



Confidence  
in the Gospel

As part of the Evangelical Alliance's *Confidence in the Gospel* initiative we are hosting a series of five national consultations to wrestle with significant and timely issues relating to the gospel.

To ensure that as many people as possible can engage with this programme, the talks are being filmed and made available online.

Why not watch some of the videos, and use the questions provided, to explore these vital subjects with your small group or leadership team?

For more information, videos and resources visit [eauk.org/confidence](http://eauk.org/confidence)

## Andrew Graystone

is the director of the Church and Media Network. He worked for BBC Religion for over a decade as