ADVANCE
THE EVANGELISTS MOVEMENT
2020
As a united group of ministries and church leaders, we believe that the gospel has lost none of its power to save and that the time is right to put the lamp on a stand once again – proclaiming the good news clearly and boldly to the UK, calling all who hear to put their trust in Jesus Christ.

Through mentoring in Advance evangelist groups, we are committed to equipping and empowering those who have a desire to prioritise sharing the gospel, whether from a stage or in a one-to-one conversation.

Alongside this we are praying and planning together for what an intentional, strategic, and spirit-filled year of mission will look like across the UK in 2020 as we commit to taking the gospel to the nation on an unprecedented scale in a variety of ways that represent the diversity of the church and meet the needs of our diverse nation.

Advance 2020 will give churches, ministries and individuals the opportunities, encouragement and support they need to reach our nation with the powerful hope of the gospel.

Visit advance2020.org to register your interest in joining in the adventure. Let’s partner together, united in the gospel of Jesus Christ, to see the UK transformed by his love.
ENDORSEMENTS

YEMI ADEDEJI
One People Commission at Evangelical Alliance
‘Advance 2020 is going to have a huge impact as we faithfully stand together to see the gospel proclaimed around the UK.’

ANDY HAWTHORNE
The Message Trust
‘Advance groups are not just for those who preach from a platform, but anyone who wants to sharpen up their sharing of the Jesus story. Join a group today and see how you begin to grow as a follower and witness of Jesus.’

RACHEL JORDAN-WOLF
Church of England
‘What would it take to see the UK transformed by the power of the gospel? The church of Jesus Christ getting serious about evangelism once again. That is what Advance 2020 is all about, so get involved and see what God does through you.’
“The gospel is the hope for the world and as the church we are the messengers of it. It’s time to get serious about evangelism and Advance 2020 is going to help us do exactly that.”

“I’m so excited by the prospect of thousands of Christians committing to sharpening their evangelistic gifting and getting intentional about mission in 2020 so that the UK can hear the gospel proclaimed clearly, relevantly, and compassionately.”

“As we build on a decade of local church mission in words and action making Jesus known, we now want to see a harvest. 2020 highlights the evangelist’s gifting reaping what’s been sown.”
Advance groups promote, develop and support the calling of evangelists through a commitment to the proclamation of the gospel.

Advance grew out of a vision from evangelist Andy Hawthorne (The Message Trust) to regularly gather twelve preaching evangelists to develop and sharpen them. Encouraging other experienced evangelists to do-likewise, and with those being mentored eventually taking on groups of their own, the movement is growing every week to see hundreds of followers of Jesus sharpened and supported in their proclamation of the gospel.

Through monthly meetings, group members receive teaching, sharpen each other through discussion, and share openly about their personal and spiritual life. It’s a space to share about opportunities and engagements they have to share the gospel, and to encourage each other with the fruit from these opportunities.

After one year in an Advance group, each evangelist finds another twelve evangelists who they then mentor in the same way. This is about evangelists developing evangelists to see a huge increase around our nation (and beyond) in the number of Christians who will unashamedly put the lamp on a stand, from a platform or through daily encounters with family, friends and even strangers.

As it multiplies around the UK and beyond, Advance is a direct response to the need for passionate, unashamed communicators of the gospel of Jesus Christ to be equipped, encouraged and supported in the lives they live, and the message they bring.
Five principles of the movement

1. **REGULAR MEETING**
   Monthly meetings and an annual conference that are made a diary priority by all in the group.

2. **SHARPENING**
   Creating opportunity for healthy critique of each other’s approach to evangelism, and a commitment to studying the Bible for a deeper knowledge of the gospel.

3. **ACCOUNTABILITY**
   Honest self-evaluation via feedback questionnaires and open sharing within the group time.

4. **COMMUNICATION**
   Keeping each other up to date with preaching engagements, prayer requests and stories of salvation via email and/or group text messaging.

5. **MULTIPLICATION**
   A commitment to explore the idea of multiplication with a view to leading a group (while remaining a member of another) within 12-24 months of joining the network.

**Is it for me?**

Whether you have opportunities to preach from a platform or are passionate about reaching those you encounter face-to-face every day, these questions below will help you decide whether joining an Advance group will be helpful for you...

**FAITH**
Do you have faith that the gospel has lost none of its power, and is the only way by which a person can know true life and salvation?

**CLARITY**
Do you desire to communicate the gospel with clarity, through personal conversations or preaching from a platform?

**INVITATION**
Do you long for opportunities to offer an invitation to receive the hope of the gospel, and see people move into eternal relationship with Jesus?
ADVANCE: RUNNING A GROUP

Groups are encouraged to meet once a month for around two hours. During this time the group leader will facilitate prayer, deliver teaching, encourage discussion and make space for accountability. These are the core elements of Advance groups, but how you run the sessions (and what extra elements you include) is up to you.

