



DYNAMIC GOSPEL  
NEW EUROPE

CONVERSATION  
AND GATHERING

# May Conversation

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# Welcome

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This is the Impact Group PDF for the May Lausanne Europe 2020 Conversation. If this is your first time joining in the LE2020 Conversation, everything you need is right here. Just follow the steps below to guide your group through the various parts.

This month's Impact Group returns to two of the key threads in our Conversation: discipleship and mobilisation for mission.

# Instructions

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## 1. Introductions

Give time for everyone to introduce themselves if this is your first Impact Group. Ask someone to pray that God would speak to us as we meet together.

## 2. Discipleship

In March we introduced the Discipleship thread of the LE2020 Conversation. We began, as we must, with a focus on personal discipleship. We want to see Europe transformed but that begins with a renewal in our own hearts. This month we turn to thinking about disciple-making in the context of the body of Christ.

Read the text on discipleship and then consider together in your Impact Group the following questions:

- ◆ In Ephesians 4:15, what aspects does Paul include in “we are to grow up in every way”? Be ready to share these in your Impact Group.

- ◆ Is your church disciple-making as a body, together? Would you like this growth to be different? If so, how?
- ◆ How could growing in discipleship as a body express Christ’s love and redemption to your local community?

## 3. Mobilisation

Last month we began the mobilisation thread of the LE2020 Conversation. We used a Podcast to think about communities around us that might be unreached by the gospel unless someone moves in. This month we are thinking about how we might be mobilised for mission right where we are. We will meet Ulvis Kravalis from Latvia, a former international wrestler. Listen to the podcast and then consider together in your Impact Group the following questions:

- ◆ Was there anything in Ulvis's story that you found particularly challenging, and if so, what?

- ◆ Do you recognise any People of Peace in your life? How did you identify them?
- ◆ What would it look like if you were to invite other Christians to join with you in living everyday life in mission? Who would you invite?
- ◆ What practical steps towards a personal mobilisation into mission might you take after this month's Impact Group?

#### 4. Prayer

Do make sure that you leave enough time to pray together every time you meet. Here are the prayer points for the May Impact Group:

- ◆ Pray for a simplified, but a deeper understanding of the 'Great Commission' (Matthew 28:19-20) and of the church as the Body of Christ, so that we can know how to best preach the gospel of Christ and make disciples for Him.
- ◆ Pray for God to reveal to us the areas we have neglected to grow together as a church community.

- ◆ Pray for the church to proclaim the teachings of Jesus Christ boldly and clearly both in personal evangelism (one-to-one discipleship) and in preaching God's word.
- ◆ Pray that God might help us to identify opportunities for mission in our everyday lives.
- ◆ As local churches continue to wrestle with the challenges posed by Coronavirus, pray for attentiveness to God's voice that we might find culturally appropriate strategies for reaching our surrounding communities and the nation at large.

#### 5. Make Your Contribution to the Conversation

We really want to hear back from your Impact Group after each session. Please find a few minutes to summarise what you hear from God, the highlights of the discussion, and any questions that were raised, in the comments box immediately below. See you next month!

[GO TO THE CONVERSATION](#)

# Discipleship

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By Jay Eastman

[Go to the article online](#)

In March, the focus of the discipleship thread was personal spiritual growth. This month, in our second instalment, we want to look at disciple-making in the sense of **bearing fruit as a body**.

Ideally, discipleship involves both growing deeper in Christ by abiding in Him personally AND growing together in unity as the body of Christ. The reality is, however, we can be tempted not only to stall in our own personal walk with Christ, but also to turn aside from being joined with others. The picture of the vine in John 15 is that, as we abide in Christ the true vine, we produce fruit together, not just on our own. Not abiding together will cause little or even no fruit.

The apostle Paul provides another powerful description in his letter to the Ephesians:

*"Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."* Ephesians 4:15-16 (ESV)

Paul focuses here on the centrality of gospel growth, and the condition for that growth - being joined together with Him and one another. Take a moment to read through the verses again word for word:

*"Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."*

Notice how much the following words emphasise Paul's point: *we...grow, every way, whole, joined, held together, every joint and body grow.*

The theme of Ephesians 4 is spiritual growth into maturity, which is discipleship. In chapters 1-3, Paul focused on grace and salvation. Now he is applying those truths practically to daily community life. It's clear this growth flourishes as we live and work together as the body of Christ. Growing together as one whole, not just as individuals, defines our identity in its proper place of unity, joy, faithfulness, perseverance, and love.

In order to grow fully and avoid fruitlessness, we need three elements:

- Christ - He is the source of our life, and our primary experience of love and grace as well as the purpose of our growth
- Each other - As lessons are taught and caught from one another, we build one another up and grow into full maturity together

- Others - We want to express the "other-focused" quality of love so that others who we don't yet know also become members of Christ's body

Our first thought on disciple-making may not be loving and caring for those outside the body, but it's an essential element. In v. 16, Paul refers to the **WHOLE** body, unified in identity and function in Christ.

