

Raising Up New Disciple-Makers

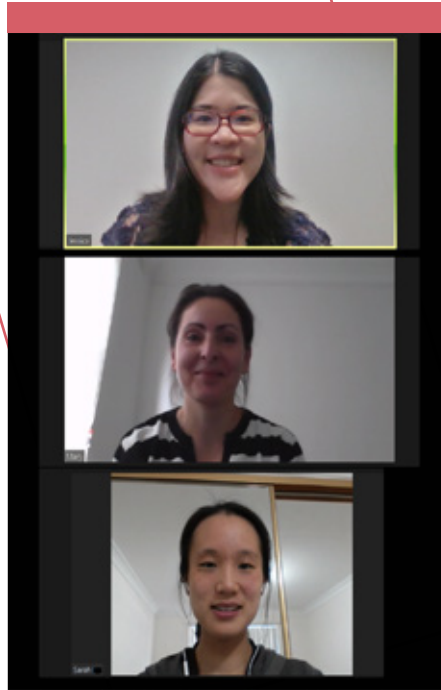
Mary contacted City Bible Forum via our Third Space website looking for a Bible study group to join and some form of Christian community. Jessica from our Relationships team phoned her for a conversation. Having previous connections to Catholicism, Mary had strayed from Christianity for a long time and was interested in reconnecting. In conversation with Jessica, she agreed to meet with another Christian to read the Bible one-to-one.

Seeing the opportunity to raise up other disciple-makers instead of taking on too many one-to-one relationships herself, Jessica contacted one of our Evangelistic Prayer Team (EPT) co-leaders, Sarah, to see if she'd consider meeting with Mary. Although Sarah had never read the Bible one-to-one with someone and wasn't feeling confident, she agreed to give it a try.

"Don't worry, I can help train you and I'm happy to join you in a triplet for the first few weeks," Jessica reassured her.

She then walked Sarah through a training session and forwarded her the Word One-to-One training videos for her to watch in her own time. They then agreed to meet for the first four sessions as a triplet.

The first week was a general session to get to know one another and share a little about themselves. The second week, Jessica led the study and the third and fourth weeks Sarah led the studies, with Jessica providing feedback and support afterwards.



Top to Bottom:
Jessica, Mary and Sarah

The Bible reading sessions provided an opportunity for the three women to share their lives, pray for one another and grow in their understanding of John's gospel.

Jessica said, "It was very encouraging to see Mary pray a simple prayer for the first time. When Sarah first led the study, she was nervous especially when Mary asked questions she didn't know how to answer. But by the end of the four weeks she felt okay leading the study by herself."

Raising up disciple-makers and connecting them with enquirers is at the heart of the City Bible Forum ministry. Sarah is growing in her confidence to share the Bible with others. Jessica said, "I am so encouraged that Sarah was ready to lead and Mary is so eager to grow. I am trusting God that they will go well without me, and that He will continue to work in both of them."

— Janelle Muller and Jessica Halim

Strategy Update

It was a huge blessing to finally gather as one team on the Gold Coast last month for our 2022 Staff Conference. Many staff joined our team during covid restrictions and had never met colleagues face-to-face. In many ways, it was a celebration of God's goodness towards us and the culmination of our strategic alignment as one body.

The story of Mary, Sarah and Jessica (left) is a perfect example of our new portfolio structure working in sync. It illustrates how the *Engagement* team generates new contacts, the *Relationships* team follows them up, and the *Training* team provide resources to support people in Bible reading. We'd love to see this repeated thousands of times over!

With our new ways of working firmly established, we see opportunities to reach more workers for Jesus. We have invested in our digital reach, launched the new training centre EvQ to raise up the next generation of evangelists, and are actively seeking to expand our relational reach in new areas. **Please pray for our mission!**

"All this is for your benefit so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God." - 2 Corinthians 4:15

— Peter Kaldor



City Bible Forum staff team at
April 2022 Staff Conference



Hosts Andrew Laird and Grace Huang

Flourishing in the Furnace

In February, for the second year running, we streamed our annual *Life@Work Conference* online. This format again proved popular, with Christians gathering in over 100 watch parties around Australia (and overseas) to consider the topic *Flourishing in the Furnace: How God uses the daily grind to shape and refine us*.

