



Baptist Churches
of NSW & ACT

Contextualisation



“

All gospel ministry and communication are already heavily adapted to a particular culture. So it is important to do contextualisation **consciously**. If we never deliberately think through ways to rightly contextualise gospel ministry to a new culture, we will unconsciously be deeply contextualised to some other culture. Our gospel ministry will be both overadapted to our own culture and underadapted to new cultures at once, which ultimately leads to a distortion of the Christian message.

”

Timothy Keller, Centre Church



Definitions

“Contextualisation is the task of relating the gospel to culture.”

- *Steve Bartlett*

“Contextualisation is giving people the Bible’s answers, which they may not at all want to hear, to questions about life that people in their particular time and place are asking, in language and forms they can comprehend, and through appeals and arguments with force they can feel, even if they reject them”

- *Timothy Keller*

“Contextualisation means translating and adapting the communication and ministry of the gospel to a particular culture without compromising the essence and particulars of the gospel itself.”

- *Timothy Keller*

“Contextualisation is the word becoming flesh within a neighbourhood.”

- *Jamie Freeman*

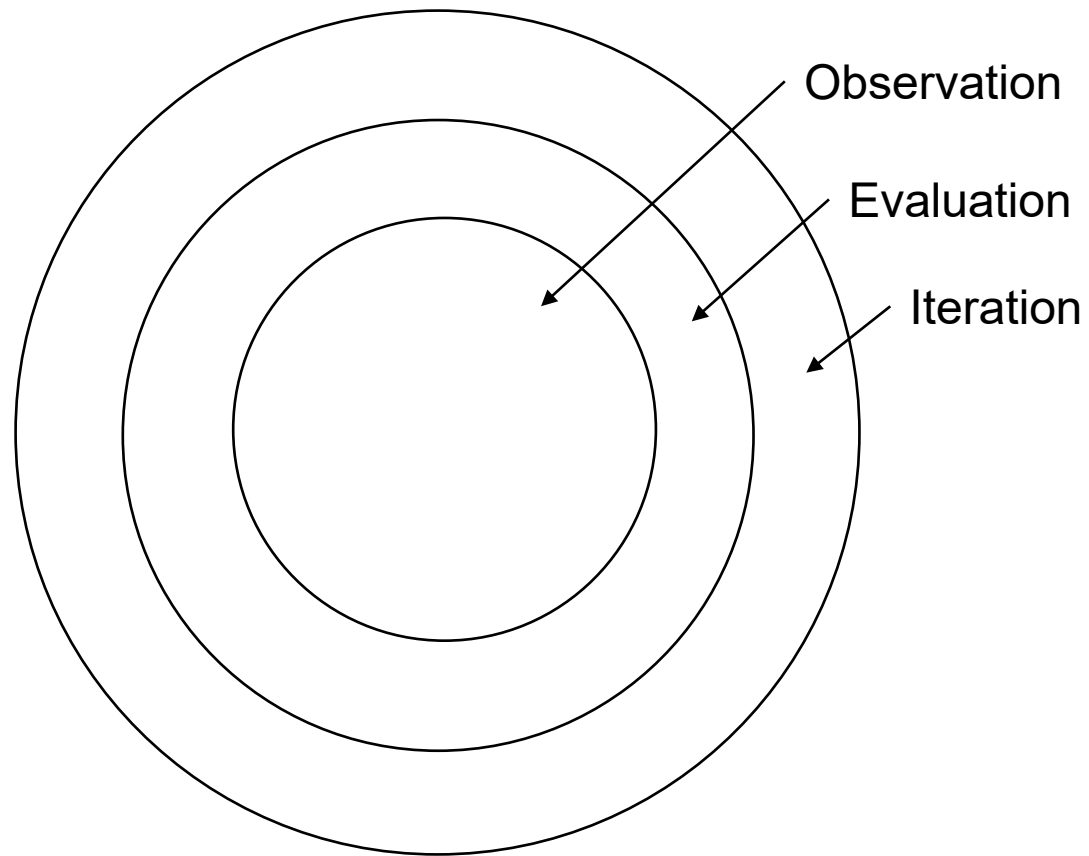
Context

An individual context is a complex interplay of many factors, such as

- geography
- language
- ethnicity
- political & economic systems
- social & family systems - including class, gender & age
- time frame - every culture will have their own periodisation's - perhaps by historical or mythical events &/or people, or by religious heritage, etc
- sense of identity
- religion
- values
- history

This list adapted from Alan Neely, *Christian mission - a case study approach* (New York: Orbis Books, 1995), 9.

