

## 01\_SIGN post

### What Kind of Sign Am I? And Where Should I Point?

#### BY THE END OF THIS SESSION ...

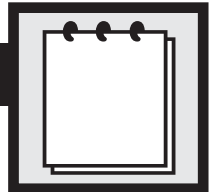
I'll know how to share The Big Story as a way of framing the Gospel. With some mid-week practice, I'll be able to draw and explain this approach by next week's session.

#### Video: *Setting the Scene*



- ❖ Welcome to SIGN // all disciples are messengers
- ❖ Why all the coded talk about "evangelism"? >> post-Christian attitude, pre-Christian understanding, and the need for new images and new Signs.
- ❖ How SIGN will work
- ❖ Session 01 focus: Knowing what kind of Sign I am, and where I should point: *The Big Story*
- ❖ The importance of a Sign: *Into the Wild* with Alexander Supertramp
- ❖ Our role is a Sign Post pointing people to Jesus
- ❖ Your Sign Post can literally spell the difference between the way that leads to life, and the way that leads to death

#### *my thoughts*



#### *take it to God*



As you open this session, **ask God to put on your heart just one person who you most want to point to Jesus.** Imagine if they were to come to Christ, and find freedom in Him. *You have a role to play in this.* Bring your fears, uncertainties, and desires to God. Take a few minutes and ask God to empower you for this role, that He would draw this person to Himself, and that He would give you the opportunities to Sign Post the way to eternal life.

## truth time



When it comes to sharing our faith, all of us have had our blunders ... times where we chickened out of witnessing or blurted out some confusing message that vaguely resembled Bible soup!

- ☛ *When's the last time you shared your faith with another, and clearly pointed someone to Jesus? How'd it go? And what stops you from sharing more?*
- ☛ *What are some of your best experiences in sharing with people close to you?*
- ☛ *What was your worst experience, and what would have helped it go better?*

## try this



To kick things off, I want to ask a couple of questions to help us get a picture of where we are all at collectively when it comes to evangelism. First, in your mind, **what does an evangelist look like?**

Alright, next one: **what is the Gospel?** Throw out a few quick responses . . .

*(Record the group's answers on a whiteboard or a big sheet of paper and keep it for the two sessions to revisit at the end)*

**Evangelist**

**Gospel**

- ☛ *Do you think this is an accurate picture of an evangelist and the message she or he carries?*

## talking point

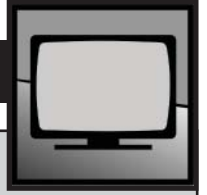


Ever heard this version of the Gospel:

*"Jesus died on a cross to forgive you for your sins. Once you say sorry, you'll be saved. That means you can know right now that when you die, you'll go to Heaven and live with Him there forever."*

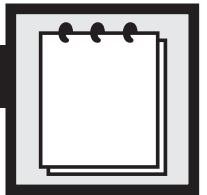
What's right about this message? Now, stop and think of all the ways this might *confuse* your average unchurched Aussie. *What parts of the "good news" does this leave out? And is there any part of the Biblical story this message mis-represents? Does God really love the whole cosmos (John 3:16), or just the people in it? What does this mean for the message we share?*

## Video: *The Gospel of the Kingdom*



- ❖ Today's images of "evangelist" and "Gospel" ... but what about back then?
- ❖ Mark 1:14-15, Gospel (good news) = "The Kingdom is at hand, so repent and believe"
- ❖ The first recorded "evangelist": Pheidippides the Marathon Runner, "Victory!"
- ❖ Gospel = a public announcement about a public event intended for the public realm of life. Because of the victory, the city has a new beginning, a different reality.
- ❖ All "evangelists" are Kingdom messengers, and all "Gospels" require a response.

## *my thoughts*




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## *talking point*



So, if our message is not just the Gospel of Salvation, but the Gospel of the Kingdom ...

*What is the Kingdom?*

*What does this new Kingdom look like?*

When God took on flesh, He showed in Jesus what the Kingdom is about—the King Himself demonstrated the Kingdom (Luke 4:14-21). In the words of E. Stanley Jones, the Kingdom is "God's total answer to humanity's total need"—good news physically, socially, politically, economically, environmentally, and spiritually. And as the Father sent the Son, so Jesus sends us. Given this ...

