

Read this page first:

Welcome to the group material linked to *Sharing Faith the Jesus Way* by Jim Currin

We hope that leaders and group members will all gain confidence in sharing their faith as they study this material together.

Ideally each person in the group will have a copy of each week's material, a copy of Jim Currin's book *Sharing Faith the Jesus Way* and access to a computer. But none of these is essential to taking part. You can buy the book from [BRF](#) or at your local bookshop. The weekly material is free to download, print or photocopy for the group. Although it's nice in colour you could choose to print it using greyscale.

The original material was used by groups in Jim Currin's church in Allesley in Coventry. It has been adapted to incorporate ideas and resources from Foundations21. At [www.Foundations21.net](http://wwwFOUNDATIONS21.net), this is a free online discipleship course designed to help and encourage Christians to think and learn about their faith on their own, at their own pace, as well as within church groups.

This course is designed to be easy to prepare and lead. As we all know, the more prayer and effort the leaders put into preparation the better it is for everyone. So it needs some thought before each meeting to decide what to emphasise, what to use and what to change. Different people could lead different sections but the overall leader should, give the person who is leading each section a target time.

The information in the boxes is for added interest.

Each week's material is based on 4 Ws. This pattern will be familiar to many from [Cell UK](#).

The 4 Ws are:

Welcome – to encourage every member to start contributing and to learn more about each other

Word – a chance to learn and change through looking at bible passages

Worship – an essential part of any group meeting. Hopefully the ideas will challenge and encourage members

Witness – because our faith is not something to hide but to share – The Jesus Way.

And... If you are going to use this material as a whole church you can also download sermon outlines from the Jesus 360 website. www.jesus360.org.uk.

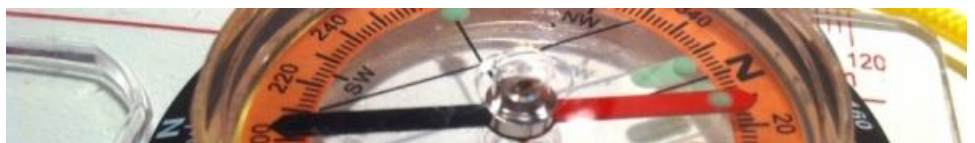
Jim Currin writes

Like many Christians I find the use of BRF Bible notes really helpful as a start to the day, perhaps you do too. BRF also produce the online resource Foundations 21, which is a remarkable website. I was delighted BRF published 'Sharing faith the Jesus way' and feel privileged that this links up with Foundations 21 in the five week course here.

'Sharing faith the Jesus way' and Foundations 21 both have a lot of exercises. This five week mini-series picks out just a few that could be helpful for a group meeting in Lent or at any other time. We are all commissioned to share our faith, so we trust this resource helps you do just that - naturally.

Perhaps it goes without saying that the more you put in to studying, the more you will receive. 'Homework' is therefore provided in both 'Sharing faith the Jesus way' and Foundations 21. We trust that you will feel free and be led by the Spirit as to how much to do, either as individuals or as a group. The key, of course, is to pray, and then to enjoy the fellowship of others as you explore what the Bible has to say to us today.

These studies by *Jim Currin* and the Foundations21 team from BRF: *Paul Simmonds, Helen Simmonds*



Week 1: Jesus accepts us

Welcome

☞ Try to give quick (one word/one sentence) answers.

Ask each person in turn:

- What is your favourite colour?

Then go round again.

- What is your favourite animal?
- What is your favourite meal?

At the end, recognize that we are all different – and that that's OK. (Well that's the anticipated outcome!!)

If you are a new group, whether you know each other from outside the group or not, it is wise and courteous to allow brief introductions at the start of the course. These early interactions can be important in setting the course of the group.



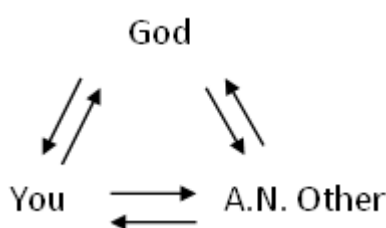
Word

As St Augustine said:

'Without God we cannot; without us God will not.'

Even though we are all different – as we saw in the Welcome - God chooses to act through all of us.

☞ How do we share the good news of Jesus? In his book *Sharing Faith the Jesus way* Jim Currin talks about a triangle of relationships that are relevant to evangelism. There is 'You', 'A.N. Other' and 'God'.



In this session we're looking at 'You'. The importance of 'You' - what you say and what you do.

