

### QUIET TIME

#### Theme: Evangelism

- Try to make a specific time every day to meet Jesus Christ through reading and meditating his Word.
- Pray, talk with Jesus Christ and make a few short notes about this Bible passage in your notebook.
- Record what you discover, what speaks to your mind and heart, what you find difficult or what you understood.

- Day 1 Isaiah 43:1-13  
God's intention during the Old Testament period was that Israel should make him known to the world
- Day 2 Matthew 4:17-25  
Jesus involves his disciples in the proclamation of the gospel and the fishing of men
- Day 3 Luke 10:1-24  
Jesus sends his disciples out with a message, authority and blessing
- Day 4 Acts 13:38-52  
People come to faith, but there is also opposition and persecution
- Day 5 1 Corinthians 9:19-23  
Go and stand next to people in order to save them
- Day 6<sup>BS</sup> Matthew 9:1-38  
Jesus heals, preaches and teaches people
- Day 7 Jeremiah 18:1-12  
God saves whoever repents of his evil
- Day 8 Ezekiel 33:1-20  
God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked
- Day 9 Daniel 4:25-38  
Everyone must acknowledge that God is sovereign over the kingdoms of people
- Day 10 Hosea 4:1-9  
God's people are destroyed from lack of knowledge
- Think about Ephesians 6:18-20. Pray that God gives you boldness to share the good news with people.
  - Pray every day for someone or something specific and wait in expectation for what God is going to do (Psalm 5:3).

### STUDY

#### Theme: Evangelism and the discovery group

Read study 44 carefully before the next meeting. If you have questions, write them down and mail them to one of your group leaders. We will seek an answer together.

### BIBLE STUDY

#### Theme: Who are you, Lord?

If you like, you may already prepare the Bible Study for the coming meeting by reading through the Bible passage. Make use of the discovery group method of Bible study. The Bible passage is: **Matthew 9:1-38**

### MEMORISATION

#### 1. Motivation

Jesus memorised Bible verses (Luke 4:4-13). Are you doing that?

#### 2. Memorisation

Memorise this verse in the Bible version of your choice.

#### EVANGELISM

##### Acts 17:2b-3a

On three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead.

**Acts 17:2b-3a(NIV)**

#### 3. Review and back-review

*Review* the last 5 memorised verses once every day and back-review all other memorised verses once every three weeks.

## 44. Evangelism and the discovery group

There are many ways to proclaim the gospel message. For example: through personal evangelisation, evangelisation in a small group, or evangelisation through mass meetings; evangelisation through music, song and drama or evangelisation through books, posters, radio, television and the internet.

An example of evangelisation in a small group is called 'the discovery group'. In a discovery group a small group of people discuss the Bible in such a way that they discover the truth concerning the good news themselves. *The purpose of the discovery group is to discover and discuss together truths about God, man and life from the Bible.*

What are biblical principles of evangelism and how can one start a discovery group?

### A. BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF EVANGELISM

#### 1. Pray for non-Christians

Pray regularly and with perseverance for family, friends, classmates, colleagues and neighbours. Note what God is doing in their lives (Colossians 4:2-4)! Pray that God may open their eyes and heart and touch their lives (Acts 16:14). By praying you show that you are completely dependent on God. Only he can work in the mind, heart and lives of these people.

#### 2. Get involved in the lives of non-Christians

Jesus went to places where people gathered (feasts, meals, synagogues and streets) (John 2:1,12). Jesus got involved in the lives of other people and in what was happening where he lived. In this way he had a positive influence on his environment (Acts 10:38). The prophets, Jesus Christ and the apostles lived an exemplary life among people. They got involved in the lives of people, sympathised with their troubles and showed interest in their lives.

Likewise, get involved in the lives of non-Christians. Share your life with them. The quality of your life, your faithfulness, sincerity, generosity, personal interest, helpfulness and love can remove their suspicion of Christians and dislike of Jesus Christ and open the way to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

#### 3. Involve non-Christians into your life

Jesus invited people to get involved into his life (John 1:38-39a). Arouse the interest of non-Christians by inviting them into the world in which you live. Live an exemplary life in your home. Open your home for others. Invite non-Christians in order to let them discover who Christians are and how they live. Involve them in your activities and relationships with other Christians. Allow non-Christians to discover from nearby and for a period of time that a life with Jesus Christ and Christians has a very

positive influence on one's life. Your message becomes believable only by the way you live it out (Matthew 6:16; 23:3).

