

6 week sermon series

Based on 'Sharing faith the Jesus way'

Each chapter in 'Sharing faith the Jesus way' is based on a very well know passage from the Gospels. These readings form the basis for a 6 week sermon series. The sermon for each week can be followed up group discussion (notes for group discussion are at www.jesus360.org.uk).

These sermon notes are based on the pilot scheme in 2010 lead by Jim Currin and Robin Trew with the people of All Saints, Allesley, in Coventry, (reproduced with permission). These are the rough notes as they developed, and not the full preacher's script. They are here for you to adapt and use in your situation.

Note: because the sermon series / group discussions took place before 'Sharing faith the Jesus way' was produced, we do not have experience of individuals reading the book alongside the sermon series and group discussion notes. Let us know via www.jesus360.org.uk if you have experience to share.

Week	Title	Reading	Passage
1	What do you mean you're not perfect? Jesus accepts you as you are and works with your own individual personality	Woman at the well	Jn 4: 4-26
2	Who do you think you're talking to? Jesus meets need and it doesn't matter where he starts on the work of salvation	Man through roof	Lk 5: 17-26
3	God loves me so? Jesus call on people is a response to God's love and is chiefly the work of the Holy Spirit	Prodigal son	Lk 15: 11-32
4	Prayer, Care, Share, Dare? Our task is to find the Good News for the people we know – so it is good news to them	Good Samaritan	Lk 10: 25-37
5	The accompanied journey As in the Bible and our own experience, every response to Jesus is different	Call of fishermen	Mt 4:18-5:16
6	Onwards, upwards and outwards The problems we face are part of the journey of faith, so keep our eyes fixed on Jesus	BBQ on the beach	Jn 21: 15- 19

AIM

To help Christians share their faith, and make new disciples – with key lessons from the way in which Jesus did it.

Week 1

What do you mean you're not perfect?

Woman at the Well: John 4:4-26

Jesus accepts you as you are and works with your own individual personality

Key message: everyone can share their faith

Starting where we are: 'me' in the triangle of relationships diagram

Sermon notes

Background and Introduction to the series

Call and commission of every Christian to share their faith

What have we done to evangelism? Stereotypes!

Back to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith: how did he do it?

Miracles, healings, deliverance, parables, stories and teaching: in this series emphasis 'words' and J 'model'

First principle is that he accepts individuals as they are before calling for a response.

We don't have to care like Mother Teresa or preach like Billy Graham - we can be ourselves.

Jesus works with personality type: look at disciples eg Peter. We all have some part to play.

Jesus calls us to follow: OK to be one step behind as he will show the way.

Our role: trust, have faith and be ready for the adventure of following Jesus. Don't worry where he leads.

Follow his example of sharing faith in word and action: consider all the people he encountered.

John's Gospel: Andrew and Peter 'come and see', while message to Nicodemus was 'be born again'.

Now add 'acceptance' and 'restoration' for the woman at the well, followed by 'worship' and her 'testimony'.

We are not perfect and the people we seek to reach are not perfect: all accepted by God's love in Christ.

How does this work out in practice? Look at the two way conversation between Jesus and the Woman.

- Jesus is friend to the outcast and puts aside custom / law expectation
- Jesus reveals his own need and enters into a respectful discussion
- Jesus knowledge and insight handled with gentleness and grace
- The woman is challenged but feels on a par with Jesus
- The woman is ready to respond to God's love in Christ
- The woman is compelled to tell others in a natural, life changing way

We are not perfect but we can all follow this example.

The following weeks build on these principles, explore practical aspects, and keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.

Week 2

Who do you think you're talking to?

Man through the roof: Luke 5:17-26

Jesus meets need and it doesn't matter where he starts on the work of salvation

Key message: Meeting the need of the other person

Focus on the 'other person' in the triangle of relationships diagram

Sermon notes

Last week in the reading of the woman at the well we saw Jesus respect for the other person eg woman and Samaritan. He treated them 'on a par' as he asked for water, even revealing his own need. We don't have to be perfect to share our faith, but we are all called to do it. This week begin to look at 'how' and begin by looking at the other person and their needs.

Jesus meets individuals on the road, in the home, at the synagogue, in boat, up the mountain, at a meal etc

Jesus love is the driver for various encounters (individual, crowd, sick or city of Jerusalem for which he wept)

Here with one of first people he met, watched by scribes and Pharisees, comes man in obvious need

The friends put the man's needs above their own and make an effort to present him to Jesus. Do we?

Man's obvious need = healing, but deeper = forgiveness. Jesus priority = deeper need but meets both

Some people suggest illness is result of sin. Can be, but not suggested here. Be careful with the link.

