



LIFE *On* MISSION

ADVENTIST CHURCH *in Sydney*

The Shared Interest

One of the things that makes us unique is what we are really interested in. Sometimes we might be the only the person who has a particular interest, like racing snails or keeping poisonous snakes as pets. It would be really boring if we all liked doing the same thing! At the same time, finding out that someone shares an interest with you is really exciting. Once you find that out, you have so much to talk about with them.

In your group, find something that you are interested in that no one else in the group is interested in. Also, figure out something that you are all interested in which you didn't know before.

Digging into the Bible

The Bible tells us that God anticipated that we would face the terrible problem of sin and that He developed a plan to save us before this world was even created (see **1 Peter 1:18-21**).

However, God knew that it would not be possible to save us remotely. Jesus had to come to this spiritually dark planet and live amongst us. John describes this beautifully in the opening chapter of his biography about Jesus. *The Message* translation captures what He did really well:

The Word became flesh and blood,
and moved into the neighbourhood.
We saw the glory with our own eyes,
the one-of-a-kind glory,
like Father, like Son,
Generous inside and out,
true from start to finish. **John 1:14**

1. Why did Jesus need to move into our neighbourhood? Why couldn't He have coordinated the salvation plan from heaven?
2. Isaiah tells us that "There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him." **Isaiah 53:2 (NLT)**. What was the glory that John and the other disciples could see in Jesus?
3. How did Jesus reveal what the Father was like to people?
4. In what ways can we follow Jesus' example of "becoming flesh and blood" and "moving into the neighbourhood" of people who are far from God?

Making Evangelism Fun and Effective

Michael Frost, who is a world famous mission expert living in Sydney, identified that living a life of mission like Jesus did involves spending time **close** to people that are spiritually lost and being **present** in their lives. There are many ways that we can spend time closer to non-Christians and be present in their lives, but an effective way to do so is to spend time with them doing things that you have a shared interest in. For example, a number of people in your group may enjoy camping or playing jazz music or flying drones.

5. What do you enjoy doing? How could you use this interest to build connections with people who are far from God?
6. What is a shared interest that a number of people in your group have in common? How could you use this shared interest to develop greater proximity and be really present in the community like Jesus was?
7. When will you start engaging in the community using your shared interest?
8. How can you introduce your faith into relationships that you will develop in your interest groups?

Talking with the Master

Spend time praying conversationally as a group. Ask Jesus to lead you to use your shared interests to really develop closer relationships with people who are far from God. Pray that the Holy Spirit would open up opportunities to share your faith with people that you are becoming closer to.