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ADVANCING THE GOSPEL OF JESUS & HIS KINGDOM

Do you see yourself advancing the Gospel of Jesus and his kingdom into your network of relationships? Perhaps evangelists come to mind when you think about advancing the Gospel. In his letter to the Colossians Paul reveals how everyday labourers advance the Gospel. We see that the approach is very different from those gifted as evangelists like the Apostle Paul.

"Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone." – Colossians 4:5-6 (NIV)

In Colossians 4:2-6 Paul starts by calling the Colossians to pray, and not just casual prayers. He wants the Colossians to pray with a sense of urgency and awareness. Where is God at work around them and where is the work of God needed? Paul also recruits prayer for himself as he proclaims the Gospel as an apostle. For the Colossians proclamation is replaced with relating wisely and conversing the Gospel. An 'other-centredness' is to *colour* how we live and relate. All of our interactions with people are opportunities to be like salt, light and the aroma of Christ. The Gospel is on display in us.

The balance Paul presents for how we converse the Gospel is amazing. Speech that is full of grace will be marked by qualities like selflessness, kindness, gentleness and affirmation. God extends grace to us and we are called to extend grace to others. Conversations *seasoned* with the Gospel indicates our sharing about Jesus will not smother or be absent or bland. There will be questions or stories from our own lives and the Bible placed in conversations that direct our friends towards Jesus.

In this issue of *Navigate* we press into how we as everyday believers advance the Gospel. We also pay tribute to our friend and lifelong labourer, Peter Burch, who recently passed away. There is much we can learn from his life on advancing the Gospel. A Toolbox section and Bible Study is included to help us advance the Gospel into our relational networks.

Yours,

Simon

Simon Cayzer
National Director



FAREWELLING A LIFETIME LABOURER

PETER BURCH PASSES AWAY FROM CANCER ON DECEMBER 30, 2018 AT AGE 73.



PETER & SULIS BURCH

Peter Burch advanced the Gospel of Jesus and his kingdom into Indonesia for over 40 years. After believing in Jesus in 1969 during a Navigator summer training program in Christchurch, Peter grew a strong conviction about his part in God's Great Commission to the nations. In 1975 he said, "The more I thought and prayed...in terms of the Great Commission, the more crystal clear it became that I should go...There comes a time when after a little training a person can go."

Peter was an International Trainee with the Navigators for 2 years in Indonesia from 1976 to 1978. He led the Lincoln College ministry here in New Zealand in 1979 before returning to Bandung, Indonesia, in 1980 on an initial 4 year term that turned into a lifelong ministry. Peter first met Sulis in 1976 and they were married on May 2nd 1998.

When I (Simon) visited Peter and Sulis a year ago in Malang, I was impressed with their deep love and interest in the people around them and their expectation that God was already at work in peoples lives. As we met and visited people in the neighbourhood, Peter would be fully present with people and curious, seeking to notice and participate in what God might already be doing in each person's life. It was easy to see how the Gospel was advancing through Peter and Sulis as they coupled presence and curiosity with the boldness to talk about Jesus at the right time.

Peter's final words to Sulis were to "Stay close to Jesus." The way Peter lived his life is a deep challenge and example to us. We have established a Navigators Cross Cultural Missions fund in Peter's name to continue his and our commitment to advancing the Gospel of Jesus and his kingdom into the nations. If you would like to contribute to this fund earmark your gifts to the 'Peter Burch Missions Fund'. Please continue to pray for Sulis who continues to serve with The Navigators in Malang. [📍](#)

TO CELEBRATE THE MISSIONS LEGACY OF OUR FRIEND PETER BURCH & TO LAUNCH THE NEXT GENERATION OF LABOURERS INTO CROSS-CULTURAL MISSIONS WE ARE ESTABLISHING:

THE PETER BURCH MISSIONS FUND

GIVING DETAILS ARE INCLUDED ON SLIP

PRAY FOR: **INDONESIA**

87%
NON-CHRISTIAN




265,386,000
TOTAL POPULATION



CONFESSIONS OF A RELUCTANT EVANGELIST

BY FRANZISKA PLIMMER

I wouldn't call myself an evangelist, in fact it's probably something I hide behind because the idea of sharing the Gospel cold turkey just seems too scary. However, I had been reading this inspirational autobiography called *Chasing the Dragon* about Jackie Pullinger and was inspired by her simple approach to sharing the Gospel. So last month on a plane I shared the Gospel with Jo, a nurse from Christchurch. Christianity came up naturally and I don't know how but all of a sudden, I was sharing what I believed and how she could too. I don't think I've ever shared it so clearly, so the Holy Spirit must really have been using me. Four days later I shared the Gospel with a Kiwi director on a bus. Again, faith came up and we compared what we believed.