Contextualisation

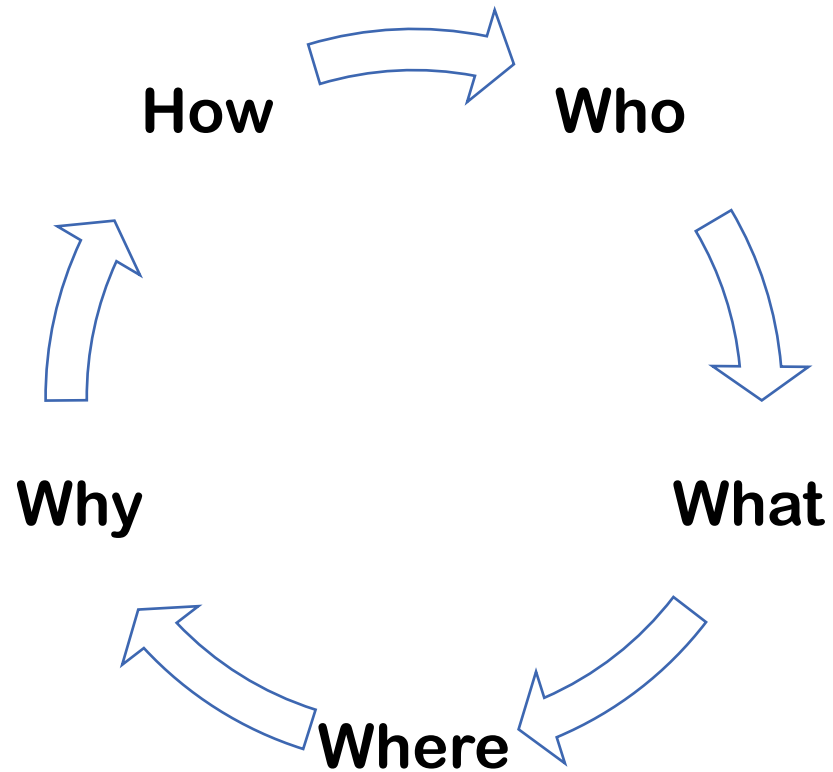


Contextualisation

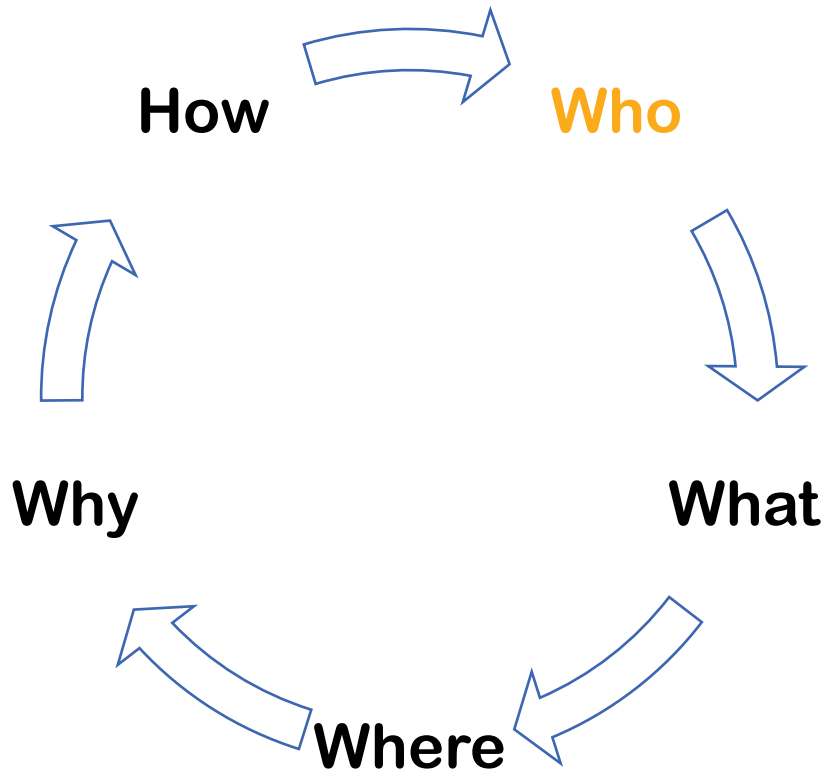
Iteration without observation = ignorant