#### 4. Use the Bible in evangelism

Only by hearing the words of the Bible, that is, the words spoken by Jesus to them, can non-Christians come to faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 10:14-17). Let a non-Christian read the Bible himself and discover the truth himself (Acts 8:30-31,35). The goal of the discovery group is: "To let people read and discover the truth themselves as the truth of the Bible is discussed in a small group." Use the principles of Acts 17:2-4 in the discovery group: discuss (Greek: dialogue) the truths in the Bible (verse 2); explain (Greek: open up) the difficult parts in the Bible (verse 3a) and show (Greek: demonstrate, point out) the facts concerning Jesus Christ, his death and resurrection (verse 3b).

The goal of the discovery group is to discover and discuss together with others the truth about God and man in the Bible.

Help the non-Christian to discover what the Bible says about the following questions:

- Who is God (the God who reveals himself in the Bible) and how does he want to relate to us?
- Who is Jesus Christ (as he is revealed in the Bible), what did he do on earth and what is he doing now?
- What does a life without Jesus Christ look like and where does it lead to?
- What does a life with Jesus Christ look like and where does that lead to?
- How can anyone begin a personal confidential relationship with Jesus Christ and really experience this relationship?

#### 5. Let the non-Christian discover the answers himself

Instead of preaching and teaching, it is better that the non-Christian learns to think for himself, discovers the truths in the Bible himself and so develop his own personal convictions (Luke 10:25-28; Acts 17:11). Do this by asking good questions and helping him to think about the meaning and consequences of what he is reading in the Bible. It certainly makes a much deeper impression on a person when he discovers the truth himself. He will also remember the truth much longer.

#### 6. Let the non-Christian understand the truth in the framework of his personal need

Keep both the good and evil aspects of his culture in mind (1 Corinthians 9:19-23, cf. lesson 20). Let the non-Christian discover that the biblical truths are important for what he needs in his personal life (Luke 4:18-19) and that the God of the Bible is able to meet his needs! Remember that people have very different needs (Matthew 9:36):

*Physical needs:* sickness, tiredness, exhaustion, hunger, poverty.

*Emotional needs:* feelings of helplessness, not knowing who they really are, dislike of themselves, living in stress, suffering deep hurts.

*Spiritual needs:* people who have no shepherd, people suffering from guilt and shame about what they did or what they suffered, people who are bitter (unforgiving) and harbouring hatred and revenge, people who rebel against God, people who have morally and spiritually lost the way.

*Needs in behaviour:* people who have become slaves of evil practices (lies, sex, drugs, gambling, etc.), people caught in a bad relationship, people seeking to fill the emptiness in their lives. Other people have become passive, make no new relationships or do nothing at all. They have given up on life.

### 7. Help the non-Christian to relate the truth of the Bible to his own life

Stimulate him and give him an opportunity to accept the truth and to receive Jesus Christ into his life (Mark 1:15; Acts 3:19; 2 Corinthians 5:20; 6:1-2).

God gave us the Bible not only to answer our questions, but to transform our lives! This works the best when you discuss this aspect of evangelism in a personal talk with the non-Christian after the small group meeting.

## B. THE DISCOVERY GROUP

The discovery group consists of a small group of Christians who each take one non-Christian along to discover and discuss the truths in the Bible with them. The discovery group is characterised by reading, discovering, discussing, explaining, proving and summarising the truths from the Bible just as in Acts 17:2-4,11. There is no preaching, teaching or challenge to accept the truths! The distinguishing characteristic of the discovery group is that everyone participates in reading, discovering and discussing the truths in the Bible without any pressure to conform!

### 1. The place, the sphere and activities

Choose a quiet place. Keep the group small, unofficial and informal. Use only the Bible. Take no more than 60 or 90 minutes. It is better not to include typical Christian activities as singing, praying and preaching. You do not want to scare the non-Christian away with activities that they are not accustomed to. The only activities in the discovery group are: relating to one another in a pleasant atmosphere and reading, discovering, discussing and summarising the discussion about the Bible. You may like to put on some secular background music before and after the group discussion. You could also decide to eat together before the meeting and drink together after the meeting.