Watch this [video](#) with Jim Currin talking about the message of his book.

Ordinary conversations are part of evangelism. You don't realise that as you talk to people they pick up your values and ideas and understanding of God.

Jesus used ordinary conversations with people to communicate his values and ideas and understanding of God.

'When Jesus asked people to follow him, he did not go on and check their credentials. While he called them to 'repent and believe', he did not check up to see if they had done it. For the most part he simply said, 'Follow me.' Some people... needed a particular message, but there was no 'gold standard' that everyone had to reach before they could be called a disciple. Being a disciple means being a follower.' Jim Currin page 36

Evangelion (that we call the gospel) is a Greek work and signifieth good, merry, glad and joyful tidings, that maketh a man's heart glad, and maketh him sing, dance and leap for joy.

William Tyndale – 16th century Reformer

If there is a flat screen TV at your meeting place, you can plug in your laptop to make it easier to view the videos. (Make sure your host is happy for you to do this, they may prefer you not to interfere with their TV set up!) You will need a standard monitor cable – most Flat TV's have an input marked 'Monitor' - for Macs use a dongle as well. Or you can use an HDMI cable if you laptop is recent.

For a simple guide watch this [video](#). Or use this fun [video explanation](#).

☞ Now read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

- Encourage one person from the group to describe how they were called by God – see verse 26.
- Ask another person to explain their family background – also from verse 26.

☞ What does Paul mean by verses 27 and 28? Is he saying we're all foolish, weak, lowly and despised?
☞ Look again at verse 29. Why don't we boast to God? Talk about it before rereading verses 30-31.

Worship

Ÿ- Now use this modified version of 1 Corinthians 1:26-30 as a prayer


Use 1 Corinthians 1:26-30 as a prayer.

Dear God, help me to think of what I was when I was called.
I was not wise by human standards,
I was not influential,
I was not of noble birth.

But you chose the foolish things of the world
to shame the wise;
you chose the weak things of the work
to shame the strong.
You chose the lowly things of this world
and the despised things –
and the things that are not –
to nullify the things that are,
so that no-one may boast before you.

It is because of you
that we are in Christ Jesus,
who has become for us wisdom from God –
that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

Amen



Witness

Ÿ- Pray for each other, for your commitment to the course and for everyone's willingness to change.
Ÿ- Pray that everyone will have a conversation when they consciously and deliberately make the effort to listen carefully to the other person.

One (or more) things to do before next time

The numbering system is deliberate. If your time is limited start with number 1 and go as far as you can.

1. Have a conversation when you consciously and deliberately make the effort to listen carefully to the other person.
2. Register for Foundations21 click on START and do the **Quiz**. Bring your scores to the next meeting.
3. Read the Introduction and Chapter 1 of *Sharing Faith the Jesus way*.
4. Go to wwwFOUNDATIONS21.net, log in and go to Room 12 and look through Luke Level 1 Waymarker 1. Once you are logged in [this link](#) will take you straight there.

A few years ago, a shoe salesman for a leading footwear producer was sent to Africa to try to develop a market for his company's products. After a month of hard graft, he sent the following telegram to his sales director, 'Am coming home soonest. No market here because no-one wears shoes.'

The sales director summoned him home immediately and he was sacked. A few weeks later, the company's leading salesman was sent out to Africa to see what he could do. Within two days, he sent the following telegram to the sales director: 'Am staying indefinitely. Market potential for our products fantastic... absolutely no-one wears shoes.'

Week 2: Jesus respects the other person and sees their need.

Welcome

☐ Did you listen carefully during a conversation since you last met? In pairs chat about what happened.

Word

☐ What were your scores in the Foundations21 Quiz? What relevance do you think your Gospel Learning Style had to the way you listened? It should have helped you to discover more about the 'You' part of the triangle.

Jesus didn't sit in the synagogue waiting for people to come in... he got out and about wherever people were... see 'Sharing Faith the Jesus Way' page 51.

If people have looked through the Waymarker and read the chapter they may like to debrief – but you will need to be brief!

An essentially biblical emphasis – all too often ignored by the church – is that Christ is Lord and Saviour of the whole of a person, or he is no saviour at all.

Because Jesus insisted on seeing the person whole, one could never be sure which aspect of a person's need he would tackle first. Here comes the paralysed man, helpless and obviously sick in body. His friends have brought him hoping for a simple cure, and Jesus talks about the forgiveness of sins.