Iteration without evaluation = isolated

Observation without iteration = ineffective



The Cycle of Contextualisation

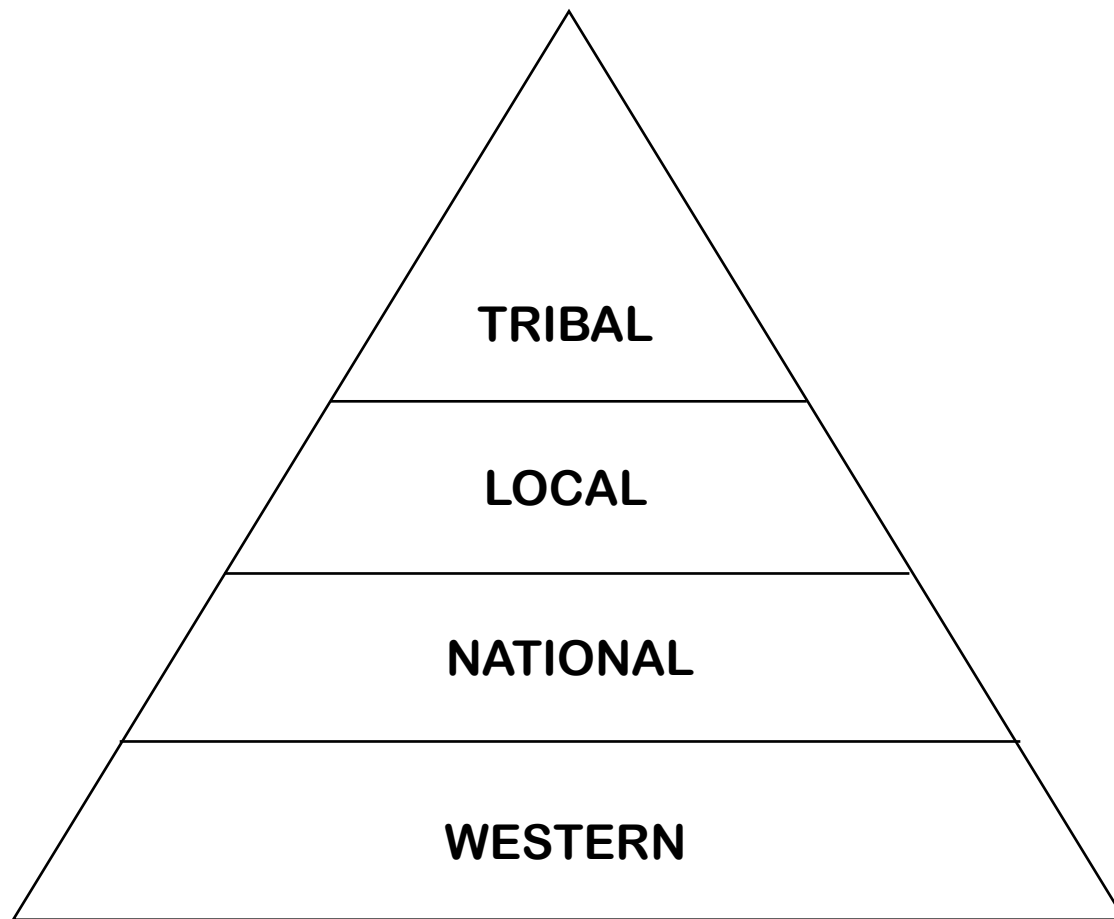


Question:

Who am I/we called to?