The day featured Bible teaching from Reverend Dr Michael Jensen, plus City Bible Forum's Andrew Laird, along with presentations from Professor Nathan Grills (public health physician) and Amy Brown (CEO, Investment NSW). Both Nathan and Amy shared honestly about the challenges they have faced in their daily work, and how God has used them to strengthen their faith and provide opportunities to share something of the hope that they have in Him with their colleagues. Amy had us laughing with her energetic style and amusing stories of work life in the public sector. Nathan shared about the big career decisions he has made over the years in order to put Christ first, and care for his family, including a daughter with disabilities. He reminded us that true workplace success is often found in weakness, and that ultimately "faithful is successful".

A highlight for many was our *Flourishing in the Furnace* stories – five short stories from five workers around Australia sharing how God has worked for their good and His glory through the frustrations and challenges of daily work life. We heard from a diverse assortment of industry representatives,

Certificate in Workplace Evangelism Fundamentals

If you have ever thought about how your faith connects with your work, or wanted to have deeper conversations with your colleagues, this new certificate course is for you!

We have collated years of workplace evangelism experience into a five-course certificate designed to help you become a well-



One of 100's of home watch parties

including a dancer, an archaeologist, a builder, a barrister, and a senior executive, making for a very rich experience. It was very encouraging to hear how so many of the challenges faced (especially as Christians in the workplace) are common irrespective of the industry. Indeed, many expressed how the conference helped them see that they are not alone, as a person seeking to live for Christ in their workplace and make Him known.

As the restrictions of the past two years ease, we are now planning the shape of the conference for future years, seeking to balance both the increasing desire to gather with others and network, whilst continuing to make the conference available to Christians anywhere in Australia and beyond. The last two years we've had watch parties in New Zealand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Hong Kong, and the Middle East - and we'd love for this to continue! Please pray for wisdom as we make plans for 2023 and beyond, and praise God that many were encouraged at this year's conference to live more boldly and seek to make Christ known to their colleagues.

Save the date for Life@Work Conference 2023 - February 18

— Andrew Laird

formed workplace evangelist. Learn from Sam Chan, Andrew Laird, Stephen McAlpine, Caroline Spencer and more!

For more information and to enrol go to citybibleforum.org/certificate



Recent resources in our library

Resources for your non-Christian friends at thirdspace.org.au/library:

- **Who's in Control?** God in 60 Seconds - Russ Matthews
- **Is Christianity Bad News?** Bigger Questions - Stephen McAlpine
- **Driving Under the Influencer** - Aaron Johnstone
- **Is Your Work a One-Sided Romance?** - Caroline Spencer

Resources for you at citybibleforum.org/library:

- **How to be Mentally Fit** Life@Work Podcast - Jenny George
- **Cutting Outie the Middle-Man** - Andrew Laird
- **Imposter Syndrome** - Amy Isham
- **HOGO and the Workplace** - Andrew Laird

Dive Deeper: 3,000 Spiritual Conversations

In the month of September, we'll be encouraging all those in our network to collectively initiate 3,000 spiritual conversations. Why? Because connecting with people through deeper conversations is a brilliant way to know them, to know their interests, their values and ultimately their worldviews. Connecting with people at a deeper level builds genuine relationship and as a bonus, it often provides opportunity for us to share our faith.

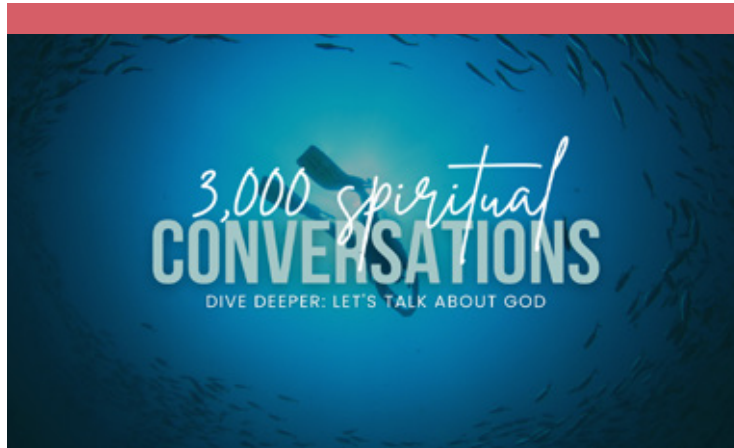
Some Christians may not consider themselves evangelists, but as disciples, we are all called to be disciple-makers. Evangelism isn't a niche gift for a small cohort of Christians. City Bible Forum provides resources, support and community to help Christians share their faith and it is our prayer that this campaign will inspire and support everyday Christians to take that simple first step in initiating a spiritual conversation.

Men's Fellowship

What began fourteen years ago in a living room is now a deep and wide fellowship of men across six cities, impacting hundreds every week. The fellowship is a safe space for men to be vulnerable about challenges and setbacks in personal and professional life. It is highly encouraging for Christian men and intriguing for enquirers to hear how trust in Jesus works when life is hard.

