

**On A Mission - study six****SUSTAINING MISSION:**  
**GOING TOGETHER**

**The mission** is still before us...

In the first two studies of this section we looked at the *type* and *quality* of relationships needed to keep us going in mission. Now we come to the *practicalities* of supporting one another as God uses us to bring the good news to our friends.

**Exercise 1: Our World, Our Relationships**

Let's return to the relational map in study 4 (use your original or if you wish, or you can redraw it below).

On our map we should have the names of the important people in our life – including the 1-5 people we have in mind and are praying for as we go through 'on a mission'. Chances are that there will be a number of different circles that people on your list are a part of (eg some are workmates, others family, others sports team mates...). But hopefully there will be some overlap between the circles (eg you are in a sports team *with* a workmate).

1. **Note down any faith connections** that your friends (who aren't Christians) have with others. eg your friend may have a mother who is a Christian, or their good friend's girlfriend is a Christian, or they went along to a youth group when they were younger...
2. **Note down any Christians who have some connection** with your friends who aren't Christians. Include people who already know your friends or have something in common with them or who you imagine would just get along well together. **Underline those you feel you could team with.**
3. Relationships often have a 'seasonal nature', where for a period of time you connect with some of your friends more than others. **Prayerfully consider which of your non-believing friends God may want you to be particularly relating to and praying for.**

Relational Map

## **Exercise 2: The New Testament World**

The apostle Paul worked with many different people to take the good news out into the world.<sup>1</sup> As he went into different cities, he also encouraged the local believers to work together in order to see the gospel expand into their worlds.

### **WHAT LOCAL BELIEVERS DO**

Read the following passages and note down the type of things Paul asked the believers in Rome and Philippi to do.

- Rom 12:9-21
- Phil 1:27-2:16

In the light of these passages are there one or two specific things can you and your Christian friends be putting into practice as you relate to your friends who are not Christians?

### **WHAT PARTNERING MIGHT LOOK LIKE**

Read the following verses then consider the questions below...

- Rom 12:4-5
- 1Cor 12:17-20

- What do you think are some of the strengths or skills that would need to be present for a 'team' to effectively help their friends encounter the good news?

*"Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well".*

*1Pet 4:10*

- What strengths or skills do you think you could contribute? And what weaknesses or areas would you need someone else to cover you in?

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<sup>1</sup> For some examples of Paul's teaming, see Col 4:7-18, Rom 16:1-16 1Cor 16:10-20

## **BARRIERS WE FACE IN OUR PARTNERING**

- What are some of the main reasons that stop us from effectively working together to make the good news accessible to our friends? If you could make progress in ONE of these areas, which would it be?

All this talk about 'mission' and 'teaming' and 'relational maps' sounds as though we have a hidden agenda and are out to treat people like projects.

- Is having a hidden agenda acceptable in our setting? Is it acceptable to have an agenda at all – even an open one?

*“Be ready to speak up and tell anyone who asks why you’re living the way you are, and always with the utmost courtesy.”*  
1Peter 3:15 (msg)

- How can we be up front about what we believe and intentional in our relating without coming across as weird, impersonal or salespeople?

*“Be assured that when we speak to you we’re not after crowd approval--only God approval. Since we’ve been put through that battery of tests, you’re guaranteed that both we and the Message are free of error, mixed motives, or hidden agendas. We never used words to butter you up. No one knows that better than you. And God knows we never used words as a smoke screen to take advantage of you. Even though we had some standing as Christ’s apostles, we never threw our weight around or tried to come across as important, with you or anyone else. We weren’t aloof with you. We took you just as you were. We were never patronizing, never condescending, but we cared for you the way a mother cares for her children. We loved you dearly. Not content to just pass on the Message, we wanted to give you our hearts. And we did.”*

1Thes 2:4-8 (msg)

- How do we avoid treating people like projects?

*Since God has so generously let us in on what he is doing, we’re not about to throw up our hands and walk off the job just because we run into occasional hard times. We refuse to wear masks and play games. We don’t manoeuvre and manipulate behind the scenes. And we don’t twist God’s Word to suit ourselves. Rather, we keep everything we do and say out in the open, the whole truth on display, so that those who want to can see and judge for themselves in the presence of God. If our Message is obscure to anyone, it’s not because we’re holding back in any way. No, it’s because these other people are looking or going the wrong way and refuse to give it serious attention. All they have eyes for is the fashionable god of darkness. They think he can give them what they want, and that they won’t have to bother believing a Truth they can’t see. They’re stone-blind to the dayspring brightness of the Message that shines with Christ, who gives us the best picture of God we’ll ever get. Remember, our Message is not about ourselves; we’re proclaiming Jesus Christ, the Master. All we are is messengers, errand runners from Jesus for you.*

2Co 4:1-5 (msg)

End of study 6