

# Loving our neighbours

“You know how we lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere.”

## 1 Thessalonians 1:5-8 (NIV)

*This session guide outlines suggested elements you might use to help answer the key question below and achieve the aim of the training session. The time allocations can be adjusted according to the amount of time you have.*

**Key question:** How can we care about and help build loving communities that point people to our relational God?

**Aim:** To see that we have the ultimate reason to believe in community because we have a relational, trinitarian God. Being involved in and helping build community creates opportunities to share God’s love and the gospel.

## Pre-video ice breaker/discussion starter (3 min)

**What is most attractive to you about being part of a loving community?**

*We would recommend people split into pairs or triplets to discuss this and further questions. If you are doing more than one session over a period of time, it may be helpful for people to stick to the same pairs/groups so that they can build trust and support one another consistently.*

*We’d also recommend you either print the list of questions or display them on a screen if meeting in person. Put them into the chat feature before you head into breakout rooms if you’re meeting online.*

## Play video by Nay Dawson (approx. 15 min)

Download here: [apassionforlife.org.uk/lc2-vid-download](https://apassionforlife.org.uk/lc2-vid-download)

## Practical exercises and discussion questions (15 min)

*Below is a list of questions to consider using. You will not have time for all of them, so select those that you think will be most helpful for people to internalise and apply what they’ve just heard. Maybe you can think of others.*

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1. What communities has God called you to? Think about where you live, work, study and any hobby and sports groups. Are there any communities you could try to get involved in?
2. How can you be more intentional about praying for those in that community to come to know Jesus? Are there other Christians in this community who could pray with you?
3. Once you've pictured your communities, which of these comes more naturally in the way you interact with them – loving dearly or speaking clearly? Which do you need to be more intentional about?
4. Thinking about the communities you're involved in, how could you love the community more? How could you be a light for Jesus there? Is there a role you could take on to serve others, care for and build up the community?
5. Brainstorm some ways you can share about and speak clearly to people in your communities about Jesus.

## Prayer time (12 min)

*We would recommend leaving some time for people to pray in their pairs or groups. You may like to ask them to reflect and pray about what has encouraged or challenged them from this session. They may like to include these points:*

- Thank God that He is a relational God who humbly came in Jesus Christ to seek and save the lost.
- Ask God to help you be involved and active in building community and friendships with those in our lives.
- Ask God to lead those in our communities to Him and to help you love dearly and speak clearly to them about the gospel

## Further Bible Reflection (10 min)

*This is an additional Bible reflection to go deeper into the main theme. You may choose to use it as part of the training session. Alternatively, you could hand it out on a printout / email it around for reflection during the week, along with the "take home" questions.*

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" John 1:14 (ESV)

"For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost" Luke 19:10 (ESV)

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"that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation." 2 Corinthians 5:19 (ESV)

**Comment:** The 'Incarnation' is first and foremost about the person of Christ and the uniqueness of the God/Man Jesus. We need to be cautious as we think about it in terms of mission and the idea of being incarnational. However, we can acknowledge that Jesus entered into our world, shared in our experience and came to transform.

What we do and say should clearly be governed by what we believe, and as we revere the doctrine of the incarnation of Christ, we can still be inspired by the model he gives us.

**Discuss:** Seeing that Jesus came to seek and save the lost, share some ways in which we could intentionally place ourselves in contact with our neighbours/those in our communities to have the opportunity to love and share the gospel with them?

## Take Home

*You may like to printout / email around this section so that people can re-watch the video and reflect further.*

Why not re-watch the video with a notebook open, praying that God will root these principles into your heart. Watch here: [apassionforlife.org.uk/lc2-view](https://apassionforlife.org.uk/lc2-view)

To help you be more intentional in your relationships with people in your community and move into a deeper friendship with them, you may like to:

- Write a list of the people in your communities.
- Ask yourself what kind of relationships are there. You could mark them as either acquaintances, occasional friends or deep friendships.
- Think about how you could move towards a deeper friendship with them.
- Make a plan for the steps you could take.
- Plan to revisit the list and steps regularly to help you keep intentional.
- Check out the book "Made for friendship: The relationship that halves our sorrows and doubles our joys" by Drew Hunter

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The training video is available for anyone to watch at [apassionforlife.org.uk/lc2-view](https://apassionforlife.org.uk/lc2-view)

More stories from everyday believers can be viewed and downloaded at [apassionforlife.org.uk/lc2](https://apassionforlife.org.uk/lc2)