did not open his mouth.
⁸ By oppression and judgment he was taken away.
 Yet who of his generation protested?
 For he was cut off from the land of the living;
 for the transgression of my people he was punished.
⁹ He was assigned a grave with the wicked,
 and with the rich in his death,
 though he had done no violence,
 nor was any deceit in his mouth.
¹⁰ Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer,
 and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin,
 he will see his offspring and prolong his days,
 and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.
¹¹ After he has suffered,
 he will see the light of life and be satisfied;
 by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many,
 and he will bear their iniquities.
¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,
 and he will divide the spoils with the strong,
 because he poured out his life unto death,
 and was numbered with the transgressors.
 For he bore the sin of many,
 and made intercession for the transgressors.

Say *'The passage which the eunuch was reading from Isaiah is probably part of a larger section we just read, sometimes referred to as The Suffering and Glory of the Servant, or simply The Suffering Servant.'*

- ❓ Ask the group to answer the question which the Ethiopian asked Philip, whether the prophet [Isaiah] was writing about himself, or someone else [spoiler for the group leaders – it's about Jesus!].
- ❓ Knowing this is about Jesus, ask the group to pick specific verses or phrases in this passage, and ask them to share how these are talking about Jesus.

[If the groups are struggling, some examples are:

1. 'he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted' demonstrates how Jesus would be lifted up on the cross, but would then rise again and be exalted at the side of his Father and as Lord of all;
2. 'he was despised and rejected by mankind' etc... shows how he was cast out and put up on the cross by us;
3. 'Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering... he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.' reflects that Jesus came to die and suffer, because of us and for us – in our place. Because we were sinful, and

had therefore alienated ourselves from God, Jesus died, taking the punishment for our sin against God upon himself, so that we wouldn't have to. By his sacrifice, we were reconciled to God once more, so that we could be in relationship with him, as we were always intended to be.;

4. 'he will sprinkle many nations' can indicate that he would bring 'many nations' into his holy city, and alludes to sprinkling clean water on the leper to cleanse them, by the one who was 'smitten by God' (it'd be good for the group to get this one to inform the next section)

WORSHIP

Say 'Imagine that Ethiopian man. Imagine him there with his Old Testament, probably in some scrolls, reading from Isaiah 52 and 53. Now imagine him turning over just a couple of pages to chapter 56, and finding this:

Let no foreigner who is bound to the Lord say,
'The Lord will surely exclude me from his people.'

And let no eunuch complain,
'I am only a dry tree.'

⁴ For this is what the Lord says:

'To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths,
who choose what pleases me
and hold fast to my covenant –

⁵ to them I will give within my temple and its walls
a memorial and a name
better than sons and daughters;
I will give them an everlasting name
that will endure for ever...

these I will bring to my holy mountain
and give them joy in my house of prayer.

- ▶ *So any foreigner, like himself, who is bound to the Lord will not be excluded, and no eunuch, like himself, need feel rejected. Instead, he would, with the other exiles, be gathered by the Lord, giving him a name even better than a son or daughter. Imagine how this man, who had just been explained the good news about Jesus, now reads this and understands that the good news of Jesus, who gathered the exiles, is also available to him. And it's available to you and me too.'*

Prayer Activity

Put on a song in the background, such as 'Living Hope' [Phil Wickham], 'How Deep the Father's Love' [Stuart Townend] or 'The Power of the Cross' [Keith Getty]. Ask the group to look back to Isaiah 52-53, and, looking at what Jesus has done **for them**, to write down a prayer of thanks to Jesus for that. Pray all together afterwards, encouraging some to pray out loud.

ACTION

Encourage the group to spend time every day this week looking back over the passage from Isaiah. Encourage them each day to focus on one of the things Jesus has done for them, and write these prayers down. Encourage them to be ready to share how they've found doing this next week.

WHAT DOES THE STORY OF PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN MEAN FOR US TODAY?

Acts 8:26-40

WELCOME

- * Welcome the group into the session. Encourage discussion among the group, maybe with some prepared questions for them to ask one another, so everyone gets comfortable talking.
- 💬 Ask the group if any of them have spent time during the week reflecting on the passage from Isaiah, and what Jesus has done for them. Encourage those that have to share with the group their experience of doing so.

WORD

- * Encourage those in the group who were there last week to recall anything they can remember about the story that was studied. If the group members are struggling to remember, then the following is a brief overview of events which are worth reminding them of: [1] An angel of the Lord told Philip to go to a road; [2] On the road, he met an Ethiopian official on his way back from worshipping in Jerusalem; [3] The Spirit instructs Philip to go to the official, and he explains to him the passage of Isaiah he was reading, and the central message of the Bible; [4] The Ethiopian is baptised by Philip; [5] When the Spirit took away Philip, the Eunuch carried on his way rejoicing.