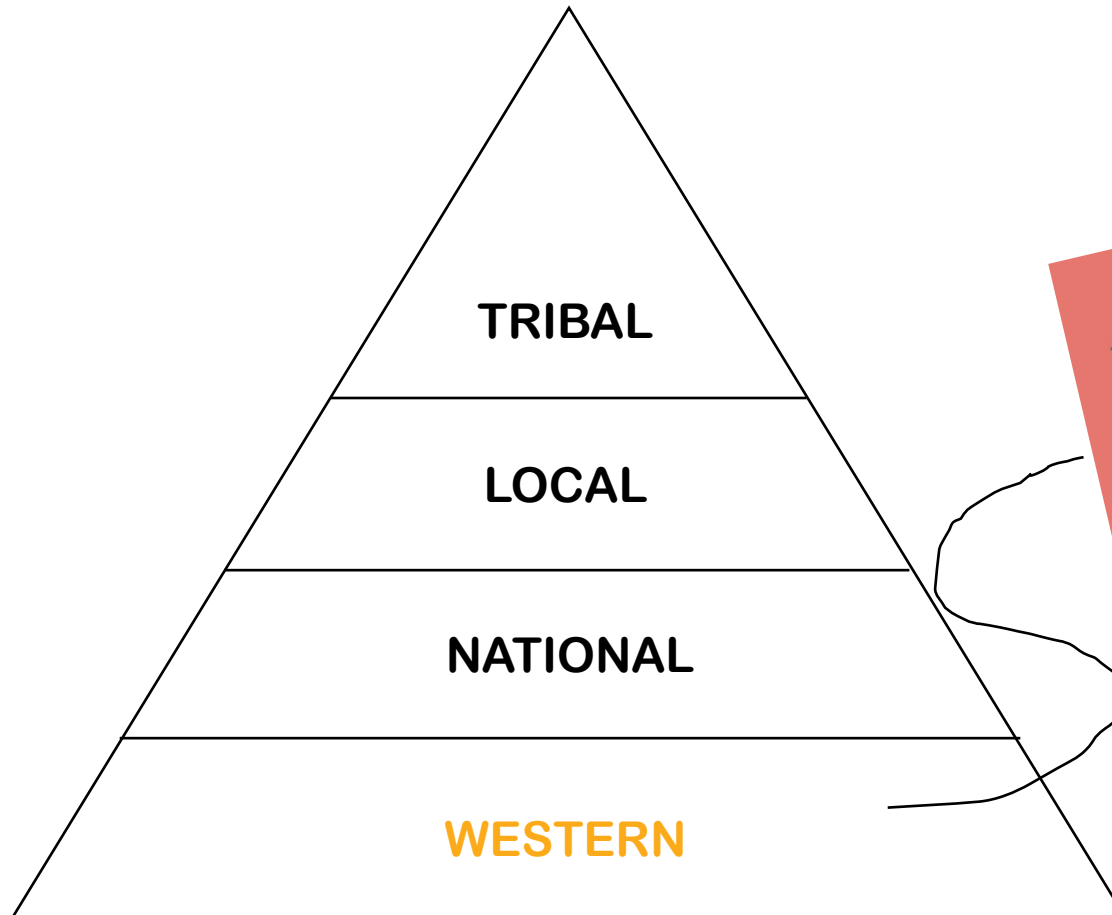
Who is my/our neighbour?