Suggested group schedule

- **20 mins** Catch up with some testimony and pray to begin the session
- **45 mins** Teaching and discussion time (using Advance session guides and resources)
- **10 mins** Prayer time in response to the teaching
- **20 mins** Pray for some of the group (see below)
- **20 mins** Fill out accountability forms, feedback in pairs and pray for each other.
- **5 mins** Set the next date if you haven’t already, before finishing.

Additional elements

**TESTIMONY**
Hear stories of fruitfulness, personal revelation and experiences of God from group members that will build faith in others.

**SPECIFIC PRAYER FOCUS**
Take time to pray as a group for a few individuals within the group each session. Try to get through everyone every three meetings or so, and then start again.
GOSPEL CRITIQUE
Watch YouTube clips or listening to audio recordings of gospel presentations and discuss the content. (You could look at style and delivery too, but the content should be the primary focus.) Critiquing systematic gospel approaches such as the four spiritual laws or the contemporary youth version of The4Points is also very helpful. What are their strengths and weaknesses? These critiques will help to refine our understanding of the gospel and how we can best explain it to the world.

PRACTICAL EXERCISES
Head out onto the streets for an hour and put some of the discussion and prayer to use in personal witness, or some other practical outworking of evangelism.

GUESTS
Invite a speaker or guest to contribute to the teaching and discussion.

Five helpful tips
1. Schedule monthly meetings as far ahead as you can (six months if possible) and keep those dates sacred!
2. WhatsApp or a Facebook Messenger group are perfect for group communications, prayer requests and salvation stories between group times.
3. Books such as John Stott’s Basic Christianity, Rico Tice’s Honest Evangelism, and Ben Jack’s The Simple Gospel are short, subject-relevant books that could work as ‘homework’ reading – reading one chapter per month and discussing as a group.
4. Making food part of the session can be a great way to build fellowship.
5. One or two of the sessions a year could be turned into longer retreat. Getting away for 24 hours together can be especially fruitful and beneficial.
‘My one purpose in life is to help people find a personal relationship with God, which, I believe, comes through knowing Christ. I will never do anything as long as I live except preach the Gospel, and I intend to do that as long as God gives me breath.’

BILLY GRAHAM
SESSION ONE: CALLED TO EVANGELISM

‘In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.’ 2 Timothy 4:1-5 (NIV)

What does it mean to be called to be an evangelist? Aren't all believers to share the good news of Jesus Christ? After all, Jesus’ great commission in Matthew 28 appears to be a blanket call to all of his followers to go into the world and make disciples. But then we come across a short passage in Ephesians 4 (v11–12) that highlights the position of evangelist as a specific role alongside that of pastor, teacher, prophet and apostle, which can be used to build the body of Christ. What are we to make of the calling of the evangelist? Is it for everyone or for a specific few?

‘Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.’ 2 Corinthians 5:17–20 (NIV)

God is in the business of reconciling fallen humanity back to himself and wants us to be the ambassadors of this remarkable message! This is not just for ‘professional’ evangelists, this is a call for all believers! No true believer in Christ is excused from this ministry of reconciliation. However, how that might play out in the lives of individuals as they attempt to be faithful to this call to witness can be very different. Perhaps this analogy will help...

Find the full version of this session for free at advance2020.org alongside a host of other helpful resources.
In a football team every player is pursuing the aim of winning the match. However, the strikers are those who are specifically tasked with scoring goals. This doesn’t mean that other players can’t and won’t score from time to time, but the primary function of the striker in the team is to score. Likewise in the church, we are all pursuing the restoring of God’s Kingdom, that all humanity would know Jesus as Lord. For this reason we all have a role to play in witness and evangelism. But there are some who are specifically called to prioritise the preaching of the gospel, probably at the cost of most other pursuits. These preachers will also prioritise invitation and response - the gospel will not only be explained, an opportunity to accept its truth will be clearly made. These are the evangelists [as Philip is identified in Acts 21:8].

If some of the following statements ring true about you then the calling of the evangelist could well be upon your life:

• You have faith that the gospel works and has lost none of its power to save.
• You long to see the lost saved.
• You are compelled to preach in all season, persevering no matter what hardships come.
• You desire to communicate the gospel with clarity.
• You will not compromise the integrity of the gospel message, no matter what the itching ears of your audience may want you to say.
• You hope for and seek out opportunities to make an invitation for people to follow Jesus.
• You have had words spoken over you about being an evangelist.

Spend some time praying together that God would make the call clear, and that opportunities to preach would follow the call, and that kingdom fruit would come from those opportunities.

No matter the gifting or the calling, we must not lose sight of the reality that no man or woman has the power to save themselves or any other. We can only be the messengers, it is God who saves. As we discern our calling, and as we work out our witness and evangelism in the world let us prioritise personal devotion through prayer, striving after lives of holiness and submission to the God who saves.

Discussion

• Is there a difference between witness and evangelism?
• How do you know you are called to be an evangelist?
• Do we need people in the church who are fully set apart for the ministry of evangelism?
• What may the calling of the evangelist mean for your life?
• Why are personal devotion and prayer essential?
SESSION TWO: WHAT IS EVANGELISM?

