

Priest Idol session 5

Engaging with the community and selling the message

BEFORE VIEWING:

- Feedback from reflection/ research at the end of session 4.
or
- List the ways people in your community can find out what is happening at your church.

Start DVD at Priest Idol 3 – 0000

Summary

Part 1: The marketing company's campaign – 'Church Lite' is launched. The village is swamped with billboards and posters.

Part 2: The new reflection zone at the back of church is completed. The billboards don't seem to make much impact on the people of Lundwood. The congregation find it difficult to explain what 'Church Lite' is about, so they are given sales training and practice. More signs go up in the church grounds and people's gardens. Finally the congregation help James deliver 3000 light bulbs with an invitation to a massive party in the church grounds.

(25 minutes)

AFTER VIEWING:

Getting the message out

- The aim of the hoardings and posters is get people to the church with an open mind, but they don't seem to produce much interest among the locals.

The congregation find it difficult to explain what 'Church Lite' is about so they are offered some sales training to help sell their lighter brand of church.

How comfortable are you 'selling' your church? Do you think you might benefit from some sales training?! If so, how?

The apostle Peter writes to Christians scattered through Asia Minor...

- *"Have reverence for Christ in your hearts, and honour him as Lord. Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you, but do it with gentleness and respect."* (1 Peter 3:15-16)

How might Peter's words give insight into how we should get the message out?

Reasons for and against going to church

- In the sales training the congregation are asked to list reasons for and against going to church.
 - Red post-it notes for reasons people definitely can't come to church.
 - Yellow post-it notes for people who could come, but the reason's they don't.
 - Green post-it notes for reasons to come to church.

Try the same exercise. This may be quite sobering to do, but is a very worthwhile exercise.

Why do those who do go to church, go?

- The sales trainer encourages the group to think positive – to concentrate on increasing the reasons to be there and to come to church.

How can you and your church increase people's reasons for being there?

Practice meeting the people

- The congregation are introduced to a garden party setting, to practice recruiting new members for church. They make lots of mistakes – forgetting names, forgetting who they've talked to, talking about everything except encouraging people to come along to church.

Is sales talk too pushy? Are there ways we can let people know what we have on offer and let them know our enthusiasm for church and the gospel?

Lundwood Lites up

- The congregation deliver 3000 light bulbs to every house in the village, together with balloons and an invitation to a massive party at the church for the launch of 'Church Lite'.

James reckons it's easier for the congregation to get revved up now they have the obvious goal of delivering light bulbs. How has working together on projects helped your church grow?

Person to person

- The sales trainer has more advice for James as he delivers the light bulbs to people. Make it personal to each person – not just a script. Use consideration. Adapt to the person and their circumstances. Encourage commitment. Use easy words.

How might this advice influence the way you speak about church to others, perhaps as you deliver church leaflets or magazines around your community?

REFLECT

The first page of the "Church Lite – Little book of Reflection" explains the Reflection Zone is a place to reflect, to remember, to reach out to God, to take some time out, to pray, to restore calm, or just to enjoy silence. It also says 'This is your time and space in your church'.

Take some quiet time to reflect how far you feel your church belongs to the congregation and how far it belongs to the whole community?