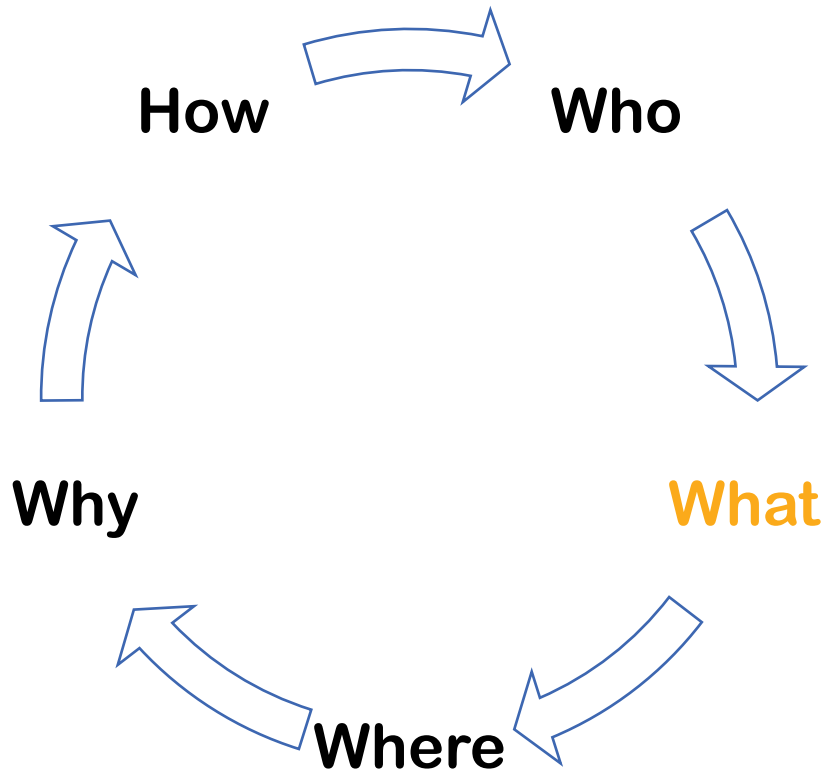
The Cycle of Contextualisation



The Cultural Stack

The Cultural Stack





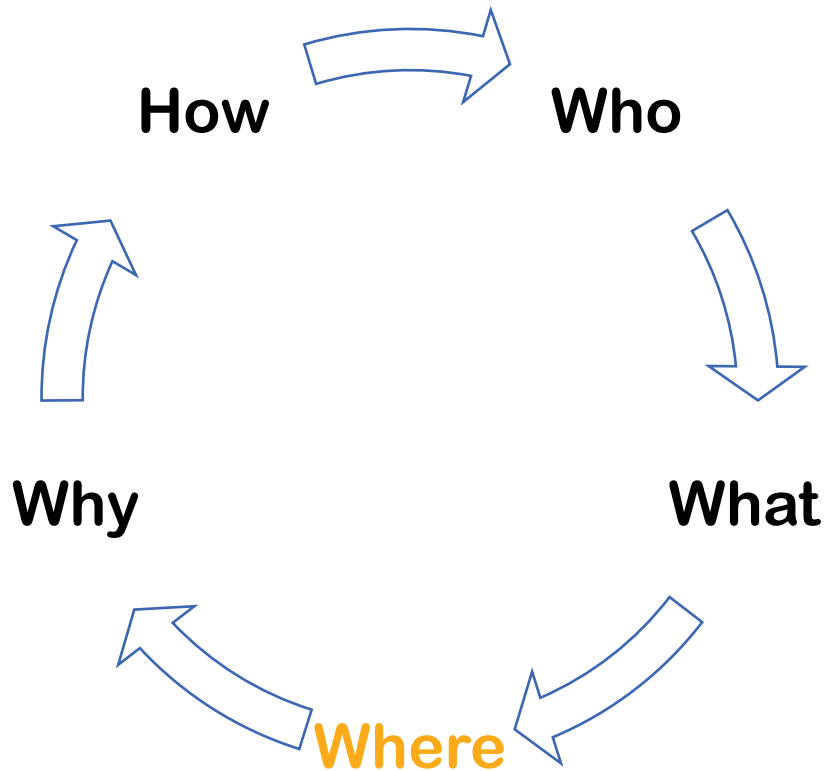
Question:

What are their dreams and aspirations?

What are their stories, symbols and rituals?

What are their needs (emotional, physical, spiritual)?