Here on the other hand comes a clear case of spiritual need, an enquirer asking how to gain eternal life, and Jesus gives him an economic answer, telling him how to give away his goods to the poor.

Because ultimately Jesus cannot rest content until all of a person's needs are fully met, it does not matter much to him where he starts on the work of salvation'.
John V Taylor

Word

Jobs were different in the 1st century but look at all the passages below.

☐ Do you think what Jesus said to these people was in any way related to their career path? (You may decide they were in the wrong job!)

- The man on incapacity benefit (Luke 5:17-26)
- Roman centurion with sick servant (Matthew 8:5-13)
- The politically astute man (John 7:50-52)
- The home owner (Luke 22:7-13)

You should be discovering different sorts of 'A.N. Other' from the triangle you looked at last week.

Witness

☐ Did you discover more about how different people are and how differently they react as you looked at the bible accounts of Jesus's conversations and as you reflected on how you listened to people during the week?

☐ Now think about the people you meet regularly. Does the job they do, or the person they are, remind you of anyone from the gospels?

☐ Can you link the way Jesus spoke to these people with the way you could speak to people you know? This is an attempt to answer the question WDJD?

This may be hard so why not work in groups of 3 so you can help each other.



J John has written a great piece about how different kind of people can understand Jesus.

*He's the Bread of Life so that bakers can understand.
He's the Water of life so plumbers can understand.
He's the Light of the World so electricians can understand...
He is Wisdom so philosophers can understand.*

You could ask someone to read the whole of this quotation from page 55 of *Sharing Faith the Jesus Way* or listen to it on You Tube, [here](#).

Worship

ÿ- Say this song or [find out more here](#):

Empty hands

Jesus, oh my closest friend, you know me all too well;
This chequered path of light and shade, the corners where I fail.
You see the things I do or say that hurt the ones who care,
The many blessings I would keep that I should surely share.

*Here I stand with empty hands,
How else can I receive?
Oh Lord, forgive my sorry heart:
Your promise I believe.*

We sometimes wander far from you and spoil the gifts you give,
We please ourselves and close our minds on richer ways to live.
But when we turn you're always there, with open arms you say:
"You're loved and precious, welcome home, the past is washed away".

*Here I stand with empty hands,
How else can I receive?
Oh Lord, forgive my sorry heart:
Your promise I believe.*

Linda Currin © 2003 revised 2010

Songs of mind and spirit

ÿ- Share any news that you want the group to pray about then pray.

End by saying this prayer together.



One (or more) things to do before next time

Again the numbering system is deliberate. Start with number 1 and go as far as you can.

1. Go out of your way to **do** something loving for someone.
2. If you haven't done so already, register for Foundations21 and do the Quiz.
3. Read Chapter 2 of *Sharing Faith the Jesus way*.
4. Go to www.foundations21.net Room 12 and look through Matthew Level 1 Waymarker 1. When you are logged in, [this link](#) will take you straight there. Make sure you start to fill in the table about your 'sphere of influence'. **Useful tip.** To make your screen look like this press F11.



Week 3: The key to the gospel – God’s love

Welcome

☐ Can you remember a time in your life when you specially experienced love – from a friend, a family member or even a complete stranger? What impact did it have on you straight afterwards in terms of how you felt? Did it change something you did or how you behaved?

Worship

Ÿ- If your group sings you could use ‘My Lord, What Love Is This (Amazing love)’ with the backing track from [Graham Kendrick's site](#). Go to songs/songs & lyrics/M to find it and then use the play button.

Ÿ- Or you could bring words and music for Stuart Townsend’s ‘How Deep the Father’s Love’.

Ÿ- Or sing or say together this hymn by Isaac Watts which is in the public domain so can be copied.

1 When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

3 See from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e’er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God!
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

4 Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.



Word

Read Luke 15:11-32 and [watch this video](#).

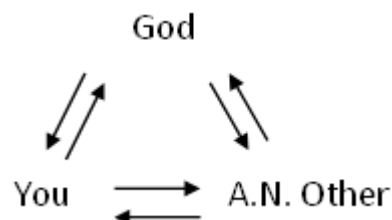
Discuss the various characters, events, and reactions. What strikes you about the Father’s attitude? What’s the key message? Try to agree it in one sentence.

☐ In *Sharing Faith the Jesus Way*, Jim Currin says: ‘God’s love is the first element of the Gospel message and should be the ‘driver’ for all we do.’ Is it?

What happens when we share our faith? This diagram has limitations but can help us picture what we are trying to do in evangelism.

