

# Welcome!

Living out our  
apostolic calling

---

**MISSIONAL FOUNDATIONS**

# MISSIONAL: POSSIBLE

- Mission Goal: Living out our Apostolic calling
- Challenges: The Current Canadian Context
- Resources: Possibilities from Scripture
- Making a Plan: Considering Change
- Into Action: Commit to Initial Steps

Living out  
our apostolic calling

---

**IN A CHANGING CONTEXT**

We begin  
with Jesus  
words...

## Jesus Gives The Great Commission

<sup>16</sup> Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. <sup>18</sup> Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Matthew 28:16-20 (NIV)

# When you say the word 'apostolic' what comes to mind?

- ▶ The historic creeds?
- ▶ Episcopal succession through the ages?
- ▶ The original inner-circle of Jesus?
- ▶ A specific denomination?



# How are we being Apostolic?

- ▶ In what ways are you personally “sending out a message”?
- ▶ What message are you sending?
- ▶ Are you ‘saying’ the things you think you are saying?
  - ▶ In what ways might you know how the message is received?
- ▶ How is your church community encouraging the act of being “sent” out?
- ▶ Is your church, as a body, “sending out a message”?

# North American Context

Evangelism Project of 2004 to 2008

Stats drawn from 30,000 churches and 6 denominations

- ❑ In non-ethnic, non-southern congregations fewer than ½ of 1% were baptizing a significant number of adults.
- ❑ Only 150 churches out of 30,000 were sharing their faith with significant numbers of new adults.

# The result?

The majority of adult Christians  
in North America  
are not sharing their faith  
with anyone.

How did we depersonalize  
Discipleship (Apostolic calling)  
so thoroughly?



**There are lots of negative approaches and images that we may have experienced or associate with Evangelists and modern day Apostles or Disciples**

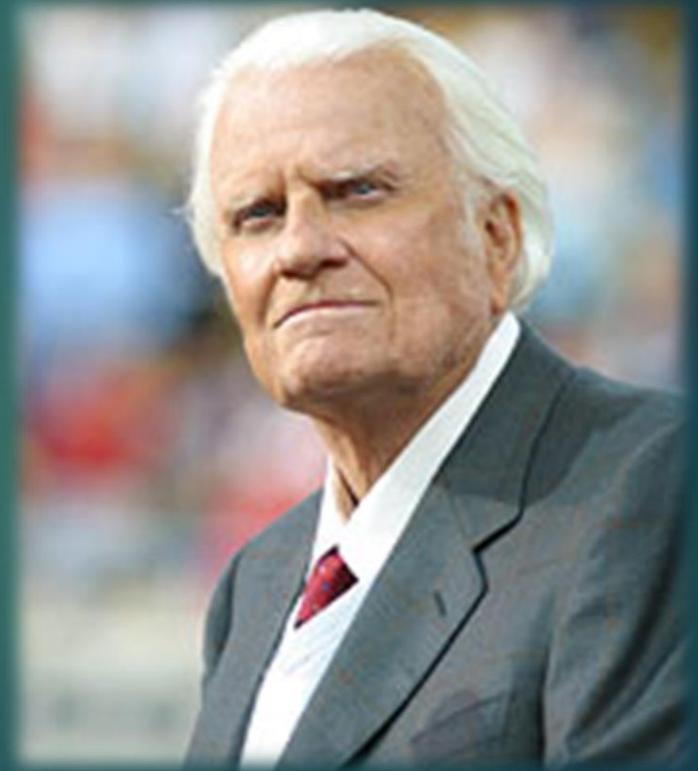
# The images we have of being evangelists:

- ▶ Mechanistic, “Just say these words ...”
- ▶ Objectifying, “That’s one more notch in my belt’
- ▶ Triumphalistic, “Accept it! You need this now!”
- ▶ Disrespectful, “Only an idiot would argue with this.”

# Other assumptions we may hold:

## An evangelist must be:

- A brilliant communicator
- A skilled apologist
- A biblical scholar
- A certain perseverant personality



# What else makes evangelism so ..... Distasteful?

- ▶ The guilt ..... This is your Christian duty
- ▶ The biblical escape clause .... That's just not my gift (Ephesians 4:11)
- ▶ Lack of confidence .... Is Jesus really



And  
the...