We have different needs / levels: Maslow's triangle? Basic / high needs (bread important but insufficient)

When we think of who we are talking to, see human being made and loved by God for whom Christ died

Some evangelists see 'scalps' ready for conversion or 'target groups'. Jesus sees individuals all different.

Note: good salesman sells what people really need not what 'want' or product promotion.

Jesus / evangelists offer good news. Marketing, promotion and sales need to be consistent with message.

Coerce, manipulate, and pressurise? No! Provide opportunity, make a presentation and encourage. Prayer.

There is a proper place for 'invite, welcome, host' the stranger if approach evangelism Jesus way.

Also 'Jesus way' to accept hospitality of others – we don't have to invite people to us all the time – 'go'!

See how Jesus deals with the man lowered through the roof:

- Accepts the interruption
- Appreciates the efforts of the friends
- Discerns real need, despite anticipated reaction of man, friends, crowd, scribes and Pharisees
- Speaks to individual, crowd, early church and wider world through this account in the Bible
- Offers forgiveness of sin as only God can do
- Enters in to a conversation: engages with those looking on
- Invites us to be forgiven (for all) and healed (for some)

When we meet the 'other person' remember principles even if circumstances and conversation different. Jesus words different to each of the people he met: starts on work of salvation as deep need discerned.

Week 3

God loves me, so?

Prodigal son: Luke 15: 11-32

Jesus call on people is a response to God's love and is chiefly the work of the Holy Spirit

Key message: Gospel begins and is shaped by God's love

Emphasis on God / Jesus / Holy Spirit as source: top of the triangle

Sermon notes

So far considered the woman at the well and the man through the roof and how Jesus accepted both

Acceptance comes from the Father's love: Love is the first part of the Gospel message and the 'driver'

All Church Army mission caravans had text 'God is Love' over cab at front so first message anyone saw

Title 'God loves me, so?' begs two Q's: accepting the love ourselves and passing it on because loved

'So what?' What doing about it? Accept, stop trying to be perfect and be open to what God doing next.

Sharing faith the Jesus way: look at Jesus model and teaching.

Here parables in Luke 15 .. Lost Sheep, Lost Coin and Lost Son: common theme here?!

Parable of the Prodigal Son .. or the Loving Father? Both.

Here note some headlines:

- Unthinkable to ask for inheritance while Father still alive. Foolish or illustration of trust?
- Younger son's unacceptable behaviour escaped to anonymity and free lifestyle
- The Father's longing and wait for the son to return. Running was unbecoming of an older man
- Expected public rebuke of the son, not even criticism or 'told you' but embrace says it all
- Unexpected feast a big event, hundred people for a fatted calf, no half measures
- Older son comes in after all started and angry about everything: opposite to Father's reaction
- We are often like the older son; steady, faithful and put out by others generosity 'at our expense'
- Further surprise from the Fr: no rebuke for older son but pleads (also unbecoming)
- Older son's ugly behaviour, truth spoken out of place: self righteous and wrong in some aspects
- Father's love still strong for older son and no angry return or rebuke: welcomes despite all.

God's love is modelled in Jesus who told the story: waiting for the lost and celebrating return (99 / 1 sheep)

Forgiven both sons + welcomed home: how do we welcome the hungry, destitute and repentant 'prodigal'?

Jesus humbled himself for our sake: how do we put that in to practice with the people we seek to reach?

Which of the main characters in this story are we most like? Try to imagine the others!

What does this famous parable say about the kingdom of God, church worship, and our model of mission?

Week 4

Prayer, Care, Share, Dare?

Good Samaritan Luke 10: 25-37

Our task is to find the Good News for the people we know – so it is good news to them

Key message: relationships communicate

Looking at the relationship between me and the other person (bottom arrows in the triangle)

Half way review

This week start the second part of 6 week series.

Last three weeks establishing the three points of triangle: Me, you and Jesus – now going to look at the sides as we consider the 3 pairs of relationships.

Main lessons of the Jesus way considered so far have been:

1. Me: Jesus accepts you as you are
2. You: Jesus sees the need that gets in the way of responding to God
3. Jesus: God's love is the key and 'driver' for us to share faith

Now going to consider:

4. The relationships we have and can develop
5. The 'accompany' role we can have when people respond to God's love
6. The ongoing journey and continuing adventure with Jesus.

Sermon notes

Second set of 3 weeks looking at relationships = triangle sides, starting with 'Me' and 'You' at triangle bottom.

Expert in law asked Jesus 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' Remember this is point of the parable.

Parable of the Good Samaritan, probably most famous, quoted and re-enacted.

