Spread the Word
Eight sessions on Evangelism
Secondary School
Lunchtime Group Resource
The Crusader Union is a Bible-based, interdenominational Christian youth organisation, whose vision is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to students in the Independent Schools of Australia, to nurture Christians and to encourage church membership.

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Welcome

This resource has been specifically written with school groups in mind but can be adapted depending on your needs. It is based on the group running for approximately 30 minutes each meeting.

What’s Inside?

• 8 sets of leader’s notes for regular meetings. The leader’s notes provide the aim of the study, a fun activity, discussion questions (with notes to help answer some questions) and prayer ideas.
• 8 student pages for regular meetings. The student pages can be photocopied and handed out if so desired. Each sheet contains the Bible passage (NIV), activities/questions and prayer ideas.
• 2 colour advertising posters designed to grab the attention of students and help increase awareness of your group. There is space for you to fill in your group name and where you meet. We encourage schools to use the ‘CRU School Groups’ logo when promoting their group so as to link students with the work that God is doing in other schools.

Before You Start

• Please note that all pages in this resource can be photocopied but Crusaders requests each school purchase at least one original.
• It is vital that time is spent adapting these resources to the specific needs of your group. As a rough guide, time needs to be spent on the introduction/game (5 min), short talk (10 min maximum) as well as the activity and prayer section (15 min). There is also an alternative boxed section containing questions which may be more appropriate if your group has many students not already committed to the Christian faith. These give them opportunities to think and respond that do not lead them towards sharing the gospel with others!
• Thought of evangelism leads to a wide variety of emotions. We talk and pray about evangelism but many find it extremely difficult to carry out. This series aims to inform and equip students to understand what, why and some hows of evangelism. It is by no means an exhaustive manual on the topic but we pray that it will provide students with the knowledge and motivation to be involved in spreading the Word - promoting and passing on the greatest news the world has ever known.
• The series culminates in an outreach event, to be planned and organised by the students. Encourage your group to take ownership and leadership of this event, and assist them where necessary. This falls on Week 8, but does not need to follow directly after the series. You may wish to plan it for the following term or another appropriate time in your school calendar.
• Recommended Reading: “Promoting the Gospel” (John Dickson) & “Youth Evangelism” (Ken Moser). These are two great books which encourage us to think widely and creatively about how evangelism is done.

We pray that this resource will be a great help as you join in God’s work of bringing students to Himself and growing them to be like His Son.

“We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labour, struggling with all His energy which so powerfully works in me.”

Colossians 1:28–29
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Passage</th>
<th>Aim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>WITNESS</td>
<td>Acts 1:1-8</td>
<td>That students will be excited that the Holy Spirit helps us witness about Jesus throughout the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>GOSPEL</td>
<td>Acts 2:29-39</td>
<td>For students to be able to understand and communicate the gospel message clearly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CHANGED BEHAVIOUR</td>
<td>Acts 2:42-47, Acts 20:17-21</td>
<td>To challenge students to be changed by the gospel message and to live and behave in ways that will attract people to this message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>MOTIVATION</td>
<td>Acts 4:18-20, Acts 5:29-32</td>
<td>Even in the face of difficulty and opposition, students will obey God and be passionate in witnessing about Jesus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>SPREAD</td>
<td>Acts 8:1b-5</td>
<td>For students to see God’s sovereignty in spreading the gospel, and to encourage them to proactively play a part in this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>LIVING PROOF</td>
<td>Acts 9:1-6, Acts 26:4-23</td>
<td>For students to be equipped to share their personal story as they witness about Jesus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>R.S.V.P.</td>
<td>Acts 13:42-52</td>
<td>To challenge students to be prayerful for those who hear the gospel, knowing the gospel is welcomed by some and rejected by others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>REACH OUT!</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>An event or program planned and organised by students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aim
That students will be excited that the Holy Spirit helps us witness about Jesus throughout the world.

Preparation
- Read through Acts 1, familiarising yourself with the context and content of the focus passage. Pray that students will be excited about God’s plans for the world to know Him and their part in God’s plans.
- Photocopy the ‘Week 1 Students page’ for everyone (page 20). Bring along coloured pens/textas/highlighters for students to use.
- Bring along map from page 21 and a copy of “Operation World” by Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk (available from Christian bookstores).

Introduction
Evangelism is a word often used but rarely understood and an activity rarely done naturally. We talk about it but don’t often do it. Some of us may be afraid of doing it, others are confused about it. Some do it well, some do it poorly. Over this series, we will be looking at how to Spread the Word: what evangelism is and how we are to be involved in passing on the greatest news the world has ever known.

