Small Group Guide: Ambassadors of the King

Series: The Hope We Have | Week 1

Background and Context

This session is based on a sermon exploring what it means to be ambassadors of King Jesus in a world that is often hostile to the gospel. Drawing from the Great Commission in Matthew 28 and the example of Jesus with the Samaritan woman in John 4, the sermon challenges us to rethink evangelism not as a frightening duty but as a natural overflow of the hope we carry.

The guiding Scripture for the sermon series comes from 1 Peter 3:15, which calls believers to always be prepared to give a reason for the hope they have, doing so with gentleness and respect.

Key Takeaways

- An ambassador does not speak on their own authority but represents another. As followers of Jesus, we are called to represent God's kingdom and God's interests in the world around us.
- Evangelism is not limited to formal proclamation. It includes acts of service, building genuine relationships, and pursuing justice alongside sharing the message of Jesus.
- The way evangelism is presented matters deeply. Good news delivered with judgment, fear, or manipulation stops being good news.
- Jesus modeled evangelism by meeting people where they were, addressing them with grace and dignity, and inviting them into a new way of life rather than condemning them for their old one.
- Evangelism and justice are not competing missions. They are two expressions of the same gospel.

- We do not go out in our own strength. The Holy Spirit is present with us and does the work of conviction in people's hearts.

Opening Question

Take a few minutes to let everyone respond briefly before moving into the main discussion.

When you hear the word evangelism, what is your honest gut reaction? Excitement, fear, guilt, or something else? Where do you think that reaction comes from?

Discussion Questions

On Understanding Evangelism

1. The sermon defined evangelism as sharing the good news of Jesus through our actions, words, and relationships, inviting people to discover God's act of reconciling humanity through Jesus. How does this definition compare to how you have understood or practiced evangelism in the past?
2. Pastor Samuel pointed to Jesus as the model for evangelism and described five dimensions of how he operated: proclamation, compassion, service, relationship, and justice. Which of these five comes most naturally to you? Which feels most unfamiliar or challenging?
3. The Samaritan woman in John 4 was a social outcast who encountered Jesus at the well. After that encounter, she ran back to her town and invited people to come see him. Is there someone in your life whom you have written off because of their lifestyle or choices? What might it look like to build a genuine relationship with that person instead?
4. The sermon raised an honest question: if evangelism is good news, why does it so often have a bad reputation? What experiences, yours or others', have contributed to that reputation? What would have to change for the good news to actually feel like good news to the people around you?

On the Great Commission

5. Matthew 28:16-20 records Jesus giving his disciples a command, not a suggestion, to go and make disciples of all nations. How does framing the Great Commission as a

command rather than an option change how you think about your own responsibility? Does that framing feel motivating or burdensome to you, and why?

6. The sermon noted that Jesus told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit before going out. What does that tell us about the relationship between preparation, dependence on God, and action in evangelism?

On Justice and Reconciliation

7. Pastor Samuel made the case that evangelism without justice and justice without the gospel are both incomplete. Do you agree? Where have you seen churches or individuals fall into one of those two extremes? What does a healthy balance look like in practice?
8. Luke 4:18-19 records Jesus reading from the scroll and describing his mission as proclaiming good news to the poor, freedom for prisoners, sight for the blind, and release for the oppressed. How should this shape the way our church engages with our local community?

On Personal Application

9. The sermon described how the disciples went out sharing not their own lives but the testimony of what they had witnessed Jesus do. What is your testimony? If someone asked you today for the reason for the hope you have, what would you say?
10. Peter's instruction in 1 Peter 3:15 is to give a reason for your hope with gentleness and respect. Think of a current relationship in your life where someone might be open to that kind of conversation. What would gentleness and respect look like specifically in that relationship?

Practical Applications

Choose one or two of the following to commit to before your group meets again.

Read and Reflect Read John 4:1-42 in full this week. As you read, pay attention to how Jesus initiates the conversation, how he listens, how he addresses the woman's dignity, and what the outcome is. Bring one observation back to share with the group.

Examine Your Relationships Make a list of three to five people in your life who do not yet follow Jesus. Pray for each of them by name this week. Ask God to show you one practical way to build a deeper relationship with one of them.

Prepare Your Testimony Write out a brief version of your personal testimony. Aim to keep it to two or three minutes. Focus on what your life was like before Jesus, how you came to faith, and what difference that has made. Practice sharing it with someone in your group.

Act with Compassion Identify one concrete act of service or justice you can participate in this week, whether in your neighbourhood, workplace, or through a church ministry. Do it as an expression of the gospel, not just as a good deed.

Start a Conversation Choose one person from your list and take a step toward a real conversation this week. It does not have to be a formal gospel presentation. It might be asking how they are doing, sharing a meal, or simply being present. Ask God for an open door and trust the Holy Spirit to work.

Closing Reflection

The sermon closed with this prayer:

"Heavenly Father, you command your followers to go throughout the earth and proclaim the good news. But God, we have done such a poor job sometimes that the good news is not presented as the good news, but rather as a news to avoid. Help us, oh God, to be a church that proclaims this good news in a way that honours you and glorifies your name. And also in a way that gives dignity and restores dignity to those that we are sharing the gospel with. God, may we be truly a reflection of who Jesus is to our neighbours, to our workplace, and to all the places that you take us. Be glorified in all of this, for we ask all this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Use this prayer to close your group time, or invite someone to pray in their own words using this as a guide.

For Further Study

- 1 Peter 3:13-17 -- the anchor passage for the entire sermon series on the hope we have
- John 4:1-42 -- the full account of Jesus and the Samaritan woman
- Matthew 28:16-20 -- the Great Commission
- Mark 1:14-15 -- Jesus proclaiming the good news of the kingdom

- Luke 4:18-19 -- Jesus describing the scope of his mission
- 2 Corinthians 5:17-20 -- Paul describing believers as ambassadors of reconciliation