

Identifying a person of peace

When we think about evangelism and sharing our faith we are used to the idea of sharing with one person and inviting them along to church. We've been taught that one-to-one evangelism is the only way to go, and yet Jesus did things differently. Jesus brought whole groups of people to faith, reaching the many, by identifying people of peace.

What is a person of peace?

A person of peace is someone who God has prepared to reach their community or relationships. They are:

- **open** to spiritual things
- **hungry** to learn more
- willing to **share** what they are leaning with others.

A person of peace can be anyone – young, old, rich, poor, popular or outcast. They are the person prepared by God to bring the message to the people in their community.

It is through people of peace that movements happen. When we find a person of peace, they open up their networks and groups form around them. In a disciple making movement, one of the most important things we can be praying for is that we would find these people of peace who will act as a doorway to their community.

Where do we see people of peace in the Bible?

We first see Jesus identify people of peace when he called his disciples. The gospel spread along relational lines when he called Peter and his family. Peter's house became the first 'house of peace' from which the gospel spread. Read John 1:35-50, Mark 1:14-20 and Mark 1: 29-34.

Then there are a number of stories where Jesus reached one, and through that one person, reached whole communities.

We read about:

- an outcast sharing with her whole village
- an influential (albeit corrupt) businessman testifying to his whole community
- a previously demon-possessed man reaching a region of cities for Jesus.

In each of these scenarios, Jesus didn't reach the communities, the people of peace did!

The principle is: we win the one to win the many.



All throughout the New Testament, Jesus and his disciples connected with people of peace to spread the gospel.

Here are some examples from Jesus' ministry:

- Woman at the well, John 4:1-42
- Levi, Luke 5:27-39
- Demonic of Decapolis, Mark 5:1-20
- Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1-10

And examples from the disciples and the early church:

- Cornelis, Acts 10
- Lydia, Acts 16:13-15
- Jason, Acts 17:1-9
- Aquila and Priscilla, Acts 18

How do we find a person of peace?

- We **pray** (and pray and pray), recognising these people are prepared by God.
- **We have go out into the harvest and have spiritual conversations** with lots of different people looking for people who God is already preparing in the community.
- **For those that are open, we begin sharing spiritual things** (how God is working in our life or Biblical stories that link to their situation). See if they are hungry to know more. Sometimes this might happen over a long period of time, or it could happen quickly.
- If the person is open and hungry, **look to see if they are sharing what you have talked about with others**. If they are open, hungry and sharing, they might just be a person of peace.

What do I do if I find a person of peace?

- **Keep connecting.**
- **Invite them to take part in a Discovery Bible Study and ask them if they know others they can ask to be part of it.** God might have opened the door for a whole group to start their discipleship journey.
- **Encourage them to share** what they are learning with others.
- **Coach them** to begin or continue their own Discovery Group with people in their network.



Want to go deeper?

- While you are looking for a person of peace, remember you might just be one yourself
- Watch '**Having Spiritual Conversations**'



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