

# Our Calling

## Telling our story and helping people meet Jesus

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### Opening prayer



God of mission,  
Who alone brings growth to your Church,  
Send your Holy Spirit to give  
Vision to our planning,  
Wisdom to our actions,  
And power to our witness.  
Help our church to grow in numbers,  
In spiritual commitment to you,  
And in service to our local community,  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

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### Getting started

Discuss these questions in pairs:

- What is the best thing about being a Christian?
- How do you feel about your friends discovering this too?

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### Bible



*<sup>2</sup> Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. <sup>3</sup> And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. <sup>4</sup> Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. <sup>5</sup> Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. <sup>6</sup> Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

Colossians 4:2-6 (NIV)

Underline parts of the text that stand out for you. Discuss in pairs which parts of the text you underlined and why.

You could also discuss your response to the phrase 'open a door for our message'. What do you think that phrase means? What might it look like for God to 'open a door' for your message in your community?

MSM4-2

Exercise: Evangelism is...



Pick three speech bubbles that describe how you feel about evangelism. Feel free to include your own ideas, using one or more of the empty speech bubbles.

...easy

...scary

...a job for church leaders

...great

...enjoyable

...unnecessary

...forcing religion down people's throats

...not something our church is into

...more about what you do than what you say

...challenging

...ok, I think?

...beyond me

...not a spectator sport

### MSM4-3

## Exercise: My story, God's story



Write some notes describing your faith journey. You could write a few words or phrases or draw some simple pictures that illustrate your decision to follow Jesus. You may prefer not to write ideas down and simply to talk through these three stages.

It can help to think of the journey in three parts. You could put some brief notes/pictures in the following boxes.

**Before:** life before knowing Jesus. If you've always gone to church, you might prefer to describe your early years of attending church and what it meant to you.

**During:** the story of how Jesus became real to you and how you chose to follow him. Alternatively, you might like to record a significant point in your life when faith became deeper and more committed.

**After:** what it means to you now to be a follower of Jesus. Alternatively, reflect on how your faith has changed and grown.

Spend four minutes with a partner sharing your story and listening to theirs.

How did you find this exercise?

## MSM4-4

### Exercise: Targeted prayer



Can you identify three people who may be searching? Write their names in the space below. Commit to praying for them regularly and ask God for opportunities to share your faith story with them.

1 \_\_\_\_\_

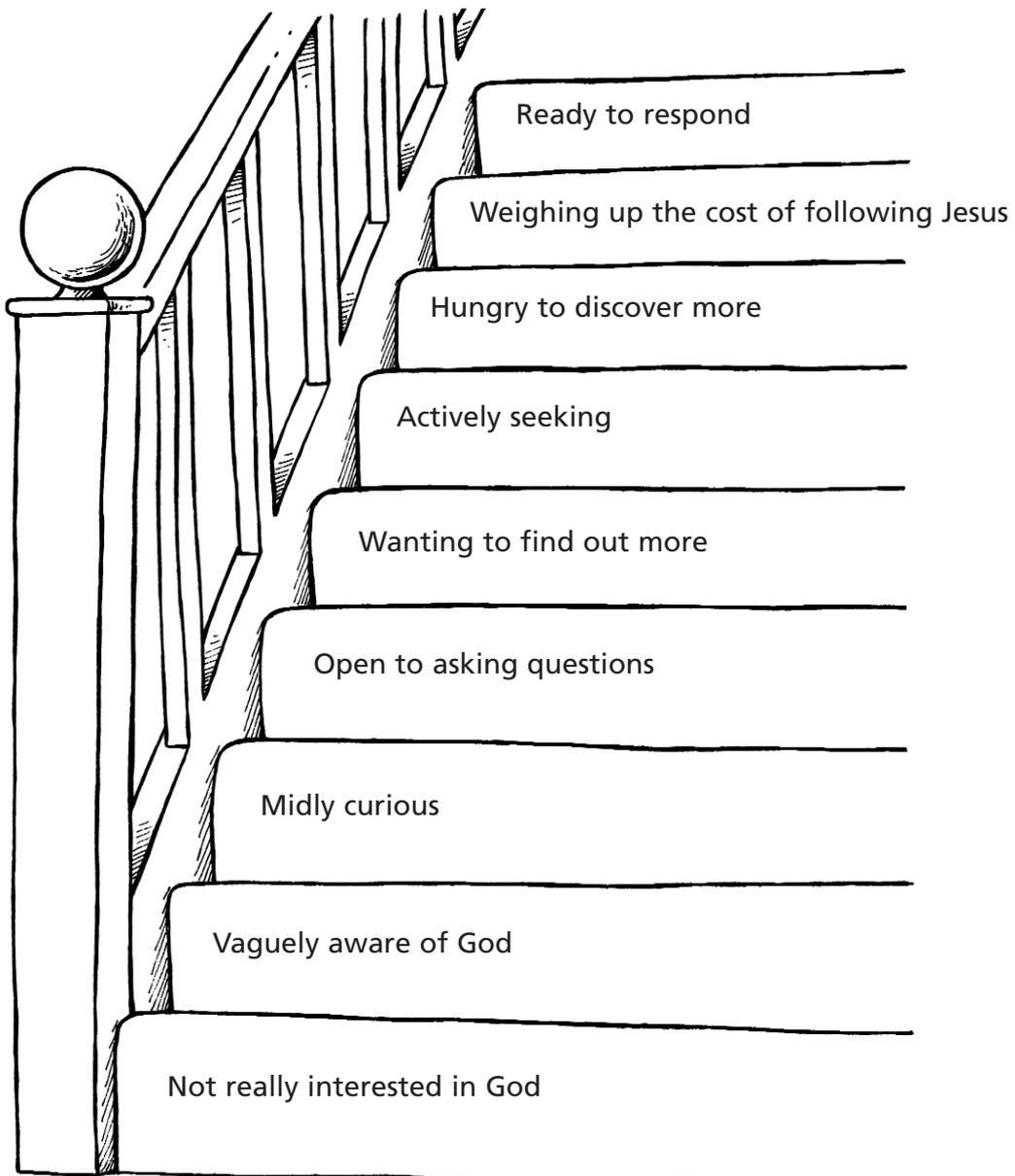
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

### Exercise: Stairway to heaven



Where do you think these people are on their faith journey? Draw stick people on the stairs to represent each of your friends. What might help them move on? It may be that all they need is for someone to ask a question, such as, 'What do you think about God or faith?' or to invite them to a special service or gathering.



## MSM4-5

### Response box

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What things have struck you during this session?

- What should I be doing as an individual?

- What should we be doing as a church?

You might want to record your responses in the boxes above.

Your group leader may ask to collect responses from you so that some anonymous feedback can be given to your church leadership team.

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### Reflection and prayer



<sup>1</sup> Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. <sup>2</sup> A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy.

<sup>3</sup> He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. <sup>4</sup> So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

<sup>5</sup> When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."

<sup>6</sup> So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

<sup>7</sup> All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner."

<sup>8</sup> But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Luke 19:1-10 (NIV)