- ❓ Ask the group which things Philip did they would find the most difficult.

Say *'As we've discovered, one thing which Philip did was to be completely obedient.'*

- ❓ Ask the group in which ways Philip was obedient [ie, following the instruction of the angel of the Lord to go to the road and obeying the Spirit to go near to the Ethiopian man]
- ❓ Ask what the group think about when someone uses the word 'obedience', whether we like it or not, and why it is sometimes such a hard thing to be obedient.
- ❓ Ask who we're meant to be obedient to, and what kind of things they ask us to do.

Say *'Well, whether we always like it or not, the Bible has lots to say about obedience. God has throughout time given commandments. So we're going to look at a few different passages to see why obedience to God is important to us, and what obedience looks like.'*

1. Read Genesis 22:16-18

16 'I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, 18 and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.'

Say *'This was just after God had asked Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac. Abraham had obediently gone to sacrifice his son, but at the last minute an angel of the Lord told him to stop, and God provided a ram to sacrifice instead.'*

- ❓ Ask the group whether they think they could have done what God had asked Abraham to do.
- ❓ Ask the group to look in the passage to find the positive result for Abraham – and all of us – as a result of Abraham's obedience to God.

[If the group are struggling, then point them to vv17-18. Explain that because of Abraham's obedience, God promised to build a nation from his descendants, with so many people that they would be impossible for

humans to count. He would also protect this nation against its enemies, and God would use this nation to bless the rest of the world. Eventually it was from this nation that Jesus was born.]

2. Read Mark 10:17-22

¹⁷ As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. ‘Good teacher,’ he asked, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’

¹⁸ ‘Why do you call me good?’ Jesus answered. ‘No one is good – except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: “You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honour your father and mother.”’

²⁰ ‘Teacher,’ he declared, ‘all these I have kept since I was a boy.’

²¹ Jesus looked at him and loved him. ‘One thing you lack,’ he said. ‘Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.’

²² At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

- 🔗 Ask the group if they can explain how this man Jesus spoke to was disobedient, even though he claims to have followed God’s commands.

[The man walked away from Jesus, because he clearly loved his money more than he loved Jesus.]

3. Read John 14:15

¹⁵ [Jesus said] ‘If you love me, keep my commands.’

- 🔗 Ask the group how easy they usually find it to follow God’s commands.
- 🔗 Ask the group how loving someone can make it easier to do what they ask of us.

4. Read John 15:5-8

⁵ [Jesus said] ‘If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.’

- 🔗 Ask the group again if they find it easy to follow God’s commands.
- 🔗 Ask the group what Jesus meant by ‘If you remain in me and my words remain in you’, and what is the benefit of ‘his words’ remaining in us.

[If people remain in Jesus, remain firmly obedient to his commands, then people will see God’s glory through people, and be drawn to God.]

WORSHIP

Prayer Activity

Put on a song in the background, such as ‘Christ is Enough’ [Jonas Myrin, Reuben Morgan, Hillsong] or ‘Lead me to the Cross’ [Brooke Ligertwood, Hillsong]. Ask the group to think about the parts of their life in which they are not currently obedient to God. Ask them to write down those things on a piece of paper which they won’t show to anyone else. Ask them to pray during the music, that the Holy Spirit would help them to love God more, and therefore love his commands, even if their human nature means they’d rather disobey them. Ask them to pray that, by their obedience to God, other people will be drawn to God, and will come to know Him. Close in prayer at the end.

ACTION

Challenge the group to look at the piece of paper during the week, and to pray each day that God would help them to obey him in those parts of their life, and that they would love him more.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE: BIBLE READING

WELCOME

- * Welcome the group into the session. Encourage discussion between the group, maybe with some prepared questions for them to ask one another, so everyone gets comfortable talking.
- * Play 'Signs'. Start by sitting everyone in a circle facing inwards. Each person should choose their own unique 'sign' – is a movement or motion such as touching their nose, brushing their hair, giving a 'thumbs up' etc. Go around the circle and give people the chance to demonstrate their sign to the rest of the group. The idea is to secretly 'pass' the sign to another player without being caught by the 'guesser'. To pass, you must make your sign followed by the sign of the player you are passing to. Choose someone to be the 'guesser'. Get them to close their eyes or leave the room while you choose someone in the circle to start the game. The guesser can then return or open their eyes. The game continues until someone is caught, and then they become the guesser. For younger groups, you can make the 'pass' simpler by making people just do their sign and look at the person they are passing to.
- 💬 Ask the group to talk about whether they like reading, and why. Ask them to share what their favourite books are, and why those books are so good.

WORD

- 💬 Ask the group – if someone was to ask them what the Bible was about, and to sum up its message in just a few words, what would they say?
- 📺 'The Story of the Bible' by The Bible Project [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_CGP-12AE0&list=PLH0Szn1yNedn4FbBMMtOIGN-BPLQ54IH&index=2]
- 💬 Ask the group if they found anything particularly interesting about the content of the video, or if they were surprised by or learnt anything new.

