



**LUTHERAN  
CHURCH**  
OF AUSTRALIA  
**LOCAL MISSION**  
*going and growing as God's people*



# Gospel Fluency WORKSHOP

## **Open** (20 minutes)

Spend some time doing the **Dwelling in the Word** exercise. A template is provided below. For this workshop, please use 1 Peter 3:13–18 as your text for Dwelling in the Word. Give 15 to 20 minutes to this segment; do not skimp on this.

## **What is 'fluency'?**

Spend a few minutes talking with participants about learning another language. What elements are needed for fluency? Share and briefly discuss the parable of the Hypto Krypto Twin (five minutes).

(For facilitators: Play the YouTube clip at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ItCE0I9MU0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ItCE0I9MU0) or in your PowerPoint. If playing the YouTube clip, skip forward to 1:49 and play through to about 02:30.)

Discuss briefly:

- Do you think this guy knows what he's talking about? How long has he been speaking this language? How much practice does he have? Do you know what he's talking about?
- What might we learn from this as we seek to share the gospel?

Lessons from the parable? Fluency takes practice; don't use jargon.



## Where to start with gospel fluency? Prayer

Ask God for opportunities (five to ten minutes)!

(For facilitators: Play the Ripple Effect YouTube clip at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Ozk3bgYN8o](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Ozk3bgYN8o) or in your PowerPoint. Skip forward to 02:38 and play to around 04:06.)

Together read Colossians 4:2–6:

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Discuss:

- How important are prayer, conversation, and your lifestyle in evangelism?
- What might it mean to be 'devoted to prayer'?
- Getting back to the video clip, do you often ask God for opportunities to share the gospel? What has happened when you've done so?

Stop and pray for opportunities to share the gospel.

## Understand the cultural context

We now live in a post-Christendom, post-Christian world. What does this mean for our gospel fluency?

In the group, read the following context and quote from Australian evangelist Sam Chan.

[In context, Sam Chan speaks of phase one as a world in which people were 'Christian-ish' and knew the basic outline of the gospel. People like Billy Graham were able to speak effectively into this culture at large evangelistic rallies. Phase two was a world in which many people were antagonistic towards Christianity, and evangelists had to deal with defeater beliefs. Phase three is described below; it's a post-Christian world.]

The third phase of evangelism is where we are now. Today, our audience is in a completely different universe. They don't know of the gospel. They don't even know why they should care. It's of no relevance to them. And deep down, they suspect that the gospel is a tool of oppression used by those who used to be in power. They are hermetically shut off from the good news of Jesus. This is why we need to merge our universes. It's one of the most powerful ways our friends can come into contact with the gospel.

Sam Chan, *How to Talk about Jesus (Without Being That Guy)*, Zondervan, Kindle Edition, p19.

Briefly discuss:

- What does this cultural context mean for learning to speak the gospel?

## Get equipped: tools to help us become more gospel fluent (two hours)

This section introduces some useful tools for gospel fluency based on what is known as the '411'.

The 411 is a visual representation and exploration of four key questions for sharing the gospel (on a one-page folded A4 sheet). Find out more at [www.movements.net/411](http://www.movements.net/411).

In the workshop, get participants to make their own copy of the 411 on a single folded A4 sheet of paper. On the first page, write 'Why.' On the second (left-hand inside), get them to write 'Who' and then 'What' on the inside right hand. On the back, write 'When'. Draw the answers out of participants as you engage with the texts; have different participants read the texts aloud.

### 1. WHY?

- a. Command plus promise (Matthew 28:18–20)
- b. Identity (2 Corinthians 5:17–21) – new creation and ambassadors

### 2. WHO?

- a. Oikos Map – your network of significant relationships. Read Luke 10:5 and Acts 10:24–27 (this is Cornelius' *oikos* gathered with Peter). Get participants to draw their own network of significant relationships. Concentrate on those who don't yet know – or aren't committed to faith in – Jesus. Then draw (or begin to outline) these oikos relationships. Spend some time sharing one or more names (first name only) of your oikos relationships. Break into pairs or triplets and spend time in prayer for each other (for opportunities to share the gospel) and for these people by name! The Oikos Map is a prayer map.
- b. People of peace – people you come across who are hospitable to the message and the messenger (not necessarily Christians yet!). Examples include Luke 10:5–7 and Acts 16:13–15 (Lydia).

