



Talking About Jesus

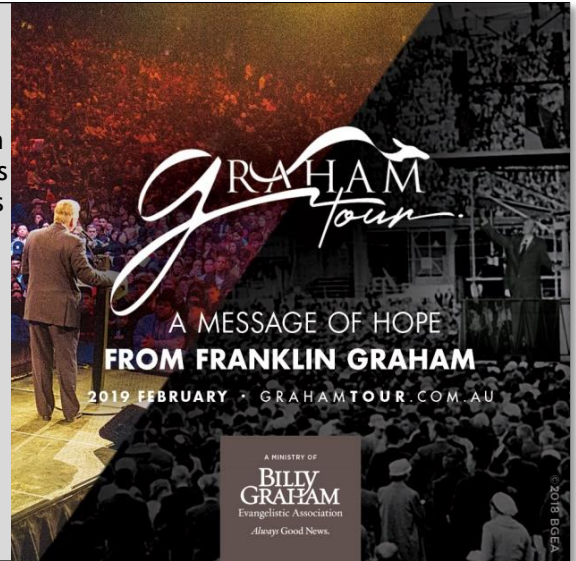
Bible Studies for **Ashfield Presbyterian Church**
ashfieldpresbyterian.org.au

Franklin Graham Evangelistic Events

In February, 2019 at the International Convention Centre in Sydney, Franklin Graham will be holding evangelistic events around Australia to celebrate the 60 year anniversary of his father Billy Graham's Crusades in Australia.

This will be an opportunity for you to invite your non-Christian friends to hear about Jesus. It's also an opportunity to think about what you believe, and how to explain it.

That's the purpose of this series. We'll look at how Jesus and four of his apostles talk about the life-changing good news of salvation.



Talking about Jesus God's way – Acts 10

God created humanity in his image to be in relationship with him. Sin ruined this relationship. God, however, chose to restore the world to himself through one man, Abraham, through whom all peoples on earth would be blessed (Gen 12:1-3). It was from Abraham's line that Jesus came (Mt 1:2).

1. Does God love all the world, or just his people? What Bible verses support your position?
2. **Read Deut 7:6-9.** Why did God choose to set his affection on the people of Israel?
3. **Read Isa 49:1-6.** God always planned to make Israel a blessing to the nations. What do we learn about God's plans for saving the nations as revealed by Isaiah?
4. Following Jesus' resurrection, what commands did he give the disciples? Mt 28:19-20. What promises does Jesus give to help the disciples' mission?

Acts 1:4-8. How is Jesus' command bigger than the disciples' expectations?

How is this a fulfilment of his plans in Isa 49:6?

Read Acts 10:1-23a

5. Despite Jesus' commands, and all that Peter has seen God do, who introduces Peter and the Gentile Cornelius?
6. What is the point of the vision Peter sees?
7. Why does God choose to use Peter at all? Why not just use the angel to give Cornelius the good news?

Read Acts 10:23b-48

8. Why do you think Cornelius had invited his relatives and friends? Who would you have invited if you were Cornelius? Why?

9. What lesson had God taught Peter? What boundaries do we put on the extent of God's offer of salvation?

10. Summarise Peter's gospel presentation. What does he emphasise? Anything he doesn't mention?

11. What happened as Peter presented the gospel?

12. What's the connection we see here between baptism and becoming a Christian?



Action:

List three non-Christian friends you want to pray for, and speak to about Jesus, in the next couple of months.

Name	What's your connection to them?



Prayer Points:

Share and pray for the friends you want to speak to about Jesus. Pray for each other - for boldness and wisdom to speak the right words.

Talking about Jesus Andrew's way

Andrew was one of the first disciples Jesus called during his earthly ministry. He was Simon Peter's brother. We know very little else about him. He's not known as a great teacher, scholar or preacher, and God never used him to write Scripture. His name means "man". Peter Marshall calls him "the saint of the rank and file".

1. **Read Jn 1:35-42.** What do we learn about how Andrew met Jesus?

What do we learn about Andrew?

What was the first thing Andrew did after he spent the day with Jesus?

2. **Read Jn 6:8-9.** What do we learn about Andrew in these verses?