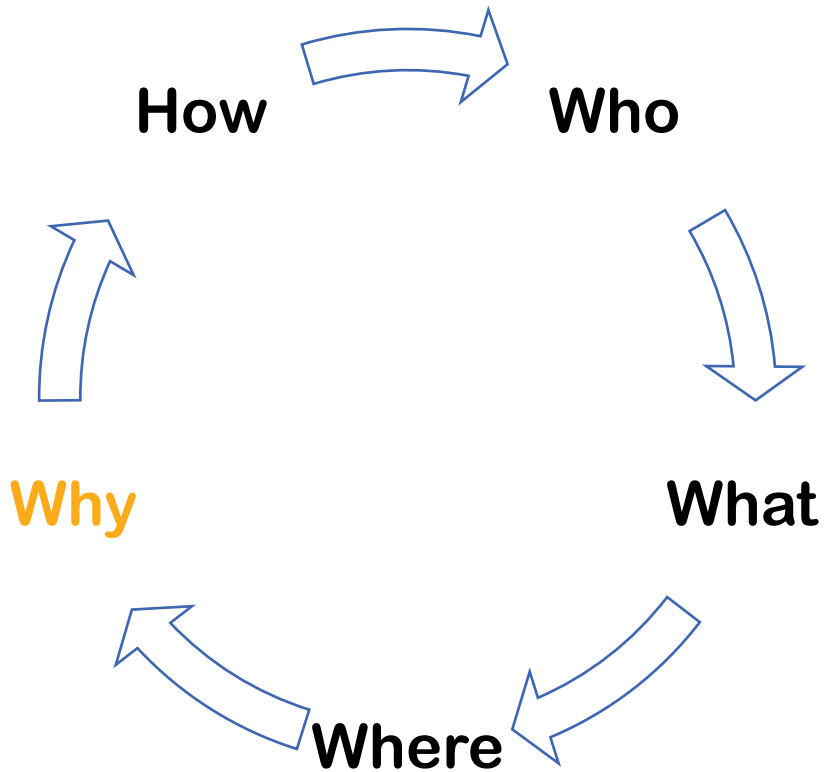
The Cycle of Contextualisation



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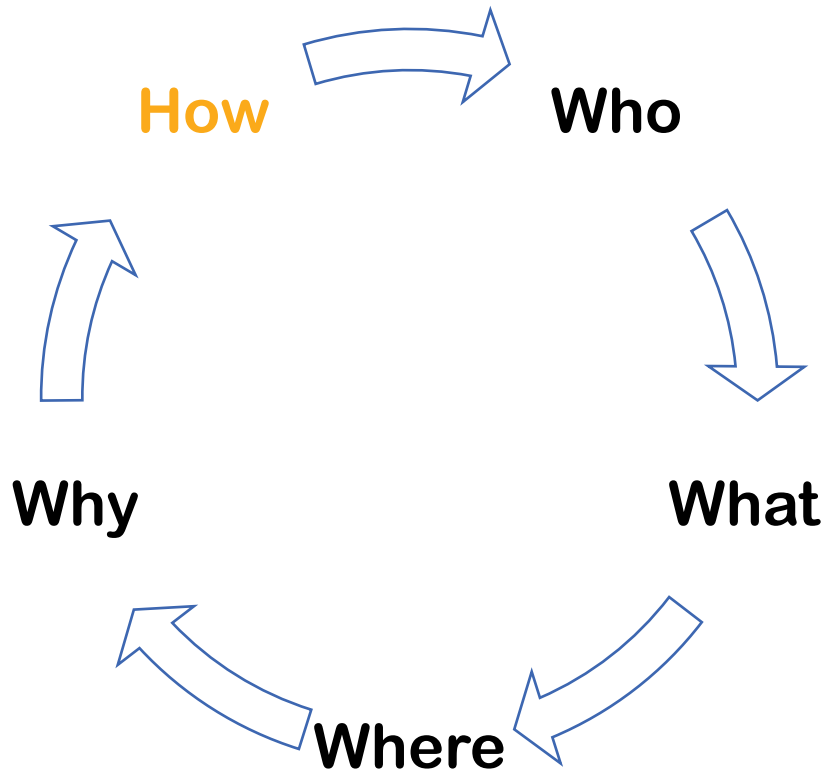
Where does the gospel champion, challenge or confront the culture?

The Cycle of Contextualisation



Question:
Why is the gospel good news in this context?

The Cycle of Contextualisation



Question:

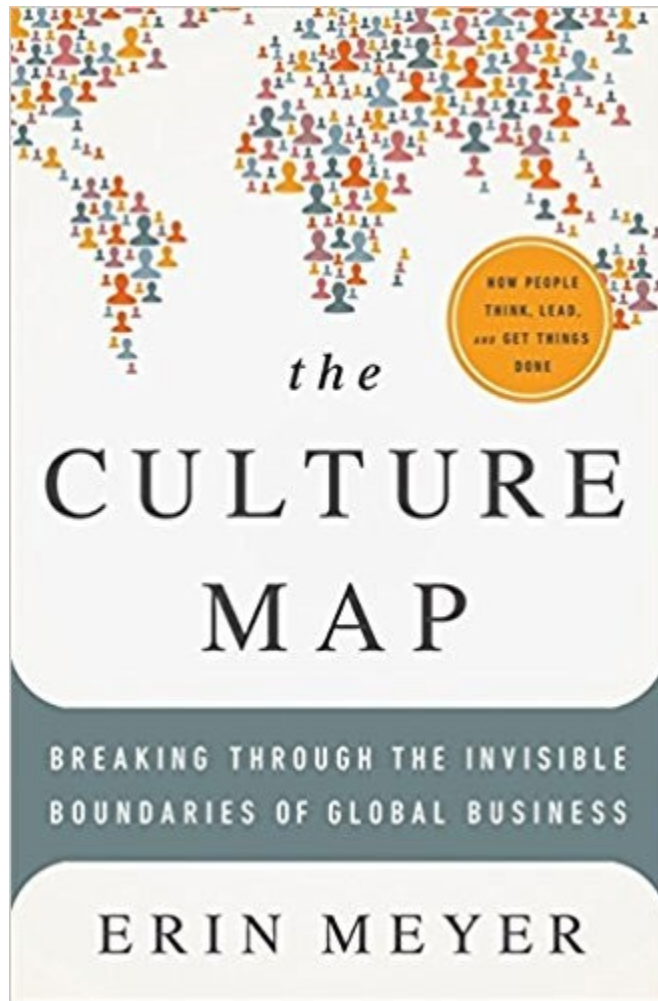
How do we contextualise our lifestyle?

