



Church Army annual meeting.

Evangelism is not a survival strategy for the church, but is instead an activity “central to being the people of God”, the Archbishop of Canterbury said yesterday.

Because we worship a God revealed in Jesus Christ who was “sent out to sow, to gather, and to draw back in”, as Christians when we evangelise we reflect the nature of God, he said.

Archbishop Justin, [who has made evangelism a priority for his ministry](#), was speaking at the Church Army’s annual general meeting in central London, where he addressed evangelists from across the UK and Ireland.

“Evangelism is never a survival strategy. It’s not a tool to ensure that the Church keeps going. God doesn’t do that. We cannot instrumentalise God,” he said.

“We can’t say we’re going to use God to ensure the church keeps going. The God we worship is a God who sends out and harvests in. And we see that most clearly in the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus is God himself, sent out to sow, to gather, and to draw back in.”

He continued: “So what you’re doing in evangelism isn’t a tool of the church, it’s not some sort of thing we do so we can still be there in a generation or two. It is the revelation of the nature of God. It is intrinsic to being the people of God.”

The Archbishop said he had “no fears about the future of the church of God” in this country.

“But I would really like, and I believe it’s part of God’s plan, that that future of the church of God includes a renewed, invigorated, confident, wonderful, celebratory, humble, delighting Church of England.”

But he said that sharing Jesus with others is not something that churches should wait until they are “ready” before doing.

“Worship and evangelism... neither are things you wait to be ready to do. You do them. You get on with them. That is the nature of the God we serve.”

He also stressed the importance of evangelism being grounded in theology.

“To earth our activity in theology, in who God is, is incredibly important. Because when we understand that this is the God we serve, that this is intrinsic to his nature, who he has revealed himself to be, that tells us that what we’re doing is not just one of those things that some people do and some people don’t – this is absolutely fundamental to being the people of God.

“And that’s quite encouraging, because when we’re being the people of God, the one thing we can be pretty sure about is that God will show up.”

[Read more about Archbishop Justin's evangelism ministry.](#)

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