

SHARING FAITH IN IRRELEVANT AND REAL WAYS

Chris Duffett shares reflections from 123GO, an evangelistic outreach that took place in Easter 2022 – and is happening again next year

Last Monday we stood in my kitchen as I made coffee and he talked. He was bubbling with enthusiasm as he told me of his adventures going two by two with his daughter to do some 'treasure hunting' on Easter Sunday, seeking to find the treasure (a person) that God wanted them to share his love with and for my friend to offer prayer to. His daughter took the lead and my friend sceptically followed. He wanted to head to some of the local parks, but ended up following in the opposite direction. They reached a park he hadn't visited before and, surprise, surprise, they met two people, both matching the description of the clues that he had believed the Lord had given them. Both were in deep need of help and prayer. Both accepted prayer, full of appreciation.

As my friend told me about his 123GO experience with his church in Stony Stratford, I felt encouraged once more as, to be honest, I had been wondering whether 123GO had been worth all the effort, time and resources.

At times it feels like my call as an evangelist is like holding a prodding stick and my task is to try and awaken the sleeping giant of the body of Christ to go and do something, anything, to let others in on the gospel. Easter seems like an 'invite only' private celebration. My heart is to see the Church embrace the season as a public party, letting others in on the best news this world has ever been graced with: Jesus is alive and has conquered sin and death!

Jesus taught his first friends that the fields are *white* (ripe), in other words there are plenty who are ready and willing to respond to the good news of Jesus, but the problem remains: the labourers are few. This year's 123GO could be looked upon as a failure; not many churches across the UK took part, there weren't thousands as I had prayed or even hundreds of Christians

going out into their communities to bring the gospel two by two.

But then again, some did. And it's important to focus on those who did and not on those who didn't and leave the heartache of the workers being few rightly in the hands of the one who says "ask the Lord of the harvest to send out the workers!"

It's also important to focus on those who connected with the good news of Jesus for the first time. We live in a time where the vast majority of people simply haven't got a clue about Jesus, and over Easter 2022 people heard for the first time something real and credible of the gospel.

Like my new friend Karin who met four people to share the gospel with. She came along to the prophetic art day, a morning of training followed by putting it into practice. Her rather nervously prophetic paintings ended up being like dynamite! I think of the young man who strutted down the street, beer can in hand, shirt hanging around his waist as he showed off his toned torso.

“Excuse me”, Karin boldly asked him, “are you broken hearted?” He stood wide-mouthed as she held towards him one of her paintings with a message of God binding up the broken hearted.

“How did you know that just by me walking down the street?” he asked.

“I didn’t”, was the reply, “but I believe in God who knows you and loves you.” A good news conversation followed.

Some people prayed to become followers of Jesus over the weekend too. In Reading at The Gate there was a festival in a city centre park with worship and fun activities for families to enjoy. Here some people also decided that they too would follow Jesus! This is good news!

In the market town of March, the churches engaged in creative ways in loving and serving their community by listening and helping people. The presence of the church ‘out there’ was seen and people heard about the Christian faith for the first time in relevant and real ways. This is good news!

I could keep writing about the people who *did* meet willing Christians who had perceptions changed about the Christian faith as well as those who heard for the first time the good news. My prayer is that this experience over Easter in the coming few years will multiply.

What is it that you could do to take the 1 gospel, 2 by 2 over 3 days in Easter 2023?



Chris Duffett has a wealth of experience in Chaplaincy, Theology, Culture and the Arts. Chris is a former president of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and an author of four books, his latest a novel on the life of his hero Philip the evangelist. He is an evangelist and artist, and the original founder of The Light Project.



123GO is the vision of evangelist Chris Duffett in partnership with Simon Goddard (RiverTree) and Yinka Oyekan (minister of The Gate in Reading). It encourages Christians across the world taking 1 gospel, 2 by 2 over 3 days at Easter, simply GOing into the streets and public spaces to demonstrate the good news of Jesus.

In the months leading up to Easter 2022 Christians were given a selection of online workshops to attend or watch to help get them ready to go in twos to bring good news. Workshops included The Turning; prophetic art; praying for the sick; acts of kindness; servant evangelism; praying for your community and prayer evangelism.

On Easter Sunday the gospel was preached live online for any who had been given invites or encountered people 2 by 2 out on the streets and wanted to know more.

123GO is taking place in 2023.

Visit <http://123go.life>

123GO is supported by a grant from Baptist Insurance Company



Photos of the 123GO team - Yinka Oyekan, Chris Duffett, Simon Goddard and Suzie Abramian