What might Andrew have been doing differently to the other disciples to have met the boy?

3. **Read Jn 12:20-22.** Any thoughts on why Phillip went to Andrew first, rather than going straight to Jesus?

What, once again, does Andrew do?

4. To testify about Jesus is a major theme of John's Gospel. What do we learn from the following verses?

Jn 1:6-9, 15

Jn 1:29-34

Jn 3:25-30

Jn 19:35

Jn 21:24

5. We can't literally bring people to Jesus. What are some practical ways you can introduce your friends to Jesus?

Becoming an Andrew begins in the heart - “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” (1 Peter 3:15). You can share that hope by first praying for your non-Christian friends and fostering friendships with them, and then by inviting them to hear the Gospel during the Graham Tour.



Action:

How are you going with speaking to your three non-Christian friends? What plans can you make to bring these opportunities about? Share with the group, so they can pray for you, and keep you accountable.

Name	What opportunity will you take to speak to them?



Prayer Points:

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Talking about Jesus Jesus' way – Jn 4

1. Read John 4:1-42. From v7-18, note down everything we know about the person Jesus meets at the well.

2. What is Jesus' attitude towards the woman?

3. In Greek, "living" water has the same meaning as "running" water in English (which is just as silly if you think about it!). The opportunity to drink fresh, cool, running water was too good to resist. When he offers her living water, what is he really offering her?

4. Look at Eze 47:1-9, Zech 14:8. How is the metaphor of water used in these verses?

Given the source of living water in the Old Testament passages, what claim is Jesus making when he says he can give living water?

5. Why does the woman suddenly change the subject and begin talking about the controversy over the proper place of worship (vv. 16-20)?

What is Jesus' attitude to the location for true worship?

What sort of worship does God desire and why?

What application does this have for how and where we worship today?

6. From verses 27-42, do you think the Samaritan woman genuinely believed? What do you see in the passage that supports your position?

Three difficulties stood in the way of this woman living as one of God's people. These barriers are no problem for Jesus.

- a. *She was a Samaritan. A mixed race who were the result of the northern kingdom of Israel intermarrying with the nations, following their defeat by Assyria (2 Ki 17:24). Their religion was a dilution of true Judaism. They based their faith only on the first five books of the Scriptures and they built their own temple at Mt Gerazim around 400BC. There was great hostility between Jews and Samaritans (4:9).*
- b. *She had led a sinful life (4:18). Was she shunned by her community? Is this why she was forced to visit the well in the heat of the day (4:6)?*
- c. *She was a woman. A common attitude in Jesus' time was that women were less important than men. Is this behind the disciples' comment in 4:27?*

7. After his encounter with the Samaritan woman, what specific lessons does Jesus apply to his disciples and to us (vv. 34-38)?

8. Given the context (see esp. v30) what is Jesus referring to when he says, “I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest!” (v35)?

9. What are the prejudices that the disciples may hold that Jesus is removing?

When are we tempted to think that there is no harvest to be had among the people around us?



Action:

How are you going with speaking to your three non-Christian friends? Are you planning on inviting them to the Franklin Graham Event? Share with the group, so they can pray for you, and keep you accountable.

Name	Progress?



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Talking about Jesus Paul's way – Acts 17; Col 4:2-6

In the book of Acts an observer and co-worker, Luke, describes how Paul evangelises. In comparison, in his letters he himself describes his message, and instructs his readers how to evangelise. We can learn a lot from both!

1. Who do you know who is a great evangelist? What characteristics or techniques can you identify that makes them a good evangelist?

Read Colossians 4:2-6.

2. Why is prayer so important for evangelism?

How does this affect your evangelistic technique?

How does this affect your attitude as you evangelise?

3. How does Paul understand his partnership with God in the task of evangelism? Read Col 1:29.
4. What, practically, does it mean
 - a. to be wise in the way you act towards outsiders?
 - b. for your conversation to always be full of grace?
 - c. for your conversation to be seasoned with salt?
5. How does the last phrase of v6 (so you may know how to answer everyone) connect to the advice that comes before it?

Let's see whether Paul puts this advice into practice. **Read Acts 17:16-34.**

6. In what three places does Paul speak about Jesus?

How would his audience have been different in each place?

