

OPENING QUESTIONS

- 1) What's the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the word "witnessing?" Why do you think that is so?
- 2) Can you recall the last time you shared or attempted to share your faith? How did it go?

READ TOGETHER

Our study today is about engaging with others who do not know Christ. As you are about to see, the Bible is amazingly relevant on this practice that God calls us to as Christ-followers. Begin by opening your Bibles to **2 Timothy 3:16-17**. Read it together and then pause as a group and have 3 or 4 group members thank God for the relevancy of the Bible as you look into it together.

BIG IDEA

The Bible calls us to build friendships with people that are strong enough to bear the weight of the gospel.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) Read Colossians 4:2-4. Paul writes from prison asking for prayer that he'd faithfully engage with those around him who don't know Christ. Now read verses 5 and 6. What does he tell us to do to engage with others who don't know Christ?
- 2) Paul writes about *making the most of every opportunity*. What does he mean by this? What does *making the most of every opportunity* look like?
- 3) Read Matthew 5:13-16. Why is salt and light essential to life? By using these metaphors, what is Jesus saying about your role in your world?
- 4) What does verse 16 tell us about how engaging with non-believers is to succeed?
- 5) Read 1 Peter 3:13-17. Peter wrote this letter to people who live in a culture that was diametrically opposed to them. Make a list of the ways of living that Peter tells them to follow as they live in that culture.
- 6) How does what Peter writes to them translate into your everyday world?
- 7) What does verse 15 tell us about how engaging with non-believers is to succeed?
- 8) In these various Scripture passages, three New Testament characters – Paul, Jesus and Peter – are encouraging us to engage in relationships with people who don't know Jesus. When you combine their teaching together, they are calling us to build a friendship with others that will bear the weight of the gospel. Let's go around the group and try to answer two final questions:
 - With whom are you trying to do this?
 - How are you trying to do this? What opportunities do you see for building that kind of friendship?

CHALLENGE

Each morning this week, take time as you begin your day to ask God for eyes to see and ears to hear the opportunities around you to engage with others who do not know Jesus. And then go out into your world to watch, listen and then act. Come back next week prepared to share what you saw and heard and what you did about it.



PRAYER

Take time to pray as a group about these things. Begin by sharing of what holds you back from engaging in these practices as a follower of Christ. And then pray for one another that God would fill you with His Spirit to empower you for this.

NEXT STEPS

To apply and take this teaching deeper into your life, write out the words of 1 Peter 3:15-16 on a card or your phone and spend some time this week committing it to memory.