The fact is today, we are an incomplete body in unity, maturity and quantity. This means our growth as disciples is visibly signified not only through our own developing unity and maturity, but also as we share the light of Christ's love and grace to those in darkness who are still to come to know and trust Him. Although we don't know for certain who those brothers and sisters are, by expressing love to one another both in and beyond the body, we produce living fruit for those who will someday be part of the body of Christ. We will develop this theme of the community-wide impact of disciple-making in a future instalment.

Christ calls us to grow in Him to fruitful maturity. Paul then makes a compelling case - for us not to grow as spiritual soloists, but rather to be a choir joined in the bond of truth

in love, producing a harmony reflecting manifold beauty  
in unison.

If you have a particular interest in disciple-making,  
Lausanne Europe 2020 wants to facilitate an initiative  
which will look into this more deeply. If you would like to  
know more, please [click here](#) and we'll be happy to get in  
touch with you.

[DISCIPLE-MAKERS INITIATIVE](#)



# Mobilisation

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By Kristian Lande

[Go to the article online](#)

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Last month we began the mobilisation thread of the LE2020 Conversation. We used a Podcast to think about communities around us that might be unreached by the gospel unless someone moves in. This month we are thinking about how we might be mobilised for mission right where we are. We will meet Ulvis Kravalis from Latvia, a former international wrestler.

## TRANSCRIPT

### **Recording of Billy Graham:**

“We have one task: To proclaim the message of salvation in Jesus Christ.”

“The whole church must be mobilised to bring the whole gospel to the whole world. This is our calling. These are our orders.”

### **Kristian talking:**

The whole church mobilised! Imagine if that would happen in today’s Europe. Every believer being a missionary in his or her everyday life.

Welcome to the mobilisation podcast at the Lausanne 2020 conversation. My name is Kristian Lande, and you just heard Billy Graham speaking at the very first Lausanne Congress in 1974.

This month we will do some wrestling with this challenge Billy Graham once gave. And to help us in that we have a guest who is not only the general secretary of IFES Latvia (International Fellowship of Evangelical Students), he is also a former wrestler at a top European level. So, he should be qualified.

But before you meet him. I would like to share the story on how God challenged me on being a missionary in my everyday life:

For several years I combined mission ministry around Europe, with working at a supermarket back home in Norway. To be honest, the motivation for my work was mainly to finance my mission activities. But then one day God challenged me, stopped me, saying something like this:

“Kristian. You are not in that shop to earn money. You are there first of all to represent me.”

That challenge became the start both to a changed mindset and an exciting journey where I was quite surprised to see that God had been at work in the shop long before I joined in.

If you want to know how it went, you can ask me at the gathering in Poland. But now to the wrestler. He lives in Riga. Is married to Ieva. The father of Louise. And together they have a dog.

Ulvis Kravalis. Welcome. I know that you are passionate about living as a missionary in your everyday life. I also know that the reason you came to know Jesus, was that someone else did the same. So, before we look at today's situation, could you tell us how it all started? How you came to faith.

**Ulvis talking:**

Thank you, Kristian, I'll gladly do that. So, my name is Ulvis. I've lived in Riga for most of my life, and I come from a non-Christian family. When I was 17 years old there was a guy who came to our practice. He was a very skinny 30-year-old dude, who appeared to be our coach's son. Henry is his name. I did not know anything about him, I just learned that the coach's son decided to join us in training. I thought, that's weird, he's a skinny guy in his 30's, what future in wrestling is there for him. Then I learned his life story.

He had left home at the age of 16/17, started an independent life with different criminal activities, drug abuse, alcohol abuse, stealing and bribing people, and basically ended up in a very, very dark place. He tried to commit suicide 3 or 4 times in his life but failed all the times. And then he was looking for true love, which he

found in Christ. Of course, God challenged him and invited him to reconcile with his father. They were in an argument, they did not talk, and they did not have any relationship. But then he came to his father, which was my coach, asked for forgiveness and shared that he became a Christian and that his life radically changed after meeting Jesus. His father, my coach, accepted two sons in one, his own son, and the son of God as his Lord and Saviour.

Then he started to train with us, and while training with us six days a week, he was just sharing his life stories about very random things. Through these stories I learned all the despair he had had, depressions, how he had wanted to kill himself and failed, how he was looking for love, and about how he found Jesus. He was talking to Jesus being as real as the pen I was holding on to, or as the door I saw, things around me, and that really struck me. It was like, wow, this is something totally new.