- God’s infinite love is at the top.
- God loves me, and I have responded by being a disciple. (two arrows left)
- God loves the other person. We pray that they may respond in their own way (arrows right).
- Sharing faith the *Jesus Way* is about a two way relationship (arrows bottom)

Notice that the *Jesus Way* is all about building relationships (dialogue not monologue).



☐ Look at the diagram. Discuss how the three relationships relate to each other. Can you share God’s love with someone else if you are not first loved by God?

☐ How do we pray for individuals and encourage them to make a response to God’s love in Jesus? Be very specific.

Witness

Read John 3:16 silently with each person putting in their name.

**For God so loved _____ that he gave his one and only Son,
that _____ believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.**

☐ Now give time for everyone to think of someone who does not yet know God.

You might like to repeat the verse together with each person putting in the name of the person they have thought of.

As you finish say together:

Jesus said I must: 'Love the Lord my God with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my mind;' and I must 'Love my neighbour as myself.'

From Matthew 22:37-39

One (or more) things to do before next time

1. Pray throughout the week for the person who is not yet a Christian whose name you inserted into John 3:16.
2. Read Chapter 3 of *Sharing Faith the Jesus way*.
3. Go to wwwFOUNDATIONS21.net Room 3 and look through Mark Level 2 Waymarker 1. When you are logged in, [this link](#) will take you straight there.

By Christina Rees

I REMEMBER when Robert Runcie, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, prayed publicly in St Paul's Cathedral for the dead and wounded on both sides of the war in the Falklands. Over the next few weeks there was an outcry in the media. How dare the Archbishop show mercy and compassion for the enemy!

Those who have not experienced something of God's overwhelming love and acceptance may find it difficult to hear the message that everyone is invited into the circle of God's love.

Everyone has access to the forgiveness, mercy, salvation and redeeming power of God's love through Jesus Christ.

What person or groups of people would you deem unfit for God's love?

From *Day by day with God*

Week 4: Prayer, Care and Share if you dare!

Welcome

- ☐ What is the funniest question you have heard a child ask – or you asked as a child?
 - ☐ If you could ask God one question, what would it be?
 - ☐ What do you think is the top spiritual question that people ask about?
- See *Sharing Faith the Jesus Way* by Jim Currin page 100.

Word

Prayer + **care** and then **share** are the nub of Jim's challenge regarding the base of the triangle – or relationships with our friends and colleagues.

Prayer

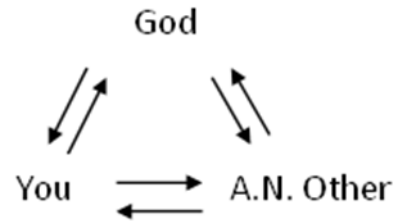
You probably know about prayer but why not stop and pray again for the person you've been praying for since you last met.

Care

Read Luke 10:29-37.

Don't do a long study just discuss these two questions:

- What does it teach you about who you should care for?
- What does it teach you about how you should care?
(‘Teachers of the law’ at other times called ‘scribes’ were learned bureaucrats and experts on Jewish life and law.)



‘I have often been asked the secret of evangelistic crusades, and I say there are three secrets: prayer, prayer, prayer!’

Billy Graham writing in *The Calling of an Evangelist*

When we share faith it should be:

- dialogue and not a monologue
- a two sided, not one sided conversation

Nothing puts people off quicker than being talked at.

On the other hand we can be like Arctic rivers: ‘frozen at the mouth’ as Wilson Carlile, Founder of the Church Army used to put it.



Share

If someone asked you how they could have eternal life what would you say? If you're not sure, you can look at it here www.Christianity.org.uk

☐ The gospels record two occasions when Jesus was asked the direct question, ‘What must I do to inherit eternal life?’
Look at Jesus' replies in Luke 10:25-28 and Luke 18:18-23.

- What surprises you?
- What can you learn?

Worship

Y- **Pray** for opportunities to show you **care** for people and that they will ask you questions and that you will be able to **share** your faith when they do. You may need to talk about this first but don't take up all your prayer time.

Witness

- ☐ Ask everyone to put an object from their pocket or bag onto a table.
- ☐ Each person then picks up one thing and does a ‘mini sermon’ saying something about the Christian faith. It's practise for spotting opportunities to talk about your faith with people who share it as well as with people who don't.

One (or more) things to do before next time

1. Plan an activity to extend your friendship with someone for whom you are praying. Have you learnt more about the part conversation plays in evangelism?
2. Read Chapter 4 of *Sharing Faith the Jesus way*.
3. Go to wwwFOUNDATIONS21.net Room 7 and look through John Level 1 Waymarker 2. When you are logged in, [this link](#) will take you straight there.

