



Stopping for the one. Week 6. (Initiative and invitation)

*PODCAST MAIN THEMES.*

- I suspect you already know this but the western world is secular, not Christian in its methodology, its habits, its aspirations and its stories. That means that our stories, our aspirations, our habits and our methodologies are just that, they are ours. We are not living a shared view of things. And so God plants us, the seed, into their field.
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- Matthew 10 and Luke 10 as a possible way of mission and evangelism.
- From those passages we know to look for people we can have a natural connection with and to make our homes with them, sharing in their life.
- Then we move into actively going, to forgo being passive or neutral and step into ways of being and speaking.
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- In the parable of the sower,
- The seed in the first soil doesn't take because of a lack of understanding.
- The seed in the second soil doesn't take because the heart can't hold it for long enough.
- The seed in the third soil doesn't take because they perceive their loss as not outweighing any gain and they invest themselves in what they already have and want.
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- What makes the good soil good. In the parable it says that it is, 'the one who hears the word and understands it.'
- Luke 8v15 adds to this where it says, 'And as for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart and bring forth fruit with patience.'
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- Regardless of the context, or how far or near someone might identify themselves to be to God, the thing in common is some level of understanding of the mind within them, a level of being able to engage with the heart and ultimately a bearing fruit in how they live.
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- John chapter 1 begun and John records Jesus saying to Andrew come and see. Later in the gospel John shifts from come and see to, come and follow. Further

on he drops the come part and simply says follow me. The follow me becomes abide in me/keep my commandments and it in turn becomes, receive the one I will send to you.

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- Too many times we get into an atmosphere of debate or confrontation or even on the other hand avoiding the part that requires our initiative and invitation.
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- Lawrence Singlehurst has a helpful illustration that frames good evangelism where relationships already exist. He calls it a trust bridge. He says to think about trust as something you put weight on. If you overstrain it, that strain could break the bridge.
- Talking to a person over time taking the weight of the good news over that bridge of trust in stages of 2000kg won't damage the trust.
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- The pool at the top of the triangle is the biggest pool. Really you could pop yourself and all the names you wrote last week into this pool. It's the day in day out pool you and they inhabit.
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- The space you already inhabit is where you get to test the water with your people to see if they are aware of or have any interest in faith or christianity.
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- So you've connected and wondered how you might invite them to the next pool, the 'come and see' pool. This pool of people is smaller as not everyone will want to explore anything more.
- Remember the probability is that they have never inhabited your stories, aspirations, beliefs or religious practices so the 'come and see' might look like answering a load of questions about your faith, suffering, science.
- People need help to build a faith landscape.
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- Let's look now at the 'come and follow' pool. This one isn't about praying a prayer but might well include praying a prayer. It's about ownership. A double ownership. The one in front of you taking ownership for their faith and entering into a relationship with Jesus for themselves and no longer via you.
- As you can see, evangelism isn't just transitioning someone through a set of truths or a power encounter but an exposing of them to sacrificial love.
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- We are asking you to join us during advent in the practice of seeing, hearing and valuing the people we identified as chance, connected and chosen.
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- A tiny challenge for you, as we are merely asking you to connect with people, why not tell them its advent and you'd love to know what or who makes their life light up? Don't just ask one person, ask every person you see until Christmas day, tell them you've decided to do this along with some friends across Europe for every day of advent. I'd love to hear how many conversations become something more than just a fun question.
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- Lastly, bring your plans for advent to your Envoy meet up AND can you bring along 4 or 5 of the names you wrote on your sheet last week as being people you not only want to connect with but you'd love to see know Jesus for themselves. At your meetup records everyone else's worthy people alongside yours and commits to pray either on the day of your meetup or every day simply saying the names one after the other and asking God for a deep connection to form for them with the Envoy person who gave the names. When we resume in the new year we will begin to explore the kinds of conversations we get to build into our connections.