We will be reading sections from the book of Acts to help us to think about the ‘what’ and ‘how to’ of evangelism and aiming to make this series as hands on and practical as possible!

For groups with non-believing students:
You may choose to run discussions on the claims of the gospel and their responses to it, rather than spending the time equipping students to do evangelism. If this is the case, discussion questions will be available in the dotted box each week.

To Begin: Discuss the following questions:
- What is the greatest news you’ve ever heard?
- Who did you tell? How did you tell them?

Short Talk
A) The disciples were witnesses of Jesus’ death and resurrection.
   - Jesus, the Son of God, had beaten death and is alive forever.
   - But what now? How were the disciples to follow Jesus?
   - Jesus had proved that He was God’s chosen King. Was he now going to fight against the Romans & bring Israel to power again?

B) Jesus’ instructions are: Stay and wait
   - He asks the disciples to wait where they are for the gift from God - the Holy Spirit.
   - The Holy Spirit would give power to the disciples to carry out their new role: as witnesses to the city, state, neighbouring countries and the whole world.
   - Jesus’ disciples were to be witnesses: people who report what they had seen and heard. They were to pass on the good news about Jesus - who He is and what He has done.

C) The message has been passed on and passed on... to us!
   - [show map] With the help of the Holy Spirit, Jesus’ disciples DID witness to others in Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth.
   - These eyewitness accounts have been passed on to us too! This is THE BIG PLAN for Jesus’ followers: to be His witnesses.
   - Believers today have also been given the Holy Spirit who gives us power to be witnesses about Jesus. We can continue to pass on the eyewitness reports about Jesus today - are we doing that?
**Activity**

**Connect 4 - How can we be witnesses today?**

**Who can we be witnessing to?** Using the sheet on page 20, think of the following:

- Who are your friends at school and outside of school? Write their names down.
- Choose 4 friends - what are their attitudes to the good news of Jesus (you may wish to think about traffic light colours: red - doesn’t know Jesus, orange - interested in learning more, green - follower of Jesus).
- Think about the connections that your 4 friends have with Christians. eg. I sit next to Sarah (red) in Geography, who plays soccer with Ben who is in this CRU group. OR I play netball with Jess (orange), who also catches the same bus as Liz who is a Christian friend from church.

*These are people you can be witnessing to!* Its great to see that there are other Christians connected to your friends. We will be thinking about what to tell them and how to tell them the great news about Jesus in coming weeks. Why not start to pray for these friends who are in the ‘red’ or ‘orange’ stages? Keep these sheets for Week 7.

Alternatively, bring along a world map and a copy of “Operation World”. Pick some countries that students have visited or have an interest in and find out about the spread of the good news about Jesus there.

The gospel has spread from Jerusalem and is now all over the world as the witness about Jesus was passed on. Many more still need the opportunity to hear this great message. You may wish to highlight a particular missionary/country and pray for them over the course of the term.

**Prayer**

Split into small groups to discuss each other’s thoughts and feelings about evangelism. Pray for organisations who are being witnesses for Jesus. Pray for each other as well, thanking God for the Holy Spirit who will help us to be witnesses. Begin to pray for opportunities to be witnesses about Jesus.

**Alternatively,**

Read 2 Peter 1:16.

- Challenge the students to think through the eyewitness accounts in the Bible. Are they made up stories or really what was witnessed by many men? What kinds of things did they witness about Jesus?
- Why do Christians today still speak about these eyewitness accounts? (Isn’t it “out of date”?)
- Christians are instructed by Jesus to be His witnesses, passing on the truth about Him. Because what we believe is based on reports from Jesus’ disciples, any witness about Jesus today should involve their original eyewitness accounts, as written in the Bible.
- Does the group have any questions about these eyewitness accounts about Jesus?

**Finish**

To witness is God’s big mission for His followers. It is not dependent on our own abilities, but all believers are given the gift of the Holy Spirit to be able to spread the word about Jesus.

The disciples were to be witnesses about the good news of Jesus, also called “The Gospel”. But **what is the gospel news?**
Acts 1:6-8

6 So when they met together, they asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

One eye witness is better than ten hear sayers.

*Titus Maccius Plautus (poet)*

**PRAY** for friends in the “red” and “orange” categories. Thank God for His Holy Spirit who helps us to be witnesses.

**THINK:** How would you explain the gospel?