

Are we seeing the world through God's eyes?

Aim of study: to see every person as having an eternal destiny and that we each have a special mission field, right where we are, for building bridges with those outside God's family

Review: Ask - was anyone able to use their *anything to declare* answers this week?

Get the rest of the group to share their answers to Anything to Declare, followed by critique: was it clear? Was there jargon? Did it make you want to find out more?

Launching question: When we meet someone for the first time, what are some ways we tend to put them in boxes?
Distribute notes & ask someone to read the first section.

We often put people in boxes:

- the mechanic who repairs my car
- the milkman who supplies our milk
- my children's teachers
- the noisy teenagers who hang out on the corner
- the shopkeepers who gladly take my money
- the self-occupied neighbours

We relate to them according to their 'box'. In our study we want to review how God sees people, and consider how his view of people might influence our lives and actions.

Assign each passage to a group member to read and answer.

1. In what basic categories does God view men and women? See Ephesians 2:13; Romans 5:19; Luke 15:6,9,24 and Romans 5:1,9

Assign each passage to a group member to read and answer.

2. What is the ultimate destiny of men and women? What is that destiny based upon? (see John 3:16-18, 36; Ephesians 2:12; John 10:27,28)

Eternal life with God or life apart from God, based on their response to Jesus.

3. Think of a friend or neighbour (maybe someone on your Five in Focus), someone who doesn't have any particular need for religion. What do these passages say about a possible third category - a sort of celestial waiting room for nice people who are basically good but want nothing to do with Jesus?

If the question of what happens to the heathen who haven't heard about Jesus comes up, refer to Stepping Stones, an Agapé publication for a helpful concise answer.

- How does the message of these passages affect your relationship to that person?

2 Corinthians 5:11-21

1. How does Paul describe his role in life?

Ambassador / minister of reconciliation / persuader of men

2. What are the things that motivate him in this role?

Fear (a healthy awe) of God / the love of Christ: not his love for Christ, but the effect of Jesus' unconditional love for him

3. According to this passage, how did Paul view people?

No longer in worldly categories, although he once did, but as people who were without Christ or people who were a new creation in Christ

MAKING HIM KNOWN STUDY 9: ARE WE SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH GOD'S EYES? LEADER'S NOTES

4. Paul uses the term 'ambassador'. What is the responsibility of an ambassador?

Represents the views and messages of the head of his country to the country in which he is stationed. A messenger, a go-between, an official representative. (an active ambassador doesn't live in his own country)

5. To what extent are all Christians (as well as professionals like Paul) to be ambassadors for Christ?

If all our neighbours and friends face eternity without God, we all have a responsibility to be ambassadors to those in our circle of influence.

6. What are some of the reasons that we avoid relating to others as ambassadors of Christ?

Not truly seeing others from God's perspective / lack of training and confidence to know what to say / a fear of being rejected, put down or ridiculed by those we speak to / not wanting to be like the caricature - a negative Christian witness

7. What are some ideas to help us cope with the possibility of being rejected?

Jesus was rejected / timing & sensitivity to the person is important / let their response motivate us to pray regularly for God to soften their heart / be sure that we are guided by God's love in our words and actions, not out of compulsive duty to perform in order to please God

Read out the following:

"But how shall they ask him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the Gospel of peace with God."

Romans 10:14,15 Living Bible

Review – Read this section to the group and give time for practical application.

Think back over your study notes for all nine sessions. Choose the TWO sessions that influenced your thinking or touched your heart the most.

Make a note of the reason you chose those two. What was it about that study that influenced you?

Now consider two practical steps you could take in the next few weeks. Be prepared to share these with the group.

Study title Reason

Practical Step

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Practical Step

Pray

Pray for your Five in Focus, that God would bring opportunities for you to be his ambassador in their lives.

Pray for an opportunity to share your answers to 'Anything to Declare' in a helpful way for someone.

What next?

Consider working through 'Mind the Gap – *working together to shape an evangelism plan*' from Agapé or The Good Book Company.

More information: www.agape.org.uk/mindthegap
www.thegoodbook.co.uk/Mind-the-Gap-Full-Pack-mtgp_1036/



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