

Learning to live the Whole of Life – together

*“I wasn’t blown away by an array of new ideas... I have come away thinking, Wow, this is awesome, and I really think we **can** achieve this!”*

There was an almost audible sound of pennies dropping as 3 Bristol churches got together in late May for Day 1 of the first Bristol Learning Hub run by the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity (LICC).

Having already begun to explore ideas about how churches can equip everyone to live the whole of their lives for Christ every day, three churches have committed to 3 days of discovering together how to carry out those ideas in practice.

Led by LICC’s Antony Billington and Neil Hudson, both excellent communicators, the sessions covered Preaching on the Frontline and Leading Worship for the Frontline. In both sessions there was a reminder that most Christians spend most of their time well away from the culture of the church. Many people are left feeling that what happens on a Sunday has little relevance to “real life”, leaving them both ill equipped to share their faith and disconnected from church life. What shifts in emphasis could we make? How could we do things differently on a Sunday, so that people leave feeling full of purpose, equipped and excited about how God will use them where they are placed? So that newcomers to faith will immediately see the part they can play in God’s mission to the UK?

Simple ideas – not earth shattering revelations or complicated new programmes you haven’t got time for – that can help the “penny to drop” in another person’s life. “Ah, now I get it! Now I get how God wants to use me during the week!” Simple ideas, such as the way we introduce a song; the illustrations we use in a sermon, the parallels we draw with modern issues, can make all the difference in helping people make links between Biblical truth, spiritual growth and their daily activity on their frontlines.

What made the simple ideas so powerful and hopefully, will transform ‘the way we do things’, is that each church could share thoughts and apply them together. On top of that, we could hear from other churches. What had they tried? Had it worked? What obstacles had they overcome? LICC have written some excellent resources, but setting aside these three days for church leaders and their teams to learn and plan for change is an effective model for getting things into practice. Between sessions there will be sharing of experiences and a sense of accountability between the churches, that we keep our eye on the task and don’t let other things distract us.

Simple ideas, well expressed and grounded in practical application, can change a church, release a whole new crowd of “mission partners” and help people to go away thinking, “I really think we CAN achieve this!”

There will be opportunities for other churches to join future learning hubs in Bristol, Swindon and the wider region, as well as to get a taster and an overview of Whole Life discipleship ideas through Imagine On The Road Days.

To find out how you could take part:

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