What do we mean when we say the word *evangelism*?

Evangelism: one definition

“Cooperating with the Holy Spirit to share the good news, in order to help someone take steps towards becoming an apprentice of Jesus, thereby joining in the mission of God.”

# What is your experience of Evangelism?

- What struck you about the information you just heard?
- Have you experienced someone evangelizing to you?
  - What was that like?
- Have you participated in evangelism?
  - How was that for you?
- Do you see parallels in the examples given of how your church interacts with your community?

Living out  
our apostolic calling

---

**THE CURRENT CANADIAN CONTEXT**

# The Canadian Context Today

- ▶ decline in church attendance
- ▶ rise in competing 'spiritualities'
- ▶ individualism & consumerism thrives
- ▶ strong environmentalism
- ▶ deep suspicion of institutions
- ▶ longing for belonging
- ▶ improved education & health
- ▶ pervasive sense of societal decline

# A Spectrum of Spirituality

---

ANGUS REID INSTITUTE:  
PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH CANADIAN PUBLIC OPINION POLL  
PUBLISHED APRIL 13, 2017

# How would you have answered?

## Beliefs Do you believe:

- ▶ That God or a higher power exists?
- ▶ In life after death?
- ▶ That God is active in this world?
- ▶ In heaven
- ▶ In hell

## Behaviours Which do you do at least monthly:

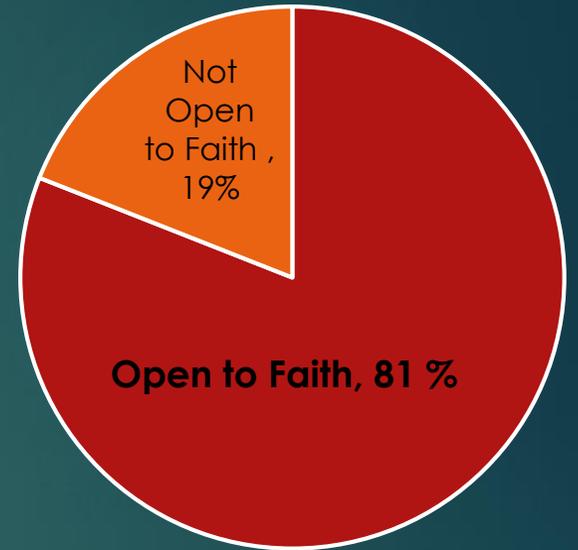
- ▶ Pray
- ▶ Attend religious services
- ▶ Talk about faith or religion with family
- ▶ Talk about faith or religion with friends
- ▶ Read the Bible, Quran or other sacred texts
- ▶ Experience God's presence

## Attitudes Which words are positive for you:

religion, forgiveness, morality, mercy, meditation, karma, salvation, mystical, born-again, resurrection, theology, evangelism