Eternal life gained by receiving God's love, in Christ by Holy Spirit, passing it on 'God's love in action'

Priest and Levite walk by but despised Samaritan cared .. God's love in unexpected ways, places and people

We gain eternal life by receiving and giving 'mercy'

All possible now by the Holy Spirit who came at Pentecost so we can reach out with the:

Mind of Christ as we offer PRAYER for people: with discernment. Pray for people like robber in the road

Heart of Christ as we CARE for people, and go out of our way. Good Samaritan interrupted his journey

Body of Christ as we SHARE good news with people, all have part to play 'inheritors together of KgdM (Bapt)

Aim: building a relationship, two way, listening and responding to need > our need to do and speak

Model of communication = dialogue > monologue

Interview / story

Jesus way, getting to know + meeting need, DARE to stay? Good Samaritan prepared for cost of commitment.

Week 5

Being accompanied on the journey with Jesus

Call of Fishermen: Matthew 4: 18- 5: 1-16

As in the Bible and our own experience, every response to Jesus is different

Key message: assist people on their journey with Jesus

Helping people make a response to God's love for them (arrow up on the right = response to God's love)

Sermon notes

Jesus accompanied his disciples from when they were first called to after the resurrection. One person in particular is worth looking at closely: Peter. Jesus first and last words to Peter were 'follow me'. Mk 1:17 and Jn 21:22.

We read more about Peter than the other disciples and we see him at various points, illustrating the highs and lows of discipleship. From first leaving his fishing nets to being empowered to preach after the resurrection appearances, we might ask the question, 'when did Peter become a Christian?' This raises lots of questions for evangelism today and is deeply revealing about how Jesus shares good news.

- Jesus accepted Peter as he was: warts and all (fisherman, brash, impulsive and failure in courtyard)
- Jesus gave Peter great encouragement: he was part of the inner circle (Peter, James and John)
- Jesus had high expectation (Rock on which build my church: Mt 16:18)
- Peter was with Jesus for three years and followed him to most places, probably day and night
- Peter was apprenticed by Jesus and empowered by Holy Spirit for preaching at Pentecost
- Peter was often the spokesman for the other disciples and took a lead in response to Jesus

The Life Application Bible says: it is better to be a follower who fails than one who fails to follow (Discuss)

The point of this reading and Peters story in particular is that Jesus was a 'mentor' 'coach' and 'mission accompanier' to the disciples and Peter in particular. Peter was a new Christian, the question is how can we help new Christians grow too. Phone, text, email, lunch, cell, church but chiefly prayer

So how do we encourage / empower people to learn and grow: Christian > disciple > minister > apostle

Faith Development theory (Fowler and Westerhoff) and the Engel scale both suggest that there are stages of faith. There are also people leaving the church. What are the stepping stones of faith and how can we help each other on the journey? Develop prayer partners.

Mentor new Christians. Seek spiritual direction. Discuss daily Bible reading in cell groups. Cursillo questions and Ignation 'Examen' helpful tools in helping each other go on in faith / grow in faith and / go out in faith to share with other people.

Interview / stories from discussion groups / readers of the book

Begin to recap on whole series

William Carey quote: 'Expect great things from God and attempt great things for God'.

Week 6

Upwards, Onwards & Outwards

Barbeque on the beach and repeat call 'Follow me': John 21: 15 - 19

The problems we face are part of the journey of faith, so keep our eyes fixed on Jesus

Key message: continue growing the Jesus way

Our relationship with Jesus (arrows left side of triangle) affects others (C/D and E)

Sermon notes

We discover Jesus alongside in our difficulties and when we thought it was all over.

Peter had denied Jesus and experienced the crucifixion at first hand. They thought it was all over.

Disciples returning to original trade and previous life: fishing.

The resurrection changed everything though, and here have appearance while fishing. Repeat experience.

Repeat experience lead to repeat call: 'Follow me'.

Look upwards to Jesus, Onwards to where he leads and Outwards as reach the world and continue his work.

HOW?

1. Let Jesus come to you. Hear his call 'feed my lambs'. Who are the 'lambs'?
2. Receive the Holy Spirit? Remember the Great Commission? (Go and Lo) Read Acts 1:8
3. Look to the new call and harvest field. Pray to the Lord of the harvest
4. Have the love of God and the response of the other person as focus as you
5. Share message of God's love, forgiveness and new life in Christ.

Peter's Pentecostal sermon illustrates his 'new life'.

Jesus with Peter in the ups and downs of life, as he is with us: purpose for the coming kingdom.

Interview / story as review the 6 week series.

Pressure is on us from all sides – like the forces on sailing boat. Harness the forces to go anywhere!

Wind of the Spirit, fill these sails!

Key is whether we 'come close to Jesus - and he will come close to us': PRAYER

Note: we may need further feeding to share as the mouth speaks what the heart is full of (Mt 12:34) or we may just need to follow Jesus with the pressures of life, and wind of the Spirit in surprising places.

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For more information about these notes visit: www.jesus360.org.uk