

He saw it was
GOOD

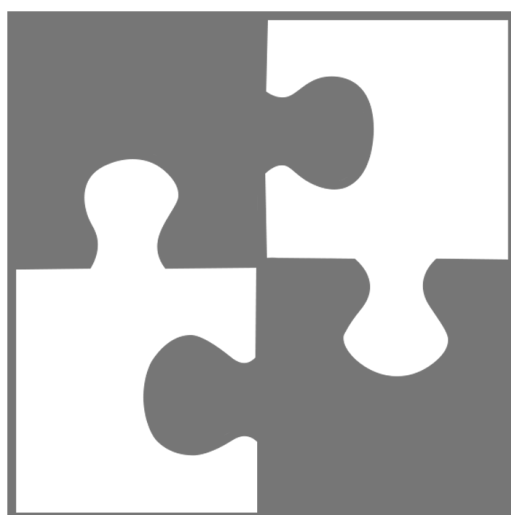
AN MAF BIBLE STUDY

PARTICIPANT'S WORKBOOK



SESSION 6

Stronger Together



Introduction

In the first video, MAF staff presenters Sheonagh and Matt will introduce the topic of Partnership and how MAF works closely with The HALO Trust in Angola to make Angola a safer place for it's population. Make any notes in the provided box below.

Scripture

'Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble. Likewise, two people lying close together can keep each other warm. But how can one be warm alone? A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.'

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (NLT)

We will be returning to this verse later in the study.

The SDGs and Partnership

In this next video, our presenters will walk you through the Sustainable Development goal of helping 'Partnership' — our final 'P'.

As you watch the video, make any notes you wish to in the space below. Jot down any facts and statistics that you will find helpful to ponder and pray over in the future.

Devotion

Written by Victoria Fagg



In 1966, Peter Scholtes, a young priest from Chicago's South Side, penned a song that would later become known as the anthem of the Jesus Movement.

Based on **John 13:35**, the song 'They Will Know We are Christians by Our Love' was charged with connecting young people who were disillusioned with the culture around them with their responsibility to participate in God's Kingdom work together. Partnership is powerful.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a partner as ‘someone who participates in an activity or game with another person.’ Partnership therefore occurs when two or more people come together in order to achieve something that they cannot achieve alone. Farmers know that teaming horses results in an ability to pull more weight than the same number of animals can pull individually.

Ecclesiastes 4.9-12 tells us that two are better than one and, in **Luke 10**, we see Jesus send His disciples out in groups of two. In **Exodus 17:8-13**, Aaron and Hur held up Moses’ hands as he prayed, which in turn enabled Joshua and the Israelites to overcome their enemies.

As believers, we are called to partner with Christ (**1 Corinthians 1:9**) and one another (**1 John 1:3**) to see His Kingdom come. Everyone brings their own individual skills and gifts to the mix.

The apostle Paul illustrates this in **Romans 12:4-5**, ‘A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. That’s how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another’ (CEV).

If we are thinking about the body, perhaps a more connective word for partnership is ‘collaboration’. When we collaborate, we are purposely co-operating with others.

MAF’s integrated ministry is a collaboration with some 2,000 partner organisations to help bring help, hope and healing to remote and isolated communities across the world.

It is through these collaborations that those who are in need can experience what’s known as the ‘Five Marks of Mission’ — marks which were first developed by the Anglican Consultative Council in 1984.

I’ve paraphrased them below:

- To hear the Good News of the Kingdom (evangelism).
- To be taught, baptised and nurtured as new believers (teaching/discipleship).
- To have your human needs met by loving service (compassion)
- To have advocates seeking transformation of unjust structures of society and challenge violence of every kind — pursuing peace and reconciliation (justice)
- To experience support in safeguarding the integrity of creation and the sustainment of all life on earth’ (care for creation)

Based on the Great Commission (**Matthew 28:19-20**), these five marks of mission reveal God’s love and missionary heart for all of His creation. The Scripture passage shows that partnership goes beyond ‘us and Him’, or indeed ‘you and me’.

According to Christian author Vinoth Ramachandra, the verses also highlight the ‘being’ and ‘doing’, the ‘spiritual’ and the ‘physical’, the ‘individual’ and the ‘social’, ‘justice’ and ‘mercy’, ‘preaching truth’ and ‘practising the truth’.

