

# Engaging with our Mission: What's the POINT?



It has been really encouraging to hear about the way that churches who have used these mission parables have been blessed, encouraged and challenged. Please do consider sharing this parable and questions in a service or perhaps e-mailing it to others in your church or giving it to homegroup leaders.

## The Parable of the Football Team

The team's preparation for the tournament had been far from ideal. They were the host nation so had not had to qualify for the tournament and had not played a competitive match for a long time. There had been some internal divisions within the team and some players had fallen out with others. Some had 'retired' from international football while others had moaned to the newspapers about the lack of preparation. To make matters worse the Manager had left just before the tournament to take up a new post.

Two weeks before the tournament was due to start those who had been selected to play for their country gathered in the hotel and sports complex that would be their base for the duration of the tournament and the team captain called a meeting.

"Our preparation for the tournament has been far from ideal," he said, stating the obvious. "We are the best players in our country. We won't improve our skills much in the next couple of weeks and we risk some injuries. The most important thing we can do now is rebuild our sense of unity. The last thing our Manager said to us before he left was that we needed to concentrate on our sense of unity, and while we all miss him we are going to honour his memory. So for the next two weeks we are going to concentrate on team-building, on getting to know one another's strengths and weaknesses, on making sure we are completely fit and on making the most of the facilities this complex has to offer."

The squad agreed that this sounded important so they spent the next weeks engaging in team-building exercises, playing games together and getting to know one another, and relaxing around the hotel pool when they were not in the gym or having their minor injuries treated. When the day came for the opening match the players were ready. They knew that they were stronger and fitter than they had ever been. They knew that as a team they had healed their rifts and were united. They knew one another really well.

The team captain had told everyone to be ready to get on the coach at 2pm, ready to travel to the stadium where they would play in the opening match of the tournament. But at 2pm nobody turned up. The hotel staff phoned around the player's rooms but nobody answered. They rushed around and found some of the players engaging in more team-building exercises, while others were in the gym or relaxing by the pool.

"It's time to go!" shouted the hotel staff. But the players were enjoying the team-building exercises, working in the gym and relaxing by the pool that they decided they would rather stay where they were. It was much nicer than running around for 90 minutes with the risk of being shouted at by the crowd and injured by the opposition.

**If you would find specific questions helpful for discussion then you could try these:**

How do you think the rest of the country would have felt if their national team decided not to play because they were concentrating on themselves?

Are we at all like that in our churches?

What is the POINT of church?

*The EBA Mission strategy is designed to help all of us to consider the **Places** where we are and the **Opportunities** that we have in those places for mission. We want to help provide **Inspiration**, remind us all that we **Need God** and to offer **Training and equipping** to help us to be honest about our faith.*

For more information about POINT or the previous parables visit [the EBA website](#). We hope they are a helpful resource for you.