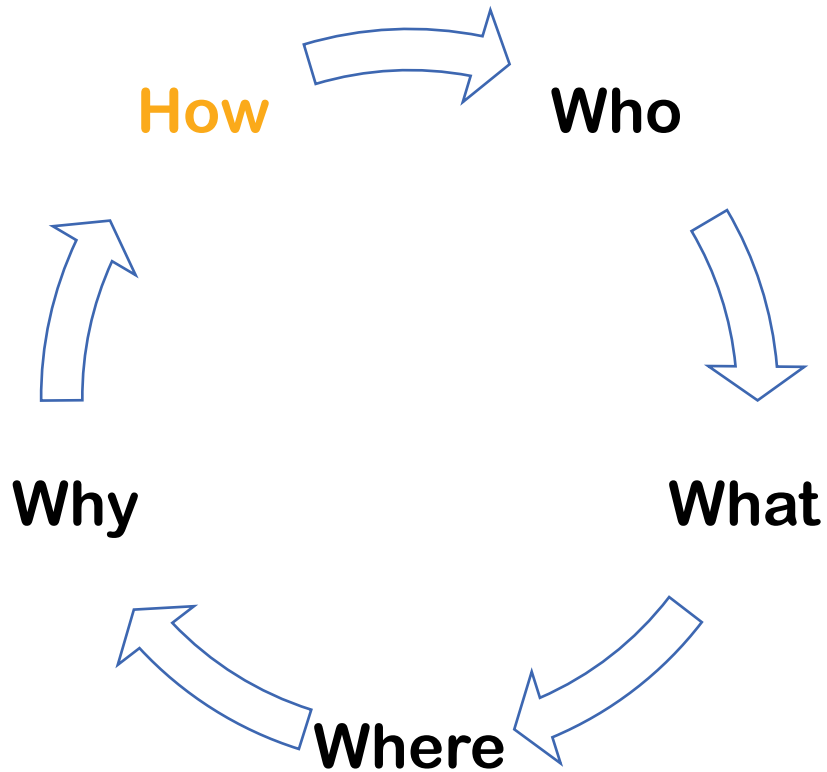
How do we contextualise the gospel message?

How do we contextualise our method?

How do we contextualise the church?

The Cycle of Contextualisation

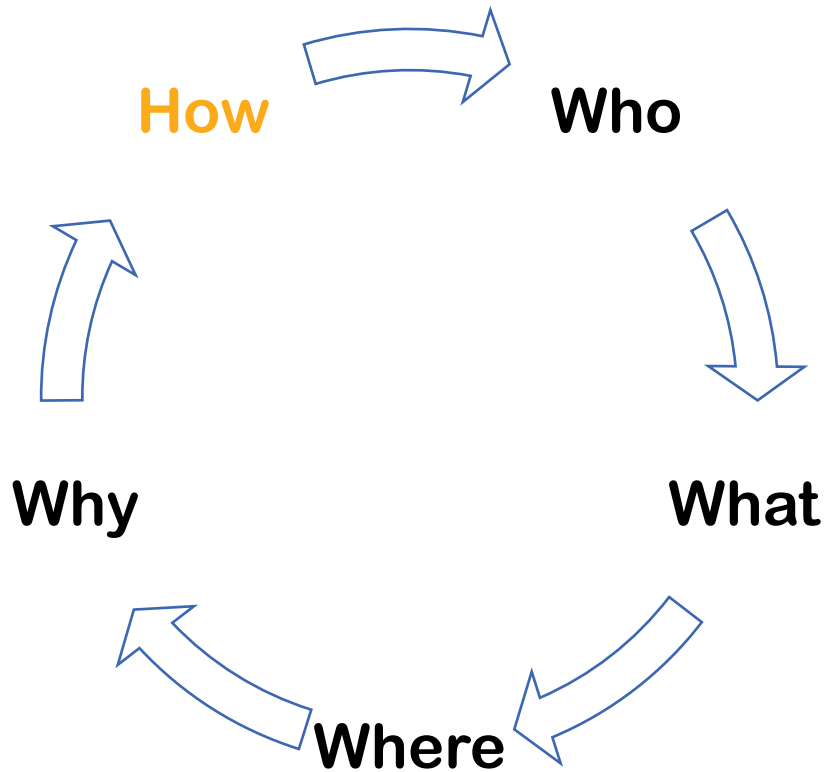




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The Cycle of Contextualisation