Jesus made a way for us to be reconciled to Him (**John 3:16**), and He invites us to partner with Him — and others — to share that redemption through our evangelism and social involvement.

This invite extends beyond organisations such as MAF — it is for you, too!

As you embrace the call to ‘love your neighbour’ in a time where polarisation seems at

an all-time high, be mindful of the marks of mission mentioned above and do all you can to collaborate with other believers.

Play your part while celebrating what others can contribute. Remember, we are better together.

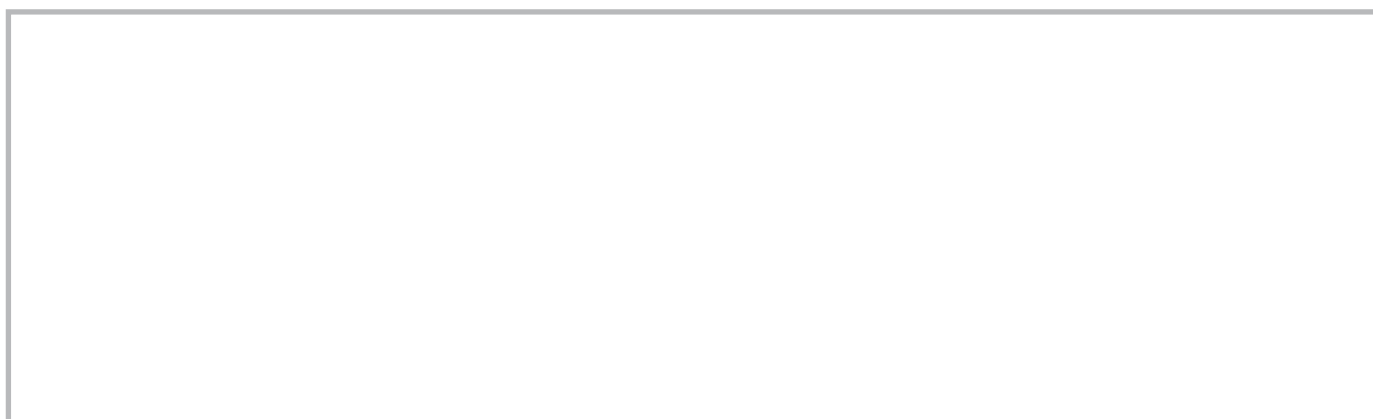
And let's pray that, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, we will be as one, as Jesus and the Father are one. By doing so, we'll bring glory to the Father and be a witness to others.

They will know we are Christians by our love!

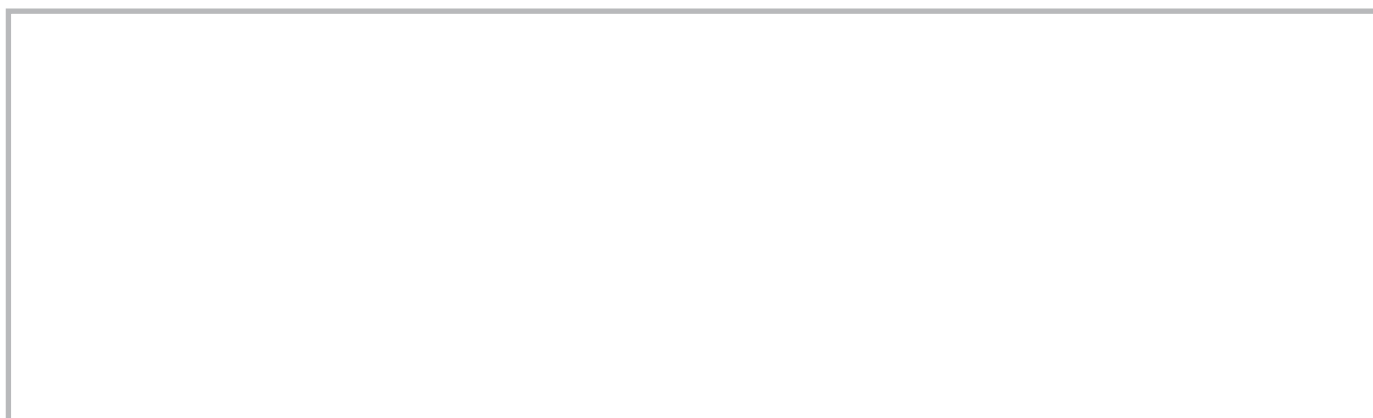
Review

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 illustrates the strength and benefit of partnering with others.

