

TRAINING FOR GUYS

What are you
talking about?

I've avoided giving opinions here about things like *Gay Marriage* and *Women Bishops*. The media is full of those things, it's supposed to be what Christians are talking about.

But, do you know, I don't believe anyone anywhere has ever been saved because Christians have talked about things like that with non-believers. I don't think, when John Wesley rode round the country 300 years ago, he stopped in towns and spent the evening talking about the rights and wrongs of clergy wearing frocks (or whatever it was that was pulling the church apart in those days).

I'm not saying that we should not prayerfully discern God's mind on some of these things as a Church. But I am saying it's not the message we have for the world.

It's so easy to get side-tracked onto an agenda that either the media wants to run with (and end up making Christians look like fools or bigots) or that enables us to mark out ground for ourselves so that we look different to another group of Christians.

But then, maybe that's not you. Maybe you haven't spent time talking with unbelievers

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about such things. Maybe instead you've talked to them about things like football, the Algerian siege, the girls you fancy, the latest film, the rising price of petrol, your kids.

There's nothing wrong with many of those things. But again, no-one gets saved through those conversations.

Romans 10:14 says *how can they hear without someone preaching to them?* Jesus made it clear whose job it was to do this preaching. At the end of Matthew's Gospel He commissioned us to *Go...make disciples*.

The Bible describes Jesus as *The Word* (John chapter 1 and 1 John chapter 1). "At His voice creation, sprang at once to sight" (Caroline M Noel) and we are made in His image. In Revelation 1:15,16 we see Jesus with a sharp double edged sword coming out of His mouth, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. When Jesus speaks to people in the Gospels it is *always* to point people towards God, to receiving salvation.

As His people we are called to do the same.

Before we go any further, I am writing this as much to myself as to anyone else. It's so easy to 'live the quiet life' and join in with other peoples' conversations on their terms, rather than setting the agenda. It's far easier to get into a debate about "side issues" of religion – such as those mentioned earlier – and not to touch on the Gospel at all.

On the next page there's a snippet of a Facebook post from a friend of mine, something that happened earlier this week in Derbyshire.





I don't know how that conversation started, but I'm pretty sure Adam and his mates didn't go over to those teenagers and chat about Gay Marriage. No, he says it clearly. They *shared the Gospel*.

There's a song that goes "Your Gospel O Lord is the hope for our nation". It used to be sung a lot 10 years ago. But very few got the message that probably then we should go out and share it.

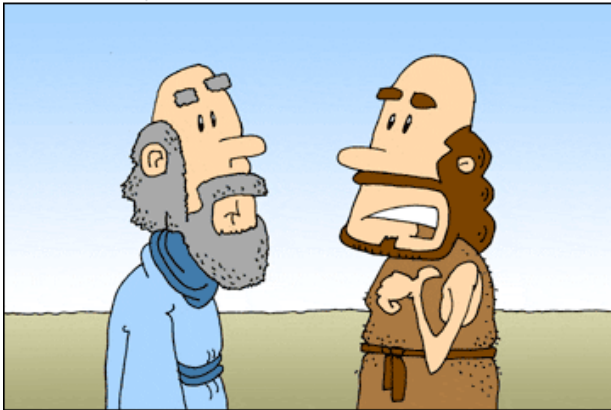
We need to find ways that are natural for us of bringing the Good News into our conversations. The world seems to have no embarrassment or shame about using swear words or talking about topics that some others might find offensive. Why are we scared to talk about a loving God?

Let's try to talk about the Good News at least once in the coming week... and maybe post on the Facebook Group what happened when we did (positive or negative)

{ www.tfgministries.org.uk/facebook }

Let's also join together praying for those teenagers in Derbyshire that they continue to seek Jesus and grow in their new faith.

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I've changed my name. I'm now John the Methodist

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Bible Study Series

Week two of our series on 1 Peter.

This week we're reading chapter 1 verses 3 to 9. Peter writes about all God has given us through Jesus and His great mercy, and the value of our faith and how it works in us to our ultimate goal - the fulness of salvation in eternity.

So go to

www.tfgministries.org.uk/podcasts and join in.

Let's try to build up a resource of our own commentary on the Bible. Whenever you read something that challenges you/encourages you/shines a light at you share it on the Facebook group. I'll collate them all during the year.

Let's see what we can produce together!

The essence of all this has been about having chats with the people you know, not about standing on street corners and being a 'proper evangelist'. But you might feel called to be that, and wonder how to get going.

A good friend of mine, Richard Sharp, works with Operation Mobilisation and has developed training programmes to help people share the Gospel.

You can watch him on YouTube, try this one to get you going:

www.tfgministries.org.uk/richardsharp



One *Man in the News* this week is US President Obama. Some feel we get too much coverage of a foreign political process, but the truth is what America, and it's President, does or thinks affects not only us but most of the world.

As he starts his second term in office, perhaps we should spare him a few prayers. Especially for wisdom, in a world of tension and hostility.