

Discovering ways to share and be the Good News of Jesus Christ.



Being and sharing the good news

### REVIEW

Recap on your experience of the challenge. Ask the following questions:

#### How did it go? Was it helpful?

If you weren't able to try the challenge, explore the question:

**Where and how did you experience God last week?**

### WORD LYFE TRANSFORMERS

Our focus is not to 'convert' people – that's the work of the Spirit. But we are called to be 'salt and light' and to 'live like stars in a dark world' and to communicate what God has done. We are called to be mission-minded.

### READ

## Ephesians 3.1-13

### Paul's Mission to the Gentiles

<sup>1</sup> Christ Jesus made me his prisoner, so that I could help you Gentiles. <sup>2</sup> You have surely heard about God's kindness in choosing me to help you. <sup>3</sup> In fact, this letter tells you a little about how God has shown me his mysterious ways.

<sup>4</sup> As you read the letter, you will also find out how well I really do understand the mystery about Christ. <sup>5</sup> No one knew about this mystery until God's Spirit told it to his holy apostles and prophets. <sup>6</sup> And the mystery is this: Because of Christ Jesus, the good news has given the Gentiles a share in the

promises that God gave to the Jews. God has also let the Gentiles be part of the same body.

<sup>7</sup> God treated me with kindness. His power worked in me, and it became my job to spread the good news. <sup>8</sup> I am the least important of all God's people. But God was kind and chose me to tell the Gentiles that because of Christ there are blessings that cannot be measured. <sup>9</sup> God, who created everything, wanted me to help everyone understand the mysterious plan that had always been hidden in his mind. <sup>10</sup> Then God would use the church to show the powers and authorities in the spiritual world that he has many different kinds of wisdom.

<sup>11</sup> God did this according to his eternal plan. And he was able to do what he had planned because of all that Christ Jesus our Lord

had done. <sup>12</sup> Christ now gives us courage and confidence, so that we can come to God by faith.

<sup>13</sup> That's why you should not be discouraged when I suffer for you. After all, it will bring honour to you.

Contemporary English Verse - CEV

*'I look on all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that, in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty, to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation.'*

John Wesley

### REFLECT

Setting the scene:

▶ Paul writes this letter from prison where he also wrote his other letters – Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. He writes to the Gentile Christians at Ephesus – who felt superior to the Jewish Christians, to remind them that it was God’s glorious plan to bring men and women of every background together in Christ.

▶ Before Christ came, God’s promises had been largely focussed towards the Jews. The wider plan to the world had remained a secret. Paul was commissioned to take the message of salvation to the Gentiles and so a new phase of God’s plan begins.

▶ Paul’s view of salvation is much bigger than individualistic conversion to Christ. The focus is of a new humanity being adopted into God’s family –

reconciled to God and to one another. The Gospel is good news of a new people as well as new life.

- ▶ What are the ‘shockers’ and ‘blockers’ for you in this passage?
- ▶ How committed are you to telling others about Jesus?
- ▶ People don’t have time for the church, but are still interested in Jesus – do you agree?

### RESPOND

Transformers challenge: As a group, create a challenge that will help you to be mission-minded, ambassadors for God this week.

**Challenge ideas:**  
If you struggle to come up with your own challenge then why not try one of the following...

#### 01 God’s Story

The Bible urges us to have an answer for anyone who asks us about our faith. Spend some time this week reflecting on the Gospel of Christ by reading about Peter on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.14–36. As you read the story several times, reflect on the following questions:

**Who was Jesus**

**What did he do?**

**What is the proof?**

**What were the results?**

As you consider your answers to these questions, clarify in your mind what you would say to anyone who asks you about your faith and the person of Jesus Christ.

#### 02 Just do it

Sometimes we just need to go for it and be bold, trusting that the Holy Spirit is with us. The Bible talks about being as ‘harmless as doves and wise as serpents.’ A serpent never chases their prey, but strikes at the right time. As you converse with people this week, be aware that the Spirit might be prompting you to specifically share your faith this week. If so, go for it.

#### 03 Mission Field

As a group, come up with a plan to become more mission focussed. You might want to plan an event or series of events for your church and focus on inviting your friends. Perhaps invite a speaker to come and tell their story. Perhaps an Alpha course? You might simply want to arrange a series of social events connecting your friends to Christians at your church. You could check out [www.cvmen.org.uk](http://www.cvmen.org.uk) (men) or [www.activateyourlife.org.uk](http://www.activateyourlife.org.uk) (women) or [www.studentalpha.org.uk](http://www.studentalpha.org.uk) for inspiration.

### Don't Forget

1. To record your experience of the challenge so that you can accurately share it with your lyfe group when you next meet. You might like to text/tweet each other throughout the experience!
2. Consider posting your created challenge on the lyfe facebook site for others to view.

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### More resources on 'Word Lyfe'

- Listen to video interview with Andy Croft and Joe Davis
- Read article on 'Mission in a Multi-Cultural and Multi-Faith Society
- Read 'lyfe story' biographies on Billy Graham and John Wesley
- Recommended reading *Storylines* by Andy Croft and Mike Pilavachi

### GROUP PRAYER:

You might like to commit to praying for each person in the group this week as you focus on being transformers in your area.