# Results: Four Canadian mindsets on religion

1. Religiously Committed (21%)
2. Privately Faithful (30%)
3. Spiritually Uncertain (30%)
4. Non-Believers (19%)



# Conclusions and implications (1)

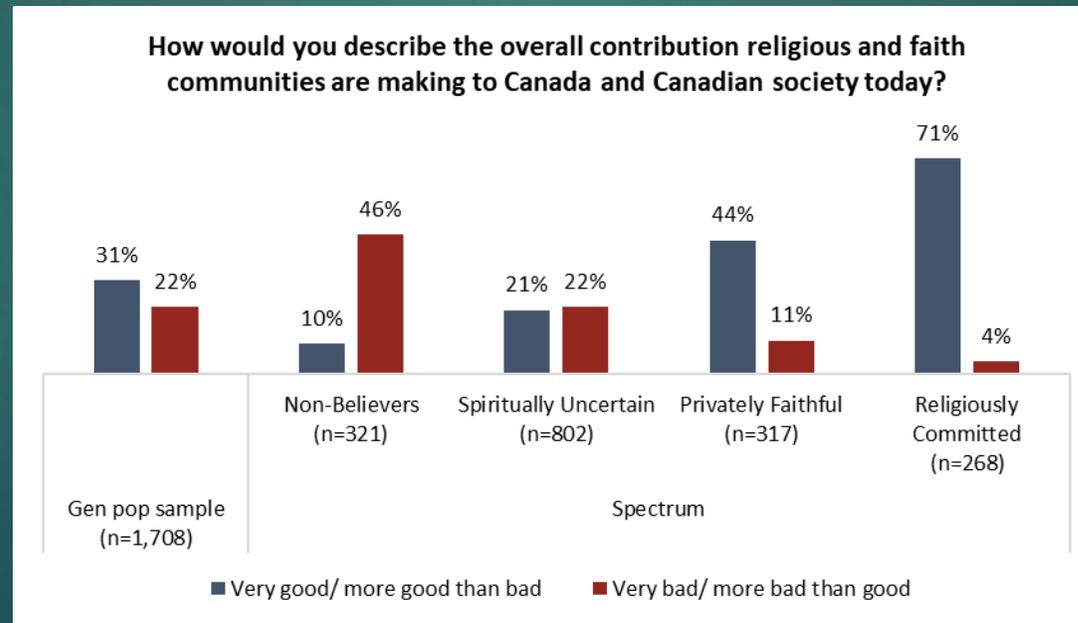
- ▶ Canadians keep the faith to varying degrees but few reject it entirely
- ▶ They are less hostile than attendance might imply
- ▶ The spiritually uncertain are somewhat interested in questions of the existence of God and life after death ... and are generally uncertain about their beliefs

# Conclusions and implications (2)

- ▶ The privately faithful are very interested in questions of faith, want their children to be formally welcomed into a faith community, and often pray
- ▶ Younger, male, and non-immigrant Canadians may be the most challenging to reach with the gospel
- ▶ Few people really like the words theology or evangelism

# Angus Reid Poll (2022)

- ▶ Similar responses as previous poll when it comes to Spiritual attitudes
- ▶ New data suggests that there is a distrust of organized religion
- ▶ How does this change how we might interact with those outside the church?



Living out  
our apostolic calling

---

**POSSIBILITIES FROM SCRIPTURE**

# The Healing of Naaman

## 2 Kings 5: 1-5

Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man and in high favor with his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Aram. The man, though a mighty warrior, suffered from leprosy. <sup>2</sup> Now the Arameans on one of their raids had taken a young girl captive from the land of Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. <sup>3</sup> She said to her mistress, "If only my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy." <sup>4</sup> So Naaman went in and told his lord just what the girl from the land of Israel had said. <sup>5</sup> And the king of Aram said, "Go then, and I will send along a letter to the king of Israel."

# The Healing of Naaman

## 2 Kings 5: 9-10,14-15

<sup>9</sup> So Naaman came with his horses and chariots, and halted at the entrance of Elisha's house. <sup>10</sup> Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go, wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored and you shall be clean."

<sup>14</sup> So he went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; his flesh was restored like the flesh of a young boy, and he was clean.

<sup>15</sup> Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company; he came and stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel; please accept a present from your servant."

# What does Scripture suggest?

## 2 Kings 5: 1-19

What led to Naaman's new found faith?

What did the slave girl do?

- ▶ She saw the need
- ▶ Spoke in faith to the need
- ▶ Used her own sphere of influence
- ▶ Trusted that God would use others also
- ▶ Trusted that God would act
- ▶ Acted out of holy intent
- ▶ Shared what she knew