Covid enabled us to extend our reach beyond the fellowships that had existed in Brisbane, Sydney and Hobart. Through regular Zoom interviews, men from Melbourne, Canberra and Adelaide now attend, in addition to men from regional centres and even overseas!

Joe has greatly appreciated the fellowship. He said, "I love how it is a



September mission: Encouraging people to dive deeper in their relationships and initiate spiritual conversations

Ultimately, we hope it will lead to conversations about Jesus and help people meet Him in the pages of the Bible.

So what's involved? A set of interactive resources will be provided in the lead up to the month of September to help you better understand your own style and how you can best share your faith. You will be invited to initiate five spiritual conversations and log them on our campaign website to encourage others in achieving our collective goal of 3,000 spiritual conversations in September.

What is a spiritual conversation? We'll outline some parameters for the campaign however think of asking questions like, "Do you have a faith?", "What religion did your parents raise you with?" or "Do you pray?" You might also want to read Sam Chan's book *How to Talk About Jesus (Without Being That Guy)* for tips. Consider this a community initiative to remind us all to dive deeper in our relationships so we can truly love others and share Jesus.

Look out for more information in the coming months!

— Janelle Muller



Recent Men's Fellowship Retreat Attendees

place where men can share their thoughts regarding the existence of a higher power, and delve deeper into important existential issues with no fear of being judged. I have always found it to be an open-minded environment where I could explore all aspects of faith (and ask questions). It's great that we can make up our own mind about what makes sense

and how to live a more fulfilling life."

The real action happens in the small groups. The most amazing is when life-hardened middle-aged men turn to Christ! The Word One-to-One has also been a wonderful resource for the men.

— Peter Kaldor

EvQ - Growing Your Evangelism Quotient

City Bible Forum's new evangelism training centre led by Dr. Sam Chan has been 'soft-launched' as EvQ! We all know about IQ and EQ but what if there was something called the Evangelism Quotient? Or EvQ? What if we knew how to read the room and knew what to say when we spoke about Jesus?

Picture this... Ollie, a natural evangelist who is already keen at sharing his faith and wants to grow his confidence in speaking about Jesus in public, is about to meet his mentor Sam at the local

cafe. Ollie and Sam meet monthly one-on-one to encourage, share, pray and establish steps to help Ollie grow his public evangelism approach. Ollie is tapping into Sam's wealth of experience, skills and wisdom as he looks to grow his targeted EvQ.

While the mentoring sessions provide the art, Ollie acquires the science through a range of courses offered by a group of evangelism trainers to support his evangelism goals.

Are you someone who sees yourself as a good mentor with strong evangelism in your DNA? If so, we'd love to hear from you.

Considering joining EvQ, just as Ollie has this year? Applications for the Class of



EvQ mentors and trainers: Max Jeganathan, Sam Chan, Julianne Laird, Caroline Spencer, Mark Leong and David Pitt.

2023 are open now. Get in touch with our team today.

*For more information on the programme, please reach out to:
Tim.Chen@citybibleforum.org*

— Tim Chen

Reframe: Women Sharing Life and Work

Reframe groups meet monthly to discuss aspects of life, work and relationships. Sometimes the discussion lends itself to the sharing of a faith perspective, but you don't need to have a faith to be part of a Reframe group.

Julie is a facilitator who says she gets a lot out of the discussions. "It's great to have this space for women to thoughtfully discuss and share their worldview on various aspects of life."

Bec is a friend of Julie's and has joined her group this year. She said, "I really

like the fact that we are never short of a great conversation! I realised that I had an unbalanced and unhealthy relationship with work so I have been working to change my priorities. I never feel preached to during our discussions or that the opinions I bring to the group are not welcomed just because I am not a practicing Christian. I have felt supported and encouraged to speak freely about my story."

If you are interested, please contact Caroline.Spencer@citybibleforum.org







— Caroline Spencer



Reframe groups provide opportunities for women to build relationships (stock image)

How to get involved

There are lots of ways to get involved in the work of City Bible Forum. Go to our website for more information or contact us to discuss your specific interest:

-  Join or start an Evangelistic Prayer Team (EPT) or workplace group
-  Join an existing professional network
-  Invite a friend or colleague to an upcoming event or conference
-  Get trained in workplace evangelism or in reading the Bible One-to-One with a friend or colleague
-  Browse our website for access to hundreds of free videos, podcasts and guides
-  Provide valuable financial support to help sustain the ministry of City Bible Forum