Say 'While it's great that we get to read the Bible together, it's also really important that we find time to read the Bible when we're on our own, and not just at church.'

- ❓ Ask the group why they think it is important to read the Bible.

Say (hopefully with the quote displayed) *'Tim Chester is a doctor of theology, a professor and teacher, an author and a church minister. He said –*

“ ‘I don't mean we need to read our Bibles because there's some law that says good Christians read a chapter every day. Reading the Bible doesn't make us more or less a Christian. We have God's approval because of the righteousness of Jesus. So why is reading the Bible important? One picture I use is eating. I don't eat because there's some law that says I must consume three meals I day. I eat because I get hungry – I need to eat food to live and I love food in all its many different tastes. The same is true of the Bible. I read it each day because I need God's word to live and because I love it (or rather because I love him).’

Say *'So we're not forced to read the Bible by God, but it almost sounds like we need it to fill us up, to give us what we need. And we should want to read it because we will love it and love God. We're going to look at some passages from the Bible together now to help us look at the question why it is useful, or why we need, to read the Bible.'*

1. Read Psalm 1:1-3

- ¹ Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
- ² but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,

and who meditates on his law day and night.
³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
 which yields its fruit in season
 and whose leaf does not wither –
 whatever they do prospers.

- 🔍 Ask the group what this Psalm says about reading the Bible.

[his law = the part of the Bible which existed at that time. The psalmist said that someone is blessed when they delight in what the Bible says, and when they are always thinking of it.]

- 🗣️ Ask the group how you can meditate on God's word every day, and every night, when you can't just spend your whole day reading the Bible.

[One idea might be to memorise parts of the Bible to remind yourself of them throughout the day]

- 🔍 Ask the group what they think it means for someone to be 'blessed' by God.

2. Read 2 Timothy 3:16

¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

- 🔍 Ask the group what they think it means for the Bible [Scripture] to be 'God-breathed'.

[Scripture is the inspired word of God, so all of it, even though written down and compiled by human hands, is directed by God]

- 🔍 How do you think the Bible could be useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness?

3. Read this quote from Tim Chester:

“ There are so many ways I could answer that question [of why I love the Bible]. But the main one is this: it leads me to my Saviour. In the pages of Scripture I encounter the Lord Jesus. I see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

- 🔍 Ask the group to discuss what they think about what Tim Chester said.

4. Read Acts 8:30-35

³⁰ Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. 'Do you understand what you are reading?' Philip asked. ³¹ 'How can I,' he said, 'unless someone explains it to me?' So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³² This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

'He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
 and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
 so he did not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.
 Who can speak of his descendants?
 For his life was taken from the earth.'

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, 'Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?' ³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

Say 'Now remember, we read this a couple of weeks ago. Philip saw the Ethiopian man and explained the good news of Jesus to him.'

- 🔍 Ask the group how reading the Bible regularly would be useful for explaining about Jesus to other people.

WORSHIP

Prayer Activity

Put on a song in the background, such as 'Build my Life [Pat Barrett], 'People Need the Lord' [Nelson/McHugh] or 'History Maker' [Delirious]. Ask the group to write down the names of people that they would love to tell about Jesus, so that they too could come to know him as Lord. Ask them to pray that God would send his Spirit to them, that they could read and understand the Bible, and then share the amazing truth about Jesus with others.

Alternatively, say that if anyone doesn't already know if they believe what Jesus says about himself is true, or whether the Bible message is true, then they are invited, if they want, to pray by themselves, or with someone else, asking that as they try reading the Bible God would reveal himself to them, just as Tim Chester said he does.

ACTION

Say 'So some of you might want to start reading the Bible, whether that's to receive blessing from understanding and loving God more, or so you can meet Jesus, or share the story of Jesus with other people. But you might not also really know how to read it, or where to start. Well, there's no better place to start than actually looking at Jesus' life and words. So our challenge this week is to read a chapter a day of the shortest account of Jesus' life, the Gospel according to Mark. And each day, ask these three questions [have these printed out, along with this link www.youtube.com/watch?v=HGHqu9-DtXk, which is a video by the Bible Project to help people understand the Book of Mark]:

1. What does what I've just read tell me about God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; about their characteristics, power and plans?
2. What does what I've just read tell me about our world, including the good and bad?
3. What does what I've just read tell me about myself, and in what ways is it a guide to my life and others today?

Say 'Come back next week ready to share a bit about what you have learnt from reading it. Don't feel guilty if you don't manage it, but give it a go.'

Invite someone from the group to close the session in prayer before everyone goes home.

