



Confidence
in the Gospel

As part of the Evangelical Alliance's *Confidence in the Gospel* initiative we are hosting a series of five national consultations to wrestle with significant and timely issues relating to the gospel.

To ensure that as many people as possible can engage with this programme, the talks are being filmed and made available online.

Why not watch some of the videos, and use the questions provided, to explore these vital subjects with your small group or leadership team?

For more information, videos and resources visit eauk.org/confidence

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Synopsis

The gospel is global. You can't get any more global than: "For God so loved the world..." (John 3:16). But, it's decidedly particular in its universality.

- 1) Particularity of the global gospel:** It isn't just any good news; it's very particular news. It's the particular story of God the Creator, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It's the narrative of the formation of a particular people at a particular point in time, and it culminates with a very particular person. History matters in the global gospel.
- 2) The universality and challenge of the global gospel:** The universality of the gospel challenges our own self-understanding and identity formation. We are invited into a bigger story. A story not of our own choosing, a story we were not even a part of. The global aspect of the gospel destabilises our identity, both Jews and Gentiles have to be reconfigured through the person of Jesus.
- 3) The global gospel as the promise of a surprise:** We are called to plant seeds, to witness to God's amazing love and the sacrifice of Jesus, but how the Spirit will grow the plant from that seed is not for us to determine. That plant might look really different from what we have known or even from what we like. The global gospel calls into question all our attempts to control, or to determine outcomes according to our desires and our understanding of how things should be.
- 4) The global gospel as evangelism:** From the first Abraham, to the laws of Moses, to Jeremiah's instructions to plant gardens and build houses, this gospel was always about showing in word, deed and character that there is only one true God. If we lose this evangelistic nature, we've lost the gospel. It is evangelistic, inviting the whole world to join their many stories with the story of Jesus; each part being joined to the whole, but each maintaining its distinctiveness.

Questions

for small groups

- 1) In what ways do you think we have over-personalised the gospel and therefore lost some of its global aspects?
- 2) Rosalee spoke of how the global gospel "destabilises our identity" and the need for it to be "reconfigured through the person of Jesus". In practice, what does this look like?
- 3) What does it mean to "plant seeds and let the Spirit grow it"? Can we think of examples of where we might have tried to control or determine outcomes rather than let God surprise us?

for leadership teams

- 1) Is the gospel we proclaim as global as it should be?
- 2) In personalising the gospel message, have we made it less particular, while simultaneously not making it universal enough? How can we help people understand the particularity and universality of the gospel?
- 3) Is there a difference between being "evangelistic about the gospel" and "having a gospel that is inherently evangelistic"? Do we need to rediscover the evangelistic nature of the gospel message?