And long story short, it took 9 months of everyday witness from him, but honest witness, not only acting nicely, being polite and all that stuff. Just sharing openly about Jesus, what Jesus is for him, what Jesus has done in his life, sharing some bible stories. Whenever he travelled with us to some competitions, he was warming up with us. And in

wrestling competitions, you have a match and then you have to wait for 2-3 hours until your next one, and all day is like that. And in the middle of all those things he was just sharing stories from the Bible, which I found really astonishing and mind-blowing. That God chooses 300 people to face a big army and defeats them. It's like, it does not make sense, but it sounds so exciting, I want to be somehow part of this. All these emotions they were like up and down.

Then we went to the European Championships together. And I joined him .... He just saw people, as he said going to hell - drinking, fornication, strip clubs. It was in Bulgaria, in one of the resorts by the Black sea. And he was like: "I can't watch this; I have to go and tell them about Jesus", and then he said: "Do you want to come with me?". I was shocked and said: "Yes I will". Then I was standing next to him as he was preaching the gospel on the streets, to people who were handing out flyers about joining the strip clubs or things like that. I saw how people were touched. There was this one guy, Henry. He approached him and started sharing about Jesus. He started crying right there, with five men around him, everyone being shocked, they were like "what's going on?". And Henry

said: "You can stop this thing right now, you can turn to Jesus, give your heart to him, and he is going to restore your life". The man just started weeping, because he was desperate, he had to sustain his family, he had a wife and three kids, and he had nothing else to do, so he was working for this thing. It was really, really powerful. I saw that this Jesus he is preaching is real for him. And he is real for other people that he connects with.

And after 9 months of these kind of experiences, and also personal questions, he texted me: "What do you think is going to happen with you when you die?". I usually don't go around and threaten people with hell, but in that context, it was the right question to ask. I had to answer to myself, to Henry, but also to God. Because I realised that God is, he was there. I had prayed: "God if you are there could you help me with this?". And usually all the things happened, like 8 times in a row - what one calls holy coincidences, they "just" happen. And then this question came: "What are you going to do?", I translated it into my heart and mind as a question of: "Are you going to follow me, or are you going to be aware that I am there, and just ignore me? Keep trying to live your life as though I don't exist but you know I'm there?". That was very challenging.

And I answered that evening to myself, to him and to God, that yes, I believe God is real. Some days later I went to this evangelisation event and officially accepted Jesus. But I would say that the Holy Spirit was present through Henry and in my life even before that. That's my story.

**Kristian talking:**

It is cool that he definitely did activities, he did street evangelism I hear, and it's beautiful - let's do a lot of activities. But in your case, it was the fact that he was just present in the club, being part of the club, and being open about who he was. He was. And that was what really made a difference for you.

**Ulvis talking:**

Yes, his presence, his interest in me. We met every day anyway, and he had time to share his life, and I had time to just watch and observe him. Test if what he was saying was real. That really made the difference for me.

**Kristian talking:**

I think that was my experience in the supermarket as well. That when I was there, that's what made all the difference. How does that look like for you today, for you to represent Jesus in your everyday life? I mean, obviously, working in

IFES, your workplace is probably full of Christians, but else from that, where you live, among friends, how does it look for you and your family?

**Ulvis talking:**

So for us as a family we have learned that it is really important to have a shared vision, shared values shared goals, when it comes to how God wants to see us. This is not merely activities, it's about how we live our lives, how we plan our rhythms of life, how we build friendships with people - and being intentional about it. In a way, we are open to welcoming people, people in whom the Holy Spirit is already doing things, and we just have to recognise it. For example, in our family setting it looks like this: We moved into our neighbourhood a year ago, and we have connected with some neighbours really quickly. There are also some youths that has connected to us thanks to the dog - the dog is a fantastic mission tool, so please buy nice dogs so people want to come to you, then you don't have to be, sort of "being pushy", reaching out to people and crashing into their private zones. Instead they come to you, really open and smiling. So that was a "deal breaker" for us. So, the dog helped us connect with the youth and the people around us. So basically we just

build connections and relationships through that. And also, there is a guard, the maintenance man, who is every working day sitting in a little cabin next to the gates of the territory which we live in. He helps people a lot with maintenance and things. We have connected really well with him, had some extended conversations - also about the Bible and Jesus, and he has become a friend of ours. He is also on the journey to get to know Christ. When I leave home, let's say I need to leave at 12, I leave 10 minutes before that, so in case this guy is around and he wants to talk, I have time for him. That is being intentional about relationships and being intentional about mission. And not always do we talk about Jesus, the Bible or what can we pray for you, but we also those small talks about different things. We care for him. Sometimes we bring a cake for him - my wife bakes something, just to give joy. That is our mission. And that's really amazing.