What does partnership look like in your life? Would anyone observing you know that you're a Christian by your love?



What steps can you take to intentionally collaborate with others to see God's Kingdom break forth here on earth?



MAF Story

Your group leader will show you the next video, introduced by your presenters Matt and Sheongh, which will introduce you to the work of de-mining organisation The HALO Trust in Angola.

Reflection

Unity within the body is often contested and isn't easy. Too often, there seems to be a 'scarcity mindset', with people and organisations afraid that, in partnering with others, they might lose out.

Differences around theology and expressions of worship can also prevent us from stepping over the denominational line to stand alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Take a moment to reflect on any barriers you might be experiencing that are hindering any partnerships for God's Kingdom.

Repentance

Depending on how your leader is running your course, you can either ponder these questions during the study, or use them in a personal time of reflection on your own after the study is over.

'...you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for He called you out of the darkness into His wonderful light.'

1 Peter 2:9 (NLT)

- Mediate on this verse, recognising that God refers to His people in the plural. Ask God to show you His bigger picture at work within your local setting and neighbourhood.
- Consider writing a letter of apology to Jesus for any way you might have avoided partnering with other believers because of cultural or theological differences, or the fear of losing out. Keep the letter as a reminder to think more collaboratively.

Prayer

- Pray that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic won't slow down the ability and desire for countries to work together to advance the United Nations' Sustainable Development Agenda. Pray for the leaders of governments to continue to prioritise this goal as they draft policy.
- Pray that the inequalities around the world between the rich and poor won't increase further. Pray too that the work of organisations like MAF and other non-governmental organisations, aid agencies and Christian missions will help close this gap.
- Pray for The HALO Trust as its de-mining personnel continue making areas of land safe for people to enjoy, live and work on once more. Pray for continued safety in the vital work they do, aided by MAF aircraft.
- Pray that the Holy Spirit will open doors for each of us to partner with others in our networks, churches or communities so we can share the Gospel where we are.
- As we come to the end of this Bible study, pray that the topics covered and the insights gained will help us to reflect on the future of the planet, the needs of those living in its remotest areas, and the need for Christians to feed into and influence the Sustainable Development Agenda.

Jot down any other areas you would like to pray for — for example, prayers for the state of the world, the work of MAF or the Sustainable Development Agenda.



After today's sixth and final study: please consider becoming part of, or setting up your own, 'For the Sake of the World' prayer group — to find out more please see <http://forthesakeoftheworld.com>

Response

To close this final study, you will hear one last time from presenters Sheonagh and Matt. They will challenge you to think about what practical actions you could commit to as a take-away from this session.

- Reflecting again on the passage from **1 Peter**, ask the Holy Spirit to open a door of opportunity for you to partner with others in prayer and service — extending your reach and effectiveness as you show others the goodness of God.

Find out more

We have lots of other examples of how MAF helps to advance the sustainable development agenda through our work and ministry, and also through partnering with other organisations seeking to reach the most isolated communities on earth.

If you would like to continue your journey in this session of the Bible Study and find out more, please visit **www.maf-uk.org/findoutmore** and we'll introduce you to some more stories from where MAF serves around the world.

MAF Discovery Air Pass

Why not continue on your journey with MAF and get your free MAF boarding pass and join us on a journey of discovery to visit places rarely featured in travel brochures, and to meet people living far from the tourist trail. Sign up for our Discovery Air Pass journey and see the world from a unique perspective.

'Fly' with MAF from country to country and find out what it's like to live, work and serve in some of the most isolated places on earth. Every couple of months, you will receive inspiration by post or email: updates from our pilots, real-life stories, fascinating facts and opportunities to support our work. Check in at **www.maf-uk.org/discover-now**

We would love to hear what you thought of our Bible Study! If you could spare few minutes to complete our survey we would be very grateful. The survey can be found here:
www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MAFHBS22

Acknowledgements

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