

THE DISCIPLINE OF HOPE
EVANGELISM
MATTERS 2021
AN EPISCOPAL EVANGELISM AUDIOCONFERENCE

Reflection Guide for
Evangelism Matters 2021:
The Discipline of Hope

How to use this guide:

For personal devotion: Listen to the podcast episode you've selected and corresponding Coffee Hour episode. After you've listened and watched the conversations, set aside 20 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the corresponding Scriptures and questions. Consider writing your responses to the prompts in a journal. Close your time in prayer.

For a group: Ask members to listen to the selected episode prior to your meeting. Open your meeting by sharing the Scripture selection for the section. Next, watch the Coffee Hour episode (or portions of it) together as a group. Spend some time on the questions for reflection. Allow group members to discuss their thoughts and answers to the question. Close your time together with prayer.

Evangelism Matters: The Discipline of Hope was an Episcopal evangelism audioconference offered in the spring of 2021. For more information on presenters and all other resources, visit <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/evangelism-matters/>.

All Scripture passages are from the NSRV.

Evangelism & Baptismal Identity: Episode 1

Scripture

Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out at you? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how those words or phrases can speak to your ministry of evangelism.

Matthew 3. In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight.’”

Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

Questions for Reflection/Sharing Good News

What is your baptism or confirmation story? Choose a family member or friend with whom you can share this story at some point during the week.

Which section of the baptism service inspires your practice of evangelism the most right now? Choose a family member or friend to share this insight with this week.

Prayer

O God, you prepared your disciples for the coming of the Spirit through the teaching of your Son Jesus Christ: Make the hearts and minds of your servants ready to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit, that they may be filled with the strength of his presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer, pg. 819

Evangelists for Such a Time as This: Episode 2

Scripture

Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out at you? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how those words or phrases can speak to your ministry of evangelism.

Esther 4:12-16. When they told Mordecai what Esther had said, Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, “Do not think that in the king’s palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. For if you keep silence at such a time as this, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another quarter, but you and your father’s family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this.” Then Esther said in reply to Mordecai, “Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. After that I will go to the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish.”

Questions for Reflection/Sharing Good News

Who told you about Jesus? How did this change your life? Choose a family member or friend with whom you can share this story at some point during the week.

Do you have a favorite Jesus story—either from the Bible or your own life? Choose a family member or friend to share this insight with this week.

Prayer

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. *Amen*

The Book of Common Prayer, pg. 833

Shared Ministry: An Evangelistic Model for Leadership: Episode 3

Scripture:

Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out at you? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how those words or phrases can speak to your ministry of evangelism.

Luke 10: 1-12. After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house!’ And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the laborer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, ‘Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near.’ I tell you, on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town.

Questions for Reflection/Sharing Good News

Think about a time when you joined with others to make a difference in the world or your neighborhood or your family. Choose a family member or friend with whom you can share this story at some point during the week.

Consider the story you have shared this week. How does it correspond with or help you understand your personal call to evangelism? Does making this connection inspire you to an evangelistic adventure of your own? Choose a family member or friend to share this insight with this week.

Prayer

Remember, O Lord, what you have wrought in us and not what we deserve; and, as you have called us to your service, make us worthy of our calling; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Book of Common Prayer, pg. 228

The Importance of Being a Disciple: Episode 4

Scripture

Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out at you? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how those words or phrases can speak to your ministry of evangelism.

John 15:12-17. [Jesus said,] “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

Questions for Reflection/Sharing Good News

At what age did you meet your best friend or best group of friends? Choose a family member or friend with whom you can share this story at some point during the week.

As we move into a post-quarantine life, we will have all sorts of opportunities to meet new people and make new friends. Choose a family member or friend to share this insight with this week, and make a plan to make at least one new friend in the next six months.

Prayer

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours utterly dedicated unto thee; and then use us, we pray you, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

The Book of Common Prayer, pg. 832

Go! Be Evangelists of Hope: Episode 5

Scripture

Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out at you? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how those words or phrases can speak to your ministry of evangelism.

Isaiah 52: 3-7. For thus says the LORD: You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money. For thus says the Lord GOD: Long ago, my people went down into Egypt to reside there as aliens; the Assyrian, too, has oppressed them without cause. Now therefore what am I doing here, says the LORD, seeing that my people are taken away without cause? Their rulers howl, says the LORD, and continually, all day long, my name is despised. Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak; here am I.

How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news,
who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Questions for Reflection/Sharing Good News

What is the best news you have ever received in your own life? Choose a family member or friend with whom you can share this story at some point during the week.

What good news do you want to share in your family or friend group this week? Choose a family member or friend to share this insight with this week --and maybe even plan a party.

Prayer

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you, bring the nations into your fold, pour out your Spirit upon all flesh, and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer, pg. 257

I Love Jesus!: Episode 6

Scripture

Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out at you? Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how those words or phrases can speak to your ministry of evangelism.

John 21:12-19. Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.” Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, “Who are you?” because they knew it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go.” (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, “Follow me.”

Questions for Reflection/Sharing Good News

If you and Jesus were having the kind of conversation that he has with Peter in the above reading, what do you think he would ask you to do for his lambs? Choose a family member or friend with whom you can share this story at some point during the week.

How has participating in Evangelism Matters changed or augmented the way you look at evangelism? How has it changed or challenged you? Choose a family member or friend to share this insight with this week.

Prayer

Almighty and everlasting God, whose will it is to restore all things in your well-beloved Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords: Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin, may be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Book of Common Prayer, pg. 254