In addition, with students (from IFS) we are doing discipleship groups or huddles, were we meet to challenge them to respond to Gods call for their situations. One of those groups is meeting at our home. The way we organise the meeting is that first we process the content and we talk about the topics of that week.



Afterwards we just share a meal together at the dinner table. We invite them into our lives, we share our life, for example, today we picked up a letter they need to deliver to this one city we are going today for resting and enjoying. We are helping them out in just everyday situations, so we're sharing life. They are invited into our life and they can see how we build relationships with our neighbours, how we live out the mission that we are called to in everyday life - they just learn from us that way.

**Kristian talking:**

Beautiful. What I hear is that you are not just adding a lot of mission activities to your life, but you're basically just being aware of what God is doing in your neighbors - with the maintenance guy, and you are just allowing other Christians to see that.

**Ulvis talking:**

Yes, exactly. We are allowing other Christians to see that, we invite them in so they can join us - there is some structured time - when they know they can join us, and also some unstructured time - like hey what are you doing this Saturday, do you want to hang out together. Something like that. Sometimes it happens, sometimes not, but we are not too about it, it is not about activities it's

about relationships. And we know that if they say no, we don't lose the relationship, we still have it. It's great.

**Kristian talking:**

One of the slogans of Lausanne is: "The whole church, taking the whole gospel, to the whole world", which I love. But then if you look at research and statistics, the whole church is not taking the gospel with them. A lot of Christians are basically not sharing the gospel, I think often because: "How am I supposed to do that?". Knowing they should do it, but not knowing how to do it. I know about you that you've really been involved with your church lately, helping them as well as the students in IFES to do it. You have already mentioned a little bit about how you do it. Could you say a bit more about how you are helping others to get going?

**Ulvis talking:**

What we do is that we form these discipleship groups where we invite people to process everyday life, what God is speaking to us through everyday life situations. In church I introduce people to these ideas which we also use in IFES, they come from Mike Breen and 3DM-ministries, if you've heard of it. Also, from Stepping Stones from the Netherlands. Which is basically living a

missional discipleship lifestyle - that's the goal behind this, that everyone is called for mission. When we start, I usually share that everyone is called for a mission, and then people freak out: "I am not a missionary, I am not an evangelist! How am I supposed to do that?"

But then we usually share this one principle about People of Peace, which you will find in Luke 10, and other places in the bible. When Jesus sends out the 72, he roughly says: "Go", and then "wherever you enter say; peace be with you, if there is a person of peace there, the peace will stay with them". Basically, it means that the Holy Spirit has already prepared some people around you, who are non-Christians who don't know Jesus, but he is already working in their hearts - they are really open to you. He says they will receive you; they will be open, you won't have to break into anyone's door, you don't have to argue with them. They will just receive you because they are ready - the Holy Spirit has prepared them for the gospel and for meeting you. Then Jesus says: "Stay with them". And then he says, "Don't go from door to door, don't go chaotically, listen to me and observe, and you will recognise what I am already doing."

So, this is what we are helping in our church, to recognize what God is already doing, and join Him into his mission. The best way how to do that is to invite people into our own life and into our own story saying: "Hey, this is how it looks for us". It might be different for your context, but the idea that we can hear from God, everyone is part of it and God is already working in people around us, is true for every single one.

### **Kristian talking:**

Basically, people go from being freaked out, to being excited, going: "Phew, I can actually do this".

### **Ulvis talking:**

I can actually do this - yes, that is totally what is happening. And whenever I share this principle about People of Peace, every single one starts thinking - I can see their eyes going, they look to the ceiling or the sky, and I can see them going: "Hmm". And I say: "You're probably thinking about 2 or 3 people in your life right now?". And they go: "Yes". You know, there are people already. And they are like: "This is so exciting". There are some students who are inviting their friends to go for a bike ride, or just go for a coffee, or for a movie, or just let's study together - and then ending up talking about life and Jesus for 3

hours instead of studying for exams. I'm not encouraging them to. Talking about Jesus is important, but also recognizing it's not only about studies and exams. And most of the students actually they realize that, they never had the thought that: "Wow, me being in university actually is me being called into mission. I thought this was the place where I was supposed to study, and then I go to church and do my whatever activities, but it's not like that. God calls us to..."

**Kristian talking:**

Again what I am hearing is that you are helping them to realize what I realized in the grocery shop. They are not

just there to study, but they are also there to represent Jesus.

That's beautiful. Ok, I think we'll sum it up from here. Thank you very much, Ulvis.

And then we'll let the words of John Stott, the second founder of Lausanne - also spoken at the congress in 1974 - end this podcast:

**Recording of John Stott:**

"It comes more natural to us, to shout the gospel at people from a distance, than to involve ourselves deeply in their lives, to think ourselves into their problems and into their culture, and to feel with them in their pain."