### 2. The participants

Every Christian invites one non-Christian to the discovery group meeting. The Christian can say that *the purpose of the meeting is to discover and discuss together truths about God, man and life from the Bible*. Every Christian arrives

and leaves together with his non-Christian friend. Also during the meeting the two form a couple, sit together and discuss the questions together.

### 3. The introduction and the programme

After the meal or coffee/tea, the group leader welcomes everyone to sit in a circle. Everyone introduces himself and says something about who he is or what he is doing. The group leader explains the purpose of the discovery group and the procedure of the discussion: they will read a particular Bible passage twice and then discuss about three questions. Each question is first discussed by the couples and then in the group. The group leader will summarise the discussion of each question and at the end draw a summary illustration.

### 4. Reading the Bible

All participants use the same Bible translation! See to it that everyone has a Bible and some paper and a pen to write with. First everyone participates in reading the Bible passage by taking turns to read one verse each. Then everyone reads quietly through the Bible passage again.

### 5. The questions

The group leader uses questions that will help the participants to discover and discuss the truths concerning 'the gospel' from that specific Bible passage. He limits the number of questions to three.

The 1<sup>st</sup> question should be about 'who Jesus Christ is'. The 2<sup>nd</sup> question should be about 'what Jesus Christ did'. The 3<sup>rd</sup> question should be about 'how people related to Jesus Christ'.

#### 1. "Who is Jesus Christ?" type of questions:

- Which unique aspect of his personality is revealed through this event?
- What does Jesus say here about himself?
- What does Jesus mean when he for example says: 'I am the light of the world'?
- Who do the people think that Jesus is?
- What did the prophet say about Jesus many years ago?

#### 2. "What does Jesus do?" type of questions:

- How does Jesus show his interest in people as individuals?
- How does Jesus show that he understands people and their real needs?
- How does Jesus' attitude differ from that of his contemporaries?
- How does Jesus approach a specific problem in life? (e.g. ignorance, sickness, prejudice, hardness of heart, selfishness, opposition death)
- How does Jesus show that he is able to help people?
- How does Jesus prove that he has authority over a particular area of life?
- What is the importance of what Jesus does here? What impact does it have on people?
- What is the meaning of what Jesus says here? Why does he say it?
- Why does Jesus do this? e.g. Why did he come to earth?
- What do we learn from Jesus' human nature, words and deeds?

### 3. “How do people relate personally to Jesus?” type of questions:

- How do different people respond to the words or deeds of Jesus?
- How would Jesus like to relate to us?
- What does Jesus expect from us?
- What should someone according to Jesus do in order to have a personal relationship with him?
- What changes were effected in the person who began to believe?
- What can a believer expect to receive in a personal relationship with Jesus?
- What are the consequences when you begin a personal relationship with Jesus?
- What are the consequences for people who reject a personal relationship with Jesus?
- Which arguments do people use not to believe in Jesus Christ?
- What is the meaning of for example the word ‘faith’ or the expression ‘receiving Jesus into your heart and life’?
- How can a person practically receive Jesus Christ into his heart and life?

## 6. Discover and discuss

### a. Communication to and fro.

The discovery group is characterised by reading the Bible, making discoveries, discussing them, explaining difficult issues and referring to other Bible passages (Acts 17:1-4). There is no preaching and teaching or challenging to make a decision in the discovery group! The discovery group is a small group in which participants communicate to and fro.

### b. The couples.

The Christian helps his non-Christian friend to discover from the Bible passage an initial answer to the question and discusses this with him. The Christian must not answer the question for the non-Christian, but encourage him to make his own discovery and to draw his own conclusions.

Accompanying questions that encourage the non-Christian may be:

- “Which facts in the Bible passage are related to the question?”
- “What do you think it means?”
- “How do we relate this to life today?”

### c. The group leader.

The group leader is not the Bible teacher! He is rather the chairman or co-ordinator of the discussion in the group. He initiates the reading of the Bible passage, asks the questions, guides the discussion in the whole group, summarises the answer to each question, draws a summary illustration at the end on a white board or large piece of paper and invites everyone to the next meeting.

