

Session Outline 1: Flatpack

The aim of this introductory session is to open up the issue of mission, to encourage people to reflect on their own understanding and experience of mission and to suggest that mission begins with God's character.

DiSCoVER _
mission _ connection _ identity

Open

- You may want to use one, or both, of the Flatpack Postcards as a starter activity. Get folk to complete them on their own, then share some of the responses together. Otherwise, ask a couple of questions:
- What do you think of when you hear the word 'mission'? What words or ideas come to mind?
- In your experience of church, what sorts of initiatives and activities are associated with mission? What does mission mean for local churches?

Engage

Show the 'Flatpack' film from the DVD. You might like to suggest that group members make a mental note (or jot down a shorthand reminder) of any words, phrases or ideas that they find particularly striking.

After watching the film, ask whether anyone would like to share any comments or questions that arose as a result of what they heard and saw?

Explore

The following questions may provide a helpful framework for discussion – use and adapt them as you see fit.

- What things have shaped your thinking about 'mission'? What has contributed to your understanding of mission?
- In what ways (if at all) did the film challenge how you think about mission?
- Are there specific things that you would agree or disagree with from what you heard in the film?

The film suggested that mission arises out of God's character – His nature shapes the values that are central to *His* mission. This is something that we'll consider a little more deeply together.

Explain that you will read a Psalm slowly. Ask the group, as you read, to identify aspects of God's character that are highlighted in the Psalm.

Read Psalm 103

- Which of these characteristics might be significant in shaping God's mission?
- How might our understanding of God impact our understanding of mission?
- In light of the discussions that have taken place in this session, consider the following questions:
 - Where does mission 'fit' on the agenda of your church? How much of a priority is mission?
 - How much of a priority is mission in your own life?
 - Would you like to be more actively engaged in mission? If so, how might you go about this? (a chance for the group to share ideas of how to get more involve in mission and where to go for guidance or support).

Respond

You may like to suggest that before the next **Discover** session, each group member pledges to do one thing to enhance their engagement with mission (eg. pray about an issue of need that concerns them, speak to their minister, contact a mission agency, read a relevant book).