How might Paul have applied his advice from Colossians 4:2-6 to these situations?



Athens' Areopagus today

7. Can you see any wisdom in the way Paul introduces his message? (v22-23)

8. What does he say about God?

Jesus?

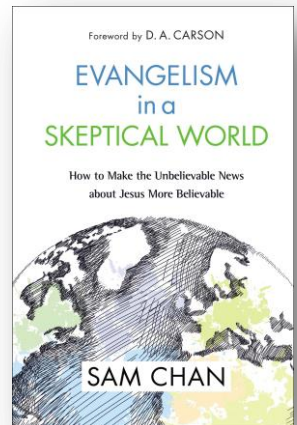
Humanity?

Our response?

9. Missiologists talk about contextualising the gospel to the culture you are trying to reach. How might we need to adjust the way we talk about the gospel to contemporary Australians?

Does contextualising mean we're compromising the truth of the gospel message? Why/ why not?

For those who are interested in finding out more, the Australian writer and academic, Sam Chan's book, *Evangelism in a Skeptical World: How to make the unbelievable news about Jesus more believable*", is excellent!



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Talking about Jesus Peter's way – Acts 4; 1 Peter 3:8-22

In some ways this study will do a similar thing to the last study: compare a description by Luke of how Peter does evangelism (from Acts) with how he describes the process himself in his letter. However, it comes from a different perspective - God can use persecution to further of the gospel!

1. Do you know a Christian who has suffered well? Have non-Christians noticed?

Read 1 Peter 3:8-18

2. How are we to repay those who do us evil (v9)? Why?
3. What are some different ways we are tempted to react when we are evilly treated? How are these expressions of not trusting God?
4. Peter commands us not to fear in the face of persecution (v14). What things are we tempted to fear at such times?

What antidotes to fear does Peter provide in these verses?

5. How is setting apart Christ as Lord (v15) a contrast to fear?
6. Why might people ask Peter's readers for the reason for their hope (v15)?

How are we to answer such questions? Why?

How can you get prepared for such questions?

7. Any thoughts on the connection between v17 and v18?

Let's see how these principles worked in Peter's life? In Acts 3, Peter and John healed the lame beggar, then preached to the people about Jesus, whom God raised from the dead. The healing came by faith in the name of Jesus. **Read Acts 4:1-31.**

8. What connections can you see between Peter's advice in 1 Peter 3:8-18 and his experience here?

9. If you have time, read the follow-up to this episode in Acts 5:17-42. How do we see Peter giving an answer for the hope that he has? Do we see evidence that he is not fearing, and is setting apart Christ as Lord?

10. Are you experiencing any persecution or suffering at the moment that you can respond to with faith and grace, rather than fear and insult? What non-Christians are watching your response? How can this group help you?



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Talking about Jesus John's way – Jn 20:30-31; Revelation 1; 5

1. The Apostle John carefully chose the events recorded in his gospel for a purpose - a purpose revealed only near the end of his gospel. What was his selection designed to achieve? (See Jn 20:30-31)

John 20:30-31

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

2. John calls the miracles Jesus' does 'signs'. A sign points to something else. What happened following the signs Jesus performed?

2:11

4:53-54

6:14

9:13-16; 35-38

11:43-48

3. Are you a signpost? What are some good ways you have found to point people to Jesus?

What do Christians do that makes it harder for people to see Jesus?

4. The resurrection was the greatest of Jesus' signs. John himself saw the empty tomb and believed (20:3-9). Then Jesus appears to most of the disciples. Thomas however would not believe simply because of the testimony of those who had seen. **Read Jn 20:24-29**. What did Thomas require to believe?

What was Jesus' attitude to Thomas' unbelief?

Who is Jesus referring to in v29? On what basis is he expecting them to believe?

5. **Read Jn 3:15-16**. What are people called to believe in? What is the result when they believe?
6. **Read Jn 5:24-25**. When does eternal life begin?

7. **Read Jn 10:10.** What is the nature of this new life?

8. Another of John's favourite terms is "witness/ testify". **Read 21:20-25.** What did John's belief in Jesus compel him to do?

How is your belief in Jesus compelling you to testify?



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