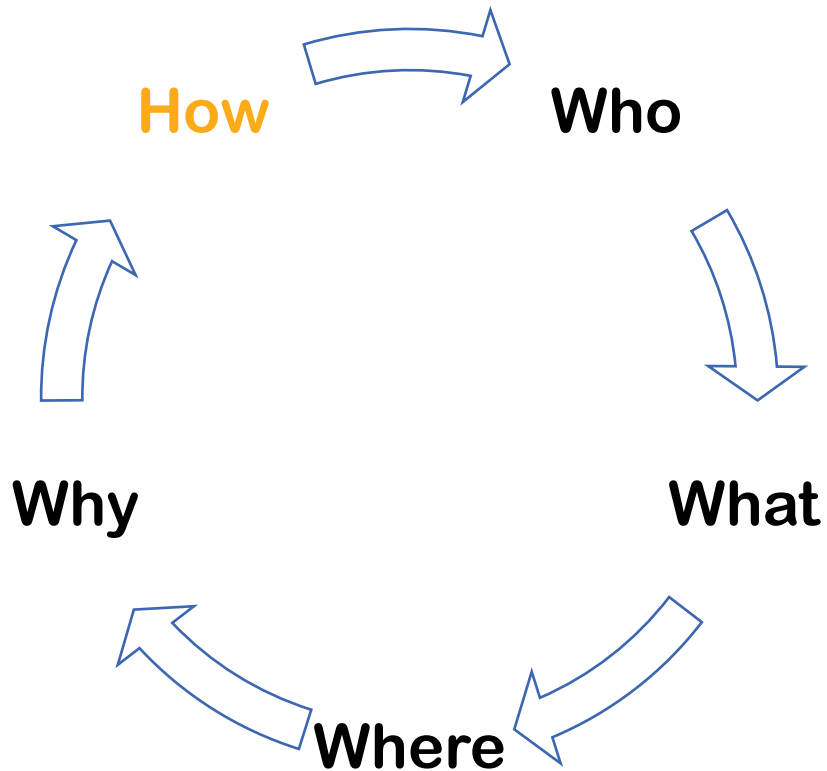


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The Cycle of Contextualisation



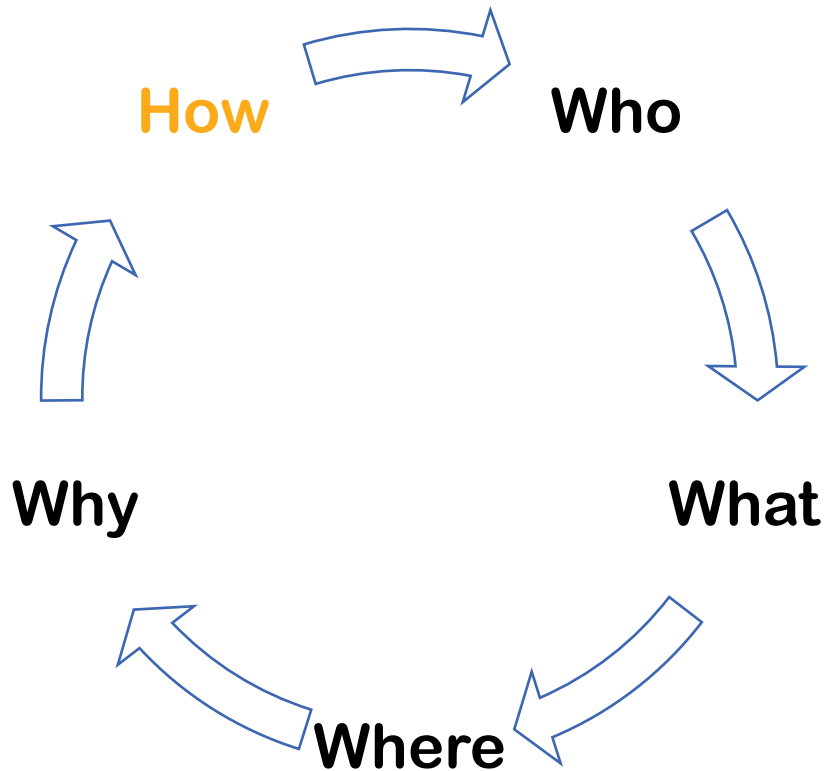
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The Cycle of Contextualisation