

INTRODUCTORY COURSES TO EXPLORE FAITH

Exploring faith, at its best, is a process and conversation. Evangelism is not all about programs. Yet good quality resources can help guide discussion and point toward towards exploring who Jesus is, what he has done and what he is inviting us toward.

Here are three excellent and simple courses that introduce Jesus and faith. They can be used 1-on-1 or in groups, over 6-8 sessions, encourage a lot of reading of the gospels and discussion of their meaning, and all three are written and developed in Australia.

The wisest approach is not to mix-and-match from assorted courses, but pick one you can work with easily and use it whenever you get the chance and encourage others in your church to do the same.

Christianity Explained

Christianity Explained (CE) is an oldie but a goody. I first discovered CE about twenty years ago and haven't stopped using it since.

It is Australian material designed for the average Aussie who has little or no understanding of Christian Faith and is sold by Scripture Union or may be ordered online from www.christianityexplained.com.

The course comprises six lessons over six weeks and focuses on the basic information that a non Christian needs to make a decision for Christ.

The course is very flexible. I have used it one on one and up to eight people. It can be run during a meal, in a lounge room or at church depending on the availability of the participants.

The leaders guide is easy to understand and sets out each lesson clearly. It can be used word for word (I don't recommend that) if you want to.

The main benefits of CE are:

1. The shortness of the course. Six weeks is not too long to commit to for someone who is unsure of what they are getting themselves into.
2. It is non-threatening. Participants are not asked to read out loud nor does the leader start and end with prayer. Remember a non Christian is already nervous about doing the course and the less threatening the better for the participants.
3. The teaching sessions are set out clearly and easy to use. By the end of the course the participants will have a good understanding of their need of salvation and how to become a Christian.
4. It blows away the myths surrounding Christian faith that the average Aussie has and focuses on the essential beliefs.

Any gospel tool is better than none but CE has stood the test of time and continues to speak to those who want to know more about God, Jesus and eternity.

Reviewed by Rev Greg Templeton, pastor of Sydenham Baptist Church

Introducing God

Wouldn't it be great to have an evangelism course designed for Aussie culture? We do - Introducing God (IG) is an evangelism course written by an Aussie for Aussies. Created by Dominic Steele (of www.christiansinthedia.com) it adopts the successes of Alpha's social methods and the Biblical outline of the 2 Ways 2 Live tract.

The method: The course runs for 6-8 weeks (including optional weekend away) and is aimed at presenting the Gospel to our friends in a relaxed culturally appropriate way. For example, many Churches run it during a communal meal, but it also works for a small group in someone's home and even 1:1. During the evening there is a talk from the Bible, multimedia, and time for discussing the evening's topic in a safe environment.

The theology: IG explores the basic Gospel message. It assumes people have little or no knowledge of Christianity and so it begins at the beginning, with God as the loving maker and ruler of the world. Each week participants explore the next major step in the Bible's story line – sin, judgement, Jesus and his death and resurrection, and in the final week the question is asked– there are two ways to live, which way do you choose?

IG is not the only course around, but its Aussie flavor, clear teaching, and relational method make it a great choice.

Reviewed by Murray Campbell, pastor of Mentone Baptist Church

Further reviews of evangelism resources are available at www.buv.com.au/Ministries/LeadershipTraining/Evangelism.aspx. These and other resources may be inspected or borrowed from Darren at BUV. Other resource reviews are welcome. "Re-Imagining Evangelism" training and consulting is also available around Baptist churches.