

God's Word in evangelism

“The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, “We have found the Messiah” (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.”

John 1:41-42 (NIV)

Outline of talk by Ray Brown

Download the video: apassionforlife.org.uk/ibd7-vid-download

Below is an outline of what the talk covers. Please see the corresponding session guide for more guidance on structuring the rest of the training session.

Making disciples is about bringing people to Jesus

- John the Baptist pointed people to Jesus, calling him the Lamb of God.
- When Andrew and Philip encounter Jesus they bring others to meet him (John 1:35-51).
- This is one of the main reasons Jesus left you here - to introduce people to him.
- Making disciples of Jesus Christ is first and foremost about bringing people to Jesus.

We can come to know Jesus through the Scriptures

- Although we cannot physically take people to meet Jesus like Andrew and Philip did.
- People can encounter Jesus through the Scriptures since they are all about him.
- To believe what the Scripture says is to believe what Jesus is saying (John 5:39-47).
- So if we want to bring people to Jesus or want Jesus to be made known to them we have to either bring the Scriptures to them or bring them to the Scriptures. Either way, that is how they will encounter Jesus.

As people engage with Scripture, they hear the Jesus' voice

- Jesus is the Shepherd or leader we all need to follow if we are to find our chief purpose in life.
- As we engage with the Scriptures, we hear the voice of Jesus our good Shepherd (John 10:3-4, 16).
- This same Jesus who speaks to you and me as his followers in the Scriptures, can also speak into the lives of our friends, work colleagues, neighbours, family members and others.
- As we bring the Scriptures to them or them to the Scriptures, they will hear Jesus the good Shepherd speaking to them.
- Will you prayerfully and actively commit to bringing people to Jesus?

God's Word in evangelism

Transcript of talk by Ray Brown

You are free to use and adapt the content of this talk to suit your context.

As a teenager, I remember walking my dog on Hackney Marshes one evening. It was a clear night and as I looked up at the moon, I wondered to myself, why was I here and what was my purpose in life? For most of my teenage years, I didn't feel as if I had a compelling answer to either of these questions. I remember being able to point to any object in the room and knowing it was created for a purpose. It had a reason for being there. And yet I didn't know what my reason or purpose for being here was. Then I became a follower of Jesus Christ after encountering Christians, my own age at university in London while doing a science degree.

I soon discovered that my chief reason for existing was to glorify God and to enjoy him in his forever kingdom. But I became a follower of Jesus Christ over 30 years ago now. What has been my purpose in the meantime? What has been my purpose in my everyday life? In Matthew 28 and before returning to his father, Jesus told his followers to go and make disciples of people everywhere, to baptise them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and to teach them to obey all that he commanded while he lived here on earth.

This is the mission the Lord Jesus has given us and we each have a part to play in making more disciples who will glorify God and enjoy him forever. And according to Matthew 9:38, there is a harvest to be reaped in this respect and Jesus has authority over it, but remarkably, he both wants and asks for your help. The first thing we're going to look at is how making disciples is about bringing people to Jesus. John chapter one is all about how a prophet named John the Baptist helped the people of his day to see that Jesus is God's long promised king, the Christ. The one who alone can open up the way to a relationship with God. A man named Andrew heard John describe Jesus as the Lamb of God, the one who was sacrificed in our place so we could be forgiven and accepted into a relationship with God. This is how John's gospel describes what happened next.

The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him we have found the Messiah, that is, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus, isn't that wonderful? A bit later when Phillip encounters Jesus, he goes and finds a friend named Nathaniel. He tells him we have found the one we have been waiting for, for so long, Jesus of Nazareth. Phillip then says to Nathaniel in verse 46, "Come and see." Again, isn't that wonderful? After discovering who Jesus is, both Andrew and Philip bring people to Jesus.

This is one of the main reasons Jesus has left you here and not taken you to his forever kingdom. He has work for you to do. He wants you to bring your friends, work colleagues, neighbors, family members, and others to meet him. The ultimate relationship we were made for is to know God and it is he who makes this possible through the Lord Jesus Christ. Making truly Christian disciples is first and foremost about bringing people to Jesus. Now, I know what you're thinking. If only I'd been born a little over 2000 years ago, like Andrew and Phillip, like them, I could have literally done exactly that. But God in his wisdom has left us a record of all Jesus said and did in the Scriptures.

The second thing we need to grasp is that Jesus is made known in the scriptures. In John chapter five, some of the Jewish leaders were giving Jesus a hard time. Despite being experts in the scriptures, they refused to accept that Jesus is God the King come in the flesh. Listen to what Jesus

God's Word in evangelism

says to them in John five and verse 39. "You study the scriptures diligently because you think that in them, you have eternal life. These are the very scriptures that testify about me." John 5:39. Towards the end of a chapter, Jesus says that to believe in the scripture is to believe in what he says. So if we want to bring people to Jesus, if we want them to come to know Jesus for themselves, we have to either bring the scriptures to them or bring them to the scriptures. Either way, that is how they will encounter Jesus.

And then number three, as we engage with scripture, we hear the Shepherd's voice. In John chapter 10, Jesus famously describes himself as the good shepherd. Unlike the leaders we encounter in John's gospel, Jesus was a leader who willingly laid down his life in sacrificial service. Jesus is the leader we all need to follow if we are to find our chief purpose in life and if we are to enjoy God in his forever kingdom in the life to come. Jesus said this about himself, "The sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out and his sheep follow him because they know his voice." John 10:3-4.

As we engage with the scriptures, we hear the voice of Jesus, our good shepherd. Having been a Christian for over three decades now, I can testify to the nourishing effect of hearing Jesus' voice as I've read and studied the scriptures, the same Jesus who speaks to you and me as his followers in the scriptures can also speak into the lives of those who do not yet know him. Our friends, work, colleagues, neighbours, family members, and others, as we bring the scriptures to them or them to the scriptures and help them to engage with what is written. They too will hear Jesus, the good shepherd speaking to them. You and I need to actively trust that this will be so. Every Christian encounters Jesus through the scriptures, through God's word. If that is you, then you should also want others to encounter Jesus like you have. This is one of the main reasons Jesus has not yet taken you to his forever kingdom. Your friends, work colleagues, neighbours, family members and others also encounter Jesus in the scriptures.

God's word is all about Jesus. So we hear Jesus speaking to us as we engage with the scriptures. And as we listen carefully to what is written in them. Will you commit to helping those around you engage with God's word so that they too can hear our Shepherd's voice?

The training video is available for anyone to watch at apassionforlife.org.uk/ibd7-view