*How should our witness look? How can Kingdom words and Kingdom deeds go together?*

Each of us is called to tell others about God's Kingdom. But no two of our Sign Posts will look exactly the same. The people we reach are each individual, with unique needs; as such, the Holy Spirit uses us differently to best meet the needs of those around us. We don't fit ourselves to evangelism; evangelism is fit to us as we share naturally what Jesus has done in our lives. Slick speech and microphone technique are irrelevant to being an evangelist. *What's your style?*

 *Optional mid session break point*

## try this (optional activity)



Grab out Bibles and divvy up the passages. *Which style of evangelism fits you best? Why?*

1. Acts 2:1-41 >> Peter's sermon @ Pentecost (Confrontational Style – 2 Timothy 4:2)
2. Acts 17:16-33 >> Paul's sermon @ the Areopagus in Athens (Intellectual Style – 2 Corinthians 10:5)
3. John 9:1-27 >> The blind man now seeing, recounting his experience before the Pharisees (Testimonial Style – 1 John 1:3a)
4. Luke 5:27-32 >> Jesus' time with tax collectors like Levi (Interpersonal Style – 1 Corinthians 9:22)
5. John 4:1-42 >> Samaritan woman calls people to see Jesus (Invitational Style – Luke 14:23)
6. Acts 9:36-43 >> Dorcas showing her love in practical ways (Serving Style – Matthew 5:16)
7. Acts 3:1-19 >> Peter and John performing miracles in the Temple Courts (Supernatural Style – Matthew 10:7-8)

## Video: The Big Story



- ❖ Sign Posts with a different look but a common point: to Christ and His Kingdom
- ❖ The questions non-Christians are asking, and the need for a clear and relevant Sign Post
- ❖ Good news, *individually, corporately, and cosmically*, but the need for a back story
- ❖ Why drills, and why *The Big Story?* >> Sharing *The Big Story*:

- **Not the Way It's Supposed to Be** ... what do you see on the news > thirst for better

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- **Designed for good** ... love God, love others, cultivate the Earth

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- **Damaged by evil** ... rejected God, abused others, vandalized the Earth = sin

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- **Restored for better** ... God entered in Jesus, paying our debt and defeating the powers

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- **Sent together to heal** ... if align with Kingdom > inside out change > help heal world

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- **Set everything right** ... Jesus returns to judge evil and resurrect the cosmos

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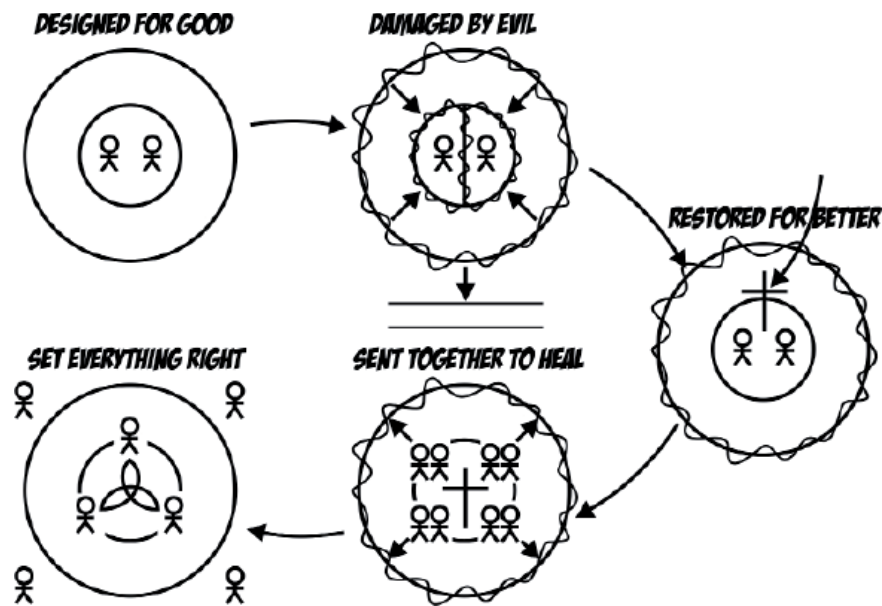
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- **Which are you?** ... damaged, restored, on mission? Go via Jesus > deal with self first

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### talking point



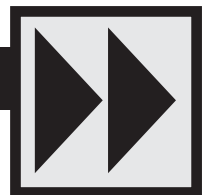
Have you ever heard the Gospel presented that way? What is different? Is anything left out? Do you think it presents *The Big Story* well? What are the implications for our current lives here? How comfortable would you feel working off a structure like that?

### big ideas (wrap up)



- \* A Sign Post can literally spell the difference between life and death
- \* Our role is to be a Sign Post, pointing people to Jesus
- \* Evangelists come in all shapes and sizes, and we all have a message to share
- \* The Gospel of the Kingdom is the good news of God's rule through Jesus
- \* *The Big Story*: designed for good >> damaged by evil >> restored for better >> sent together to heal >> set everything right

### where to from here?



This session has focused on getting our heads around the Gospel and how to Sign Post it to those who are lost, in a way that makes sense. So, here are the next steps:

- **Watch and practice with "The Big Story" video** (<http://pathways.kbc.org.au/passing-it-on/>) until you've got it down pat. You'll role play this in pairs next week, so come ready!
- Work through the **5 devotions** following this session, one per week day. Genuinely ask God to open your heart and speak through His Word, to catch His heart for the lost.
- Keep **praying for the person** God laid on your heart at the start of this session. Ask God for four other people as well, and get in the habit of praying for them each day. This is crucial.
- Next week we're looking at sharing your story. In preparation, really try and boil down the heart of your relationship with God (cut away religious jargon) and answer this question:  
**Why is Jesus good news to me?**