ACTS INTO ACTION

WELCOME

- * Welcome the group into the session. Encourage discussion among the group, maybe with some prepared questions for them to ask one another, so everyone gets comfortable talking. Ask the group to share if anyone had been reading from the Gospel of Mark during the week, and how they had found it.
- * Game [if desired by the leader and group]
- 🗣️ Ask the group what they think are the greatest needs of the world. Spend a good 10-15 minutes writing them down, and discussing ideas as a whole group for how those issues could be solved on a big scale, and how individually we could make a difference.

WORD

- 📺 Watch the video on tips for sharing your faith for beginners – www.youtube.com/watch?v=94Emmdlckl and discuss anything that stood out to you.

Maybe you're afraid to share your faith because you don't know what to say. Or maybe you're sharing the gospel but nothing seems to be happening; people aren't committing their lives to Christ. Are you doing something wrong? You shouldn't feel guilty; you can't open someone's heart to the truth of the gospel – it's always the work of God, by his Spirit.

One of the best ways to share your faith is to live a godly life. Non-Christians often see Christians as hypocritical because we say one thing but do another. We can counter this by showing those close to us that we care – spend time with them, help meet their needs and offer to listen when they have problems. You might not be able to answer all of their questions, but they can't deny the reality of what Christ has done in your life.

Another important part of sharing your faith is to pray for those you interact with. If you can't think of anyone who isn't a Christian, pray for God to place someone in your life who needs him.

Also make a habit of reading the Bible, praying and going to church, to help you grow in your own faith. Being passionate about Christ will help others see that there's something different about you, and they will want to know what it is. You can also reflect Christ through kind words, patience, a gentle temperament, choosing to love even difficult people, carefully monitoring what you watch or listen to, and treating others with respect.

At the same time, we must do more than live godly lives. People need to hear the gospel – to hear that God loves them, Christ died for them and that they can have eternal life.

ACTION






1. Spend some time planning what you would say to someone who doesn't know Jesus. Then split into pairs and practise having that conversation. Discuss how it felt and how you can make the conversation more natural. Who is in your life that you could talk to about Jesus this week?

Tip: **be authentic.** Most people will relate to the real-life experiences you've had, so don't be afraid to let people know how God is working in those ordinary, everyday experiences! Remember... people aren't looking for perfection. They're looking for someone who's real.

- ✓ **Practise focused listening.** This takes some concentration, but it shows care for the other person. Keep your mind focused on what they are saying. Don't try to think of the next question to ask, or the next comment to make. Trust God to give you the right words to say and the timing.
- ✓ **Keep it simple.** Don't go into theological debates on the nature of good and evil, or which denomination is the best! The gospel is already simple. Because of love, Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again. We

SESSION
FOUR

need to turn away from the things that are wrong in our lives, and accept what Jesus did on the cross for us and receive him as Lord. Don't complicate it. Explain the gospel in a way that people can understand. Don't be afraid to say you don't have all the answers.

2. Look for the needs around you. Think about the people you know who have particular needs, and see how you could practically serve them and their needs well.
 -  Think about the people in your classes at school, or college. Is there anyone who you see is in desperate need of friendship, who you could spend time with, or invite to do something with you and your other friends? Are there any other young people at church like this too whom you could befriend? Challenge yourself to do that this coming week.
 -  Think about any friends you have who often have nothing to do or are bored. Consider inviting one of them to an activity you take part in regularly, such as clubs or going to church.
 -  Think about the people who live around you. Talk to your parent/guardian and see if there any older people, or those caring full-time for small children, who could do with some assistance at home, whether that is with mowing the lawn, putting out the bins, washing up or other household chores.
 -  Think about how you at home, or your school, disposes of rubbish. Look at ways to see how you could be better at recycling and, in a small but important way, protect the planet. Ask teachers at school if you could do anything to help improve recycling there.
 -  Think about the activities your church puts on during the week. Are there any of these, such as the youth/ children's club or teaching people to play instruments, that you could offer to help with, to make things easier for the leaders, and to also make a difference to those other young people who attend?
3. Think about the people around you who don't know Jesus personally. Pray that you might have opportunities to share about Jesus with them. Actively seek out opportunities to speak to friends openly about Jesus. If you're not sure how you might do this, or what you might say to their questions, continue to spend time reading the Bible, and also check out the 'bethinking' online resource [find a way of sharing this link with them - www.bethinking.org/youth], which is designed to help you talk to your friends about Christianity, and to answer your questions and their big questions.

WORSHIP

Prayer Activity

Put some music on in the background, maybe 'This I believe [the Creed]' [Hillsong], 'Amazing Grace' [Chris Tomlin] or 'Who You Say I Am' [Hillsong]. Invite the group to spend time reflecting on and thanking Jesus for all he has done for meeting our greatest need. Also encourage them to pray for those friends and family whose names they wrote down last week and who they wanted God's help to speak to about Jesus.

¹¹ Kathy Howard. *Lavish Grace*