**3. WHAT?** Practise gospel fluency. (This section is significantly expanded from the original 411.)

- a. Practise generous listening. 'Wow, tell me more!' is a great question in mission. Remember your right to be heard is directly related to your willingness to deeply and generously listen. See 1 Peter 3:13–17. Be prepared to answer those who ask you.
- b. Be aware of the four movements of the gospel (expanded from sin/fall and forgiveness):
  - i. Creation (image of God, goodness of creation, beauty)
  - ii. Fall (sin, conflict, brokenness, shame, guilt)
  - iii. Redemption (grace, forgiveness, Jesus)
  - iv. Restoration (God is making all things new/Jesus wants what is good for every part of your life/shalom).
- c. Discuss: How might these movements of the gospel speak differently to people in different situations? Try to get as specific as possible without naming people or breaking confidence.
- d. My story/your story/God's story: The best evangelism happens at the intersection of these three circles.
- e. Fifteen-second testimony: 'There was a time when ... then Jesus/God ... [did something/broke in/new realisation/answer to prayer] and now ... [the difference Jesus has made]. Do you have a story like that?'
- f. Give participants three or so minutes to write a fifteen-second testimony. Then have them share it with the group. Practice!
- g. 'Has anyone ever shared the gospel with you?' Three circles: beauty, brokenness, Jesus.
- h. What if people respond to the gospel? Proceed in prayer (helping them put their thoughts and feelings in simple words to God), suggest meeting for one-on-one Bible reading (the Gospel of Mark for instance) and lead (back) to baptism.
- i. Nine simple words: 'Would you like to read the Bible with me?' Be willing to take no for an answer several times.
- j. Five simple words: 'Can I pray with you?'
- k. Christian community as the best apologetic of the gospel. Live 'questionable lives' (Michael Frost). Five BELLS habits; Sam Chan, 'merge your universes' to provide credibility structures:
  - i. Bless two people this week.
  - ii. Eat with different people this week.
  - iii. Listen to people's stories.
  - iv. Learn Christ together.
  - v. Sent into the world – live life on mission.

**4. WHEN?** Set goals for your 411.

- a. When will you *pray* (daily) for the people on your Oikos Map?
- b. When will you *share* (your fifteen-second testimony/three circles/four elements of the gospel)? With whom to start?
- c. When will you *train* – teach others what you have learned today?

Throughout the workshop, the facilitator should ask, 'Do you think you could teach someone else this simple component you have just learned?' When someone says yes, ask them to re-present it to the group briefly, in their own words.

### Resources for further reading, study, training and discipleship

**411 Training** [www.movements.net/411](http://www.movements.net/411): the original presentation of the 411

**Saturate** <https://saturatetheworld.com>: missional resources for groups setting out to live as a missional community

**The Word One to One** [www.theword121.com](http://www.theword121.com): this app/series of printed booklets breaks the Gospel of John into 'episodes', which you can read and discuss in 20 minutes over a coffee, asking 'What are you learning' and 'Would you like to do this again?'

**Hope groups/discovery Bible study** [www.togethernetwork.com.au/hope-groups](http://www.togethernetwork.com.au/hope-groups): three to four people who meet online or in person to encourage and support each other

**Life Transformation Groups**: two to three people who get together once a week to (1) read Scripture (continuously, in context and in community), (2) pray for those who don't know Jesus yet, and (3) keep each other 'on track' in following Jesus. No leader is required. A simple card in each person's Bible provides the format. A Life Transformation Group outline card can be made available on request

**Ripple Effect evangelism** [www.ripple-effect.net.au](http://www.ripple-effect.net.au): good Australian material, but the course is large

**How to Talk About Jesus (Without Being That Guy)** by Sam Chan

# Dwelling in the Word: A SIMPLE OUTLINE

## Pray together

**A simple prayer might be, 'Holy Spirit, open up your word for us, and open our hearts as we read. In Jesus' name. Amen'.**

One participant reads through the Bible passage aloud, slowly. For the Gospel Fluency Workshop, 1 Peter 3:13-16 is our text.

Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. 'Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.' But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

## Repeat

**Repeat the reading aloud, slowly ...**

Leave 90 seconds or more of silence. During this time, jot down thoughts as they come to you. Some questions that will help shape your thoughts are:

- Did anything strike you as particularly important or grab your interest?
- Does the text connect with your life at any point?
- Did the text raise any questions in your mind?

Make some notes here:

## Listen to one another

**Find a reasonably friendly-looking stranger or someone you don't know quite so well.**

Split into pairs and tell each other what you heard in the text. Listen well until each participant is speaking freely. Take 7 to 10 minutes or more. The aim is to be able to tell the larger group what the *other* participant found in the text and what they said.

- Listen carefully (feel free to take notes); your job will be to report back to the whole group what your *partner* said.

Make some notes here:

## Report back

**Now report back to the whole group what your partner said.**

Check-in with them that you heard them correctly. In a larger group, break into groups of four (two pairs) for the report back part.

Lead into whole group discussion. Finish with prayer.

During the following session, feel free to refer back at any time to your time of Dwelling in the Word and what the Holy Spirit was bringing to light during this time.