‘However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.’ Acts 20:24

Put simply, ‘to evangelise’ means to ‘proclaim good news’. The good news in question is the gospel of Jesus Christ, that sinful humanity has been reconciled to God through the saving work of Jesus. We can know life eternal, perfect relationship with God because Jesus took the death we deserved.

Look at the following two definitions of evangelism and discuss them as a group. What can we learn about the task of evangelism from these short sentences (some words emboldened for potential discussion points)?

‘To evangelise is to **present Christ Jesus** to **sinful people** in order that, through **the power of the Holy Spirit**, they **may** come to put their **trust** in God through him.’ J. I. Packer

Evangelism is...

‘The **proclamation** of the **historical, biblical Christ** as **Saviour and Lord**, with a view to **persuading** people to come to him **personally** and so be **reconciled** to God’ Billy Graham.

Evangelism involves a proclaimed message, a presentation of the risen Jesus, and an attempt at persuasion of the listener that the good news shared is to be received and accepted. But as essential as words are to evangelism, there must be more than just verbal communication going on.

David Watson says that, ‘Unless there is a demonstration of the power of the Spirit, the proclamation of the gospel will be in vain. It will not be evangelism.’ Evangelism is a spiritual activity that requires God to move in power for it to ever be effective. If evangelism was just about changing people’s minds on an issue we could rely on persuasion alone. But evangelism is about the salvation of souls through the bringing of the message (which the spirit empowers us to do) whereupon the Spirit of God convicts, gifts faith to, and begins transformation in the heart of the hearer. Evangelism without God is not evangelism, just marketing. But we can be confident that any method of evangelism can work if God is in it.

Ultimately evangelism seeks to create disciples, worshippers who worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:23). Of course if the message we preach is intended to move people from rejection of God to worship of him, we the message bringers must be authentic worshippers ourselves. Worship and evangelism are two sides of the same coin, our witness into the world
is an act of worship (obedience and adoration to the king) designed to create more worshippers. To be authentic evangelists we must be authentic worshippers.

**What state is your personal worship life in? How does that shape you so that you are a messenger of integrity? Discuss.**

Retreat is often helpful in the busy lives that we live. Getting away for some alone time with God, where the electronic devices are switched off and we disconnect from the world for a time so that God has our full attention. Look at the example of Jesus retreating from ministry in Mark 1:35-39 to spend alone time with his father. It directly affects the next steps of his ministry.

This act of worship - the sacrifice of time, or comforts like food by choosing to fast during these times - equips us for service, and reveals the heart of the true evangelist, someone who knows that God must come first in all things.

**Discussion**

- How would you define evangelism?
- What does it mean to proclaim the gospel?
- What is our role in evangelism and what is God's role in evangelism?
- What form should evangelism take?
- How do we ensure we are authentic evangelists and authentic worshippers?

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1 J. I. Packer’s rewording of the 1918 Archbishops Committee definition of evangelism found in Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God, Nottingham: IVP, 1961, p. 25.


3 A variation on a similar quotation from Leonard Ravenhill.
‘If I thought I could win one more soul to the Lord by walking on my head and playing the tambourine with my toes, I’d learn how!’

WILLIAM BOOTH
ONE THING I WISH I KNEW WHEN I STARTED PREACHING THE GOSPEL

DR RACHEL JORDAN-WOLF

The ‘One Thing’ series is an ongoing blog available at advance2020.org to encourage and promote discussion around the gospel, evangelism and mission.
28 years ago I listened to George Verwer speak as he called young people to be committed to world evangelism. I committed myself to that challenge and 28 years on I’m still committed. So, this is more ‘one-thing-someone-told-me-that-has-helped-me that I’m sharing with you…’

Verwer writes in his book ‘Revolution of Love’:

I challenge you to be a marathon runner for God in this great task of world evangelism. And when you’re knocked down, just get up, and get back in the race and start running. When you fail, when you fall, get up! As soon as you feel your hand touch the ground, get up! And you’ll discover that someday, twenty or thirty years from now, just like me, you’ll be still running the race; weary sometimes, wounded sometimes, but still pressing on for Jesus Christ. Let’s press on together for the kingdom of God and world evangelism.

I’m so excited about Advance 2020. It will be 30 years on just as George Verwer said, so it seems right to repeat the challenge to a new generation. Things are going to go wrong, you’re going to find this hard, but the big secret is get up and keep going, and you too, in 30 years’ time, will be able to pass on the same great challenge and message. ‘It’s keeping going that counts’: will you?

Or in the words of the apostle Paul, he said he would, ‘Press on to take hold of that for which Christ took hold of me… Forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus’ (Philippians 3:12, 14).

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EMENT TODAY

Head to advance2020.org to join an Advance group and get started on the great adventure.
THE GOSPEL. THERE IS NO PLAN B.