These two experiences taught me to stop stressing about evangelism; it isn't a chore that God is disappointed if we don't do but a privilege if God provides us with the opportunity. Maybe evangelism is like public speaking. Most people don't like it, a few are very gifted at it but with practice it gets easier. God doesn't need us to have the perfect speech ready and we'll have the Holy Spirit to help us. God just wants us to be courageous and take opportunities as they arise. If we're excited and passionate about the Gospel won't we want to talk about it? 



LABOURERS TOOLBOX: *Lessons from Peter Burch*

Ideas to help you advance the Gospel of Jesus	Examples from life	Examples from the Bible
Strengthening your convictions from the Bible on the Gospel and our part in its advance	Memorise, think about and pray through Bible passages on advancing the Gospel.	Romans 1:14-17; Matthew 28:18-20
Pray and expect God to already be at work in peoples' lives	Ask God to lead you and pray for people before visits or social gatherings. Adopt an expectant attitude and willingness to be Jesus' friend when with others.	Acts 17:24-28; John 6:44
Be fully present and curious, take a genuine interest in the people you meet and develop friendships with	This often starts with a friendly greeting and being open to engage in conversation. Ask open questions and listen. What might be your friend's underlying concerns? Are there ways you can serve your friend?	John 4 (the story of the woman at the well)
Speak about Jesus at the right time	Listen to God and follow the promptings God's Spirit gives you straight away. What personal faith stories or wisdom from the Bible can you share? Ask your friend a question that then leads on from your experience like, "Have you ever prayed?" Or "Have you ever wondered about God?"	Colossians 4:2-6; 1 Peter 3:8-16

FRIENDSHIPS KEY IN SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

BY HAMISH FLANAGAN

As I reflect on those I've shared spiritual content with in my workplace a few patterns emerge:

I try to get to know everyone a little bit. I am open to how God will create friendships with those I wouldn't necessarily gravitate towards.

Inevitably I end up with more significant connections with a few. I get to know people's stories as I chat one on one, in shared office spaces or over lunch.

Without diminishing the significance of the Gospel's power, I see myself in some respects as a mere information broker. As I get to know people, their issues, hurts, and fears emerge. In the post-Christian culture I work in most people have never considered that the wisdom and power of God could offer solutions to the fears that are pressing into their daily lives. As I gain wisdom and new insights that I've found useful, I share what I'm learning.


Sometimes something feels like such good news that I'll just share it with a colleague I have gotten to know in the same way they might share their enthusiasm for some new item they've bought. More commonly though, I relate what I've learned to a previous conversation I've had with a colleague. That way they can see the content is relevant and therefore valuable. It also makes it less about me and more about them.

Simply, I share what I'm learning in the same way I share a good deal or a new restaurant I've enjoyed – If I



think it's content that the person would be interested in and benefit from, I share it!

I've found fear is one issue people are most interested in a solution for - people are fairly open about what they are worrying about. Jesus's response to fear as the Prince of Peace (perfect love drives out fear) is a good space for me to introduce how much peace Jesus promises in his kingdom. I also have learned to take risks and open up dialogue on issues (such as death) that my friends are dealing with that their other friends might shy away from talking about.

I would add that this rhythm of sharing presumes I'm experiencing God, and sometimes, for a range of reasons, it's harder to do that. But I find being able to share with others is one of the great joys that motivates me to draw near to God again. 

STUDYING THE GOSPEL TOGETHER

This year we will begin to include Bible studies in each edition of the Navigate. Our heart is to begin to study the Bible on a deeper level together

In the apostle Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he clearly lays out the content of the Gospel message, Take a moment to read and interact with 1 Corinthians 15 and answer the questions below:

[Q.] According to **1 Corinthians 15:1-8**, what are the core aspects of the Gospel, the things of first importance?

[Q.] Why do you think that Paul included Jesus appearing after the resurrection to the twelve, the five-hundred and then to him as a core aspect of the Gospel? What would we be missing without it?

[Q.] Why do you think Paul is taking the time to remind the Corinthian church, and us, of these core aspects of the Gospel?

[Q.] Have you ever taken the time to write out these basics of the Gospel message and write them out in your own words so that you are able to communicate them to someone else? Why don't you take the time to do so now.



To Know Christ, To Make Him Known & Help Others Do the Same.

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