Prayer of Service

Teach us, Good Lord,
To serve you as you deserve
To give and not to count the cost
To fight and not to heed the wounds
To toil and not to seek for rest
To labour and not to ask for any reward
Save that of knowing that we do your will
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
Saint Ignatius of Loyola

Week 5: Their journey and your journey

Welcome

This is designed to help you to realize what a disparate (not desperate!) group the original 12 disciples were.

☞ Put the names of the 12 disciples in a hat. Find a stop watch or a watch with second hand. Pass the hat round.

Round 1 – 30 seconds each. Each person picks out a name and *without saying the name* describes them. When someone guesses correctly they get to keep the piece of paper. If nobody can guess put the paper back in the hat. Note your scores.

Round 2 – 30 seconds each. Pass the hat again but this time each person can only give a 1 word description. Again keep as many pieces of paper as you 'earn'.

Round 3 – 30 seconds each. As before but this time everyone must mime.

Worship

Ÿ- Look around the room and think about why you appreciate each other person in it. Give yourselves plenty of time. Then say:

Jesus said: "Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other."

John 13:34-35 from *The Message*.

Ÿ- If you prefer everyone could write a short, positive note about everyone else. Hand them to one person who will accept the job of collating them and typing them up. They must then hand them out to the relevant people either privately or when you meet again. See the Witness section.

Word

Peter's journey was up and down. In the three years he spent with Jesus he oscillated between faith, blindness and at times stupidity.

Most of us are on a more even keel but that's what makes Peter such an exciting person to learn from.

Read John 21:15 -19 looking for the change in mood for them all not just Peter. Has anyone in the group had a similar experience of their mood and attitudes changing as they sensed Jesus?



What parts of this analysis do you all agree with?

- Jesus **accepted** Peter as he was (fisherman, brash, impulsive and failure in courtyard)
- Jesus gave Peter great **encouragement**: he was part of the inner circle (with James + John)
- Jesus had high **expectation** (Rock on which build my church: Matthew 16:18)
- Peter was **with Jesus** for three years and followed him to most places
- Peter was **apprenticed by Jesus** and learned with the 12 then the 70/72 to go out on mission.
- Peter was often the spokesman for the other disciples and **took a lead in responding to Jesus**

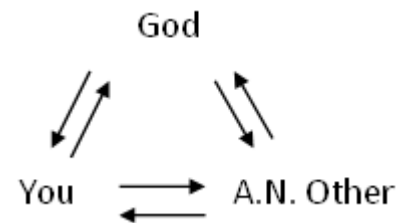
After the resurrection this volatile man needed Jesus' forgiveness for deserting him and denying him.

The disciples were probably very familiar with sheep and lambs but have you ever seen a farmer tussling with a sheep to get it into a sheep dip or to hold it for shearing? Watch this [video](#) about shearing sheep

☐ Reread Jesus' responses to Peter in verses 15, 16 and 17. Can you accept their challenge?
'Feed my lambs.'
'Take care of my sheep.'
'Feed my sheep.'

☐ When people become Christians through your church members what provision do you make for feeding and taking care of them?

☐ Finally can you explain the triangle of relationships considered over the past weeks? If you like, in pairs explain this to each other and discuss how you should be 'feeding' and 'taking care' of lambs and sheep.



Witness

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

Provide paper and pens/pencils so everyone can write it out to put somewhere they'll see it each day. The more artistic may decorate it!

Whilst you do so make arrangements to meet again in perhaps 6 months or a year to review the changes in you as a result of doing this course together. (Make a date for this even if you're a group that is already established and will keep on meeting.) You could agree to bring anyone who is now a Christian thanks to your increased confidence and motivation.

Say this quote together. You'll find it on one of the videos you watch later.

**'God bless you, God bless your friends,
God bless those you love and especially...
God bless every single one of your enemies.'**

Adrian Plass Foundations21

One (or more) things to do before next time – whenever that is

1. Find somewhere to put your William Carey quote.
2. Find your diary and put in the date of your next meeting.
3. Read Chapters 5 and 6 of *Sharing Faith the Jesus way*.
4. Log in to www.foundations21.net and watch the Disciple Master Video and the Introductory Video on Christian Mission. You can find them in the Exploring Foundations21 part of the home page. When you are logged in you can find them [here](#) and [here](#).

