

## SESSION 5 - INVITE

### Discuss

1. Share in the group some of your experiences of either inviting someone to a Christian event, or being invited yourself. What was it like?
2. How many people in your group became a Christian because someone invited them to church; to an outreach event; to read a Christian book?

### Video 1: Effective invitations

Read Philippians 2:1-11.

1. What attitudes does Paul encourage?
2. How is Jesus the ultimate example of these attitudes?
3. How will these attitudes affect the way we go about inviting people to read the Bible; come along to church; attend an outreach event?

What are the most appropriate invitations for the friends you have been praying for? Use the table below to help you plan the practical steps you can take. For example:

- invite them to read a book which explains Christianity (see appendix 1 for some suggested resources).

- invite them to listen to a CD which explains Christianity (e.g. an evangelistic CD or a good sermon you heard at church).
- invite them to do a Bible study with you (perhaps on Ephesians 2).
- invite them to church.
- invite them to an outreach event.
- invite them to a course which explains Christianity.

| Name | Event/activity/book etc. | Practical steps to take |
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### Practical tips<sup>1</sup>

Here are some practical tips for inviting people to church or an outreach event.

- Be intentional. Plan to invite people to events and always be prepared for unexpected opportunities. Make sure you have invitations/flyers with you. Always be thinking about who you can ask along to events—don't leave everything to the last minute!
- Don't talk yourself out of it. Invite people confidently—God is at work! Don't keep talking nervously and start making excuses for them; offer the invitation and then wait for a reply.

<sup>1</sup> Sourced partly from Kim Hawtrey of Impact Evangelism. Used by permission.

- Use attractive language to describe the event (as long as it's true), but also let them know it's Christian. If you're not excited about the event, they won't be!
- Be realistic. Expect several knock-backs for every acceptance. For every event, plan to invite three or four people.
- Don't interpret a single knock-back as a sign that you should never invite that person again. It takes multiple invitations for some people to say "Yes". For others, it may just be that that particular event wasn't convenient.
- Link your invitation with a meal. If you're inviting people to a morning church meeting, then ask them to come over for lunch afterwards. If you're inviting them to an evening talk, perhaps organize to go out for coffee. This not only gives you a chance to talk afterwards but also displays your commitment to the friendship.
- Become known as an 'inviter' by often inviting people to share your life on other occasions (e.g. sport, meals, kids, movies), not just church. People want to know that there is more to the relationship than whether they come along to church with you!
- Organize to pick them up or meet them outside the venue. (Then be on time!) No-one wants to walk into an unfamiliar environment alone.
- Try asking two or more people to attend together. People feel safer in numbers and there is more chance of an acceptance.
- Make sure that you clearly convey the details of the event—date, time, location, what the event is about, cost (if any), what to wear, etc. If people are uncertain about anything then they either won't say yes, or won't turn up.
- Give them a phone call, email or text message to confirm the details the day before the event. This is particularly worthwhile if your friend is disorganized and might have forgotten.
- Invite people far enough in advance that they have plenty of notice, but not so far in advance that they are unlikely to commit themselves.
- Still attend even if you have no-one to go with. A half-empty room says that what is happening isn't really that important. Also, there

will be other guests you can talk with and make feel welcome. (And you can tell your friends what they missed out on!)

- Pray constantly for the people you plan to invite.
- Do it because you love them and want them to know the love of God displayed in Jesus Christ!

## Video 2: Invitation role-plays

## Discuss

From the role-plays, what was helpful about the way the invitations were made? What was less than helpful?

## To conclude

1. Spend time praying for any events which are coming up at your church. Pray that God would give you boldness and confidence as you invite people to find out more about Jesus.
2. If you have time, choose one or two people to share their one-minute story (of how they became a Christian) with the whole group.