## Overview of a discovery group meeting

Introduction and explanation of the programme (± 5 min).

- Reading the Bible passage twice (± 10 min).
- Each couple discuss each question together (± 5 min) before continuing the discussion in the whole group (± 8 min).
- The group leader summarises the answer to each question by making use of what the participants said (± 1 min). Then he asks the second question. Etc.
- At the end he draws a summary illustration (± 3 min). The illustration should contain the truths as discovered by the participants. He ends by inviting everyone to come to the next meeting.

## 7. After the discovery group

### a. Fellowship.

Offer more drinks and play soft background music. The Christian should leave together with his non-Christian friend.

### b. Contact.

The Christian maintains contact with the non-Christian.

### c. The decision.

When the non-Christian shows more interest in the gospel message, the Christian should explain the gospel message to him by means of the 12 Bible verse method. It is important that the non-Christian understands the gospel. If appropriate, the Christian could ask the non-Christian whether he would like to begin a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. If yes, he could pray with him or ask him to pray a prayer receiving Christ. If not, continue to participate in the discovery group.

### d. Frequency.

Some non-Christian only come once to a discovery group meeting, others come irregularly or often. This is OK. The purpose is to relate in a relaxing way with each other and discuss the truths of the Bible in a way that helps the other to understand the gospel.

### e. Follow-up.

When a couple of non-Christians have received Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, you could start ‘a growth group’ on the same evening in another room in the same house. In this way the people still meet one another during the meal or the coffee-time.

### f. Concentrate on the gospel.

The discovery group is an evangelistic Bible study. Every meeting contains a complete programme. Although some people only come once, they still hear the whole gospel message.

That is why the purpose of the discovery group is to discover the three truths of the gospel every time:  
 “Who is Jesus Christ?”  
 “What did Jesus Christ do for you?”  
 “How can you begin a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?”

### 8. Suitable Bible passages for the discovery group

1 <i>Luke 2:1-52</i> The birth and youth of Jesus.	12 <i>John 10:1-39</i> The Good Shepherd and his sheep – Was Jesus a demon or God?
2 <i>Luke 4:1-30</i> The temptations and rejection of Jesus.	13 <i>John 14:1-27</i> The claim of Jesus to be the only Way to God – His teaching about the Holy Spirit.
3 <i>Mark 1:1-45</i> Jesus is powerful and spiritual, God and yet tempted, Preacher, Teacher, Healer, dependent and merciful.	14 <i>Mark 15:1-47</i> The trial, rejection, crucifixion and burial of Jesus Christ.
4 <i>Mark 2:1-27</i> The spiritual and physical authority of Jesus, the sick and the healthy, the old and the new.	15 <i>Isaiah 52:13–53:12</i> . A prophecy about the suffering and victory of the Messiah (Jesus Christ).
5 <i>Mark 3:1-35</i> Religious rules and human needs, evil spirits and the Holy Spirit, earthly and heavenly family.	16 <i>John 20:1-31</i> The resurrection and appearances of Jesus.
6 <i>Mark 4:35–5:43</i> Jesus' authority over nature, demons, the sick and the dead.	17 <i>Acts 1:1-11; 2:1-17</i> . Ascension and Pentecost
7 <i>Mark 10:1-52</i> Divorce, children, the rich, leaders and the crucifixion.	18 <i>1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11</i> . The second coming of Jesus.
8 <i>John 2:23–3:21</i> Regeneration, salvation and judgment.	19 <i>Revelation 20:11-15</i> . Final judgement.
9 <i>John 4:1-42</i> The Holy Spirit and true worship.	20 <i>Revelation 21:1–22:6</i> The new heaven and new earth.
10 <i>John 5:1-47</i> The claims of Jesus in relationship to God the Father and his witnesses.	21 <i>John 1:1-18</i> The eternal existence of Jesus.
11 <i>John 6:24-72</i> Food that spoils and food that remains unto eternity.	22 <i>John 1:19-51</i> The calling of Jesus' disciples.
	23 <i>Colossians 1:15-23; 2:9-15</i> The supremacy of Jesus.
	24 <i>Romans 3</i> The gospel.
	25 <i>Ephesians 2</i> The gospel.

This cycle of 25 meetings can be repeated every half year!