

**Prayer:**

*Heavenly Father, we embrace Your call for us to make disciples, to be witnesses and to grow leaders. Give us the eyes to see Your vision, ears to hear the prompting of Your Spirit and courage to follow in the footsteps of your Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.*



Share together any experiences you have had of dropping 'faith bait' into conversations and also share the reactions of other people.

**Exercise: Questions, questions, questions**

Think of some of the hardest questions you have ever been asked. These can either be humorous or serious.

**DVD: 3:1****Exercise: Table Talk**

Explore together some thought provoking questions using either the 'Table Talk' game or the list of questions in the leader's guide.

**DVD: 3:2****Bible: Acts 17:16-34**

*<sup>16</sup> While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. <sup>17</sup> So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. <sup>18</sup> A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbling trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. <sup>19</sup> Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? <sup>20</sup> You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean." <sup>21</sup> (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)*

*<sup>22</sup> Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. <sup>23</sup> For as I walked around and looked carefully at your*

*objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.*

<sup>24</sup> *“The God who made the world and everything in it, is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. <sup>25</sup> And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. <sup>26</sup> From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. <sup>27</sup> God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. <sup>28</sup> ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’*

<sup>29</sup> *“Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. <sup>30</sup> In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. <sup>31</sup> For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”*

<sup>32</sup> *When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.” <sup>33</sup> At that, Paul left the Council. <sup>34</sup> Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.*

Then consider the following questions

- As Paul spent time walking around Athens and conversing with people, he was ‘listening’ to the city. What things did Paul particularly notice about Athens?
- How did Paul’s ‘listening’ in Athens help him share the Christian Faith?
- What is your reaction to the approach that Paul adopted to help him share the Christian Faith?
- What do you think lay behind the response of those who said “We want to hear you again on this subject”?

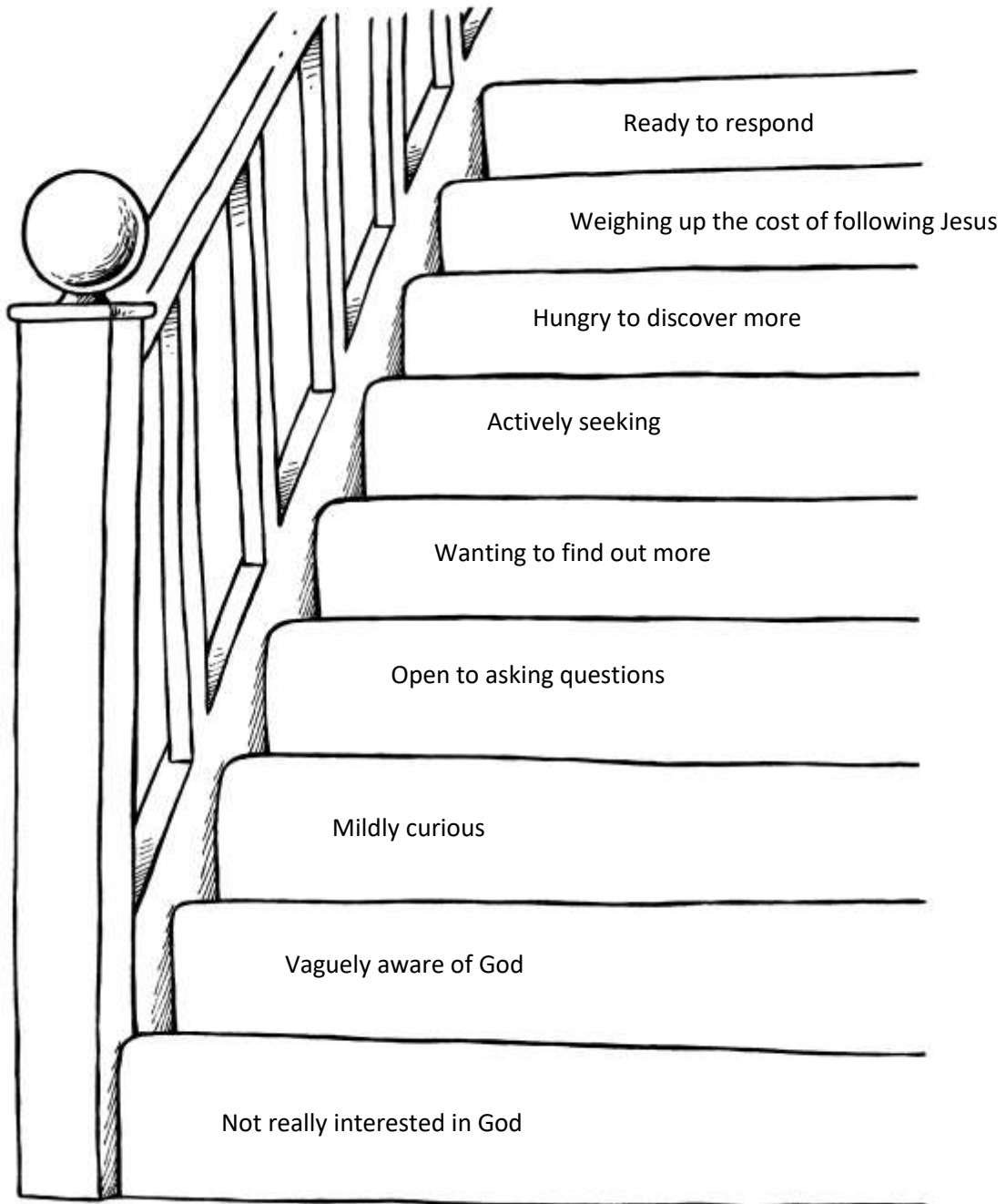


**DVD: 3:3**



**Exercise: Stairway to Heaven**

Using the Staircase picture on the following page reflect on what your church is able to offer people to help them explore the Christian faith. Think about group activities and resources that are available in the life of your church. Remember to think about steps that will help people to believe and belong.



Discuss together in groups of four what steps you have been able to list. Are there any steps that are missing or are some of the gaps between the steps too large?



**Prayer:**

Thinking about the “Who are you?”, “Where are you?” and “Why don’t you?” questions mentioned in the DVD, consider how far up the believing/belonging staircase the people you are praying for have already travelled. You might want to draw stick figures on the staircase picture and use initials to show who that figure represents. Consider what might help the people you are praying for take the next step forward.

Spend some moments in silence, praying for the people on your prayer list. Then ask God to help you to play your part in helping move people closer to Him.

Pray together the 'Being Witnesses' prayer.

*Lord, help us to be witnesses through our actions and our words.*

*May we be faithful in prayer, gracious in service and more confident in speaking.*

*We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.*



**Take away activity:**

Encourage the group to see if they could drop some 'faith bait' into conversations during the coming week and also encourage people to think of ways of helping people move forward on their faith journey – what might be the next step forward for them?