# Living out our apostolic calling

---

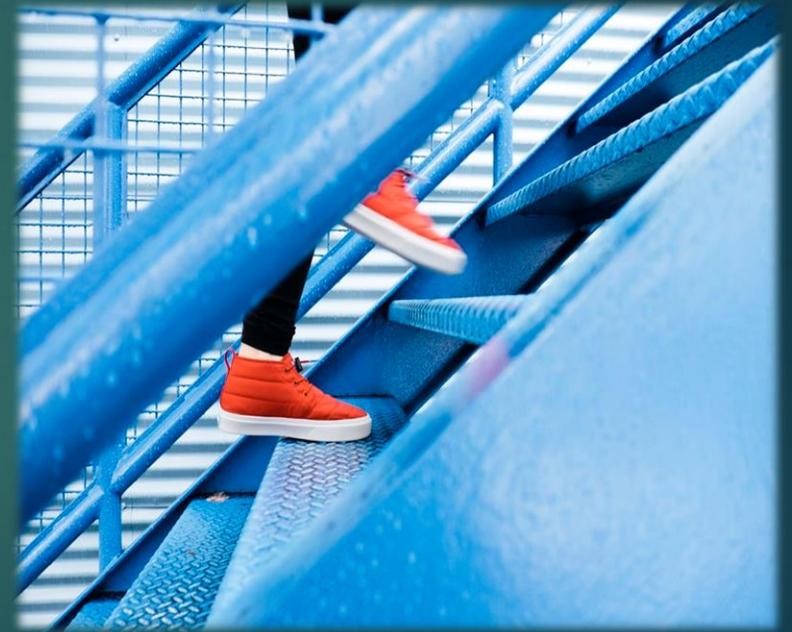
**SELECTING OPTIONS FOR CHANGE**

# Helping people take steps:

## Five thresholds in faith development

Moving from:

1. distrusting to trusting
2. trusting to curious
3. curious to 'open to change'
4. 'open to change' to seeking
5. seeking to following



# What do you think about the Five Thresholds?

- ▶ How long do you think it might take to work through each step?
- ▶ Can you think of anyone you know in one of these thresholds?
- ▶ What might your role be in helping someone in these steps?
  - ▶ What is the role of the Holy Spirit?
- ▶ How do you recognize the active nature of what we do?

## **We cooperate with the Holy Spirit**

- **We don't just sit and wait for the Holy Spirit**
- **We also don't move without the Holy Spirit**

# Mindset Shift

What does thinking differently look like?

## What it ISN'T

- Not a program
- Not prescriptive
- Not just about coming up with more events or duties
- Not about change for the sake of change



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

# Mindset Shift

What does thinking differently look like?

## It IS about

Changing the way we THINK about what we do.

- ✓ Engaging with people in a more meaningful way
- ✓ Keeping 'being missional' forefront in what we are already doing
- ✓ Understanding how others see us and the church



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

# Technical problem or

# Adaptive challenge?

- The solution already lies within the organization's current capabilities
- Requirement: Apply current know-how
- Involves those in authority in the specific area

- The solution lies in a change of the organization's culture
- Requirement: Learn new ways
- Involves everyone in the organization

**A Mindset Shift**

“Because the problem lies in people,  
the solution lies in them too.  
So the work of addressing an adaptive  
challenge must be done by the people  
connected to the problem.”

(The Practice of Adaptive Leadership, p.74)



# Some basic principles of cultivating change

- 1) The two parents of change: pain & possibility
- 2) Leaders work hard to give the work back *to those to whom it belongs*
- 3) Change involves engaging people in and cultivating: new ideas, new motivations, and new practices

Evangelism is more than an  
individual activity

---

**IT IS ALSO A CORPORATE ACTIVITY SHARED  
BY THE CHURCH AS A COMMUNITY**

# Evangelism: one definition

“Cooperating with the Holy Spirit to share the good news, in order to help someone take steps towards becoming an apprentice of Jesus, thereby joining in the mission of God.”

... Leading to a new Mindset

# When evangelism is *at the heart of a diocese:*

- ▶ It will show up in every area of your **diocesan life**
- ▶ It will show up in the liturgy, budget and agenda of your **diocesan synods**
- ▶ It will be reflected in the **stats you ask for**
- ▶ It will be reflected in **programs & resources**
- ▶ It will underpin your **postulancy process** and your **post-ordination training**

# When evangelism is *at the heart of a church / parish:*

- ▶ It will be assumed there are **explorers present**
- ▶ It will show up in your **language in worship**
- ▶ It will be reflected in your **church budget**
- ▶ It will be reflected in your **programs & meetings**
- ▶ it will be evidenced in your **friendships**
- ▶ **many adult baptisms, confirmations & reaffirmations** will be the norm

Thank you!

You can make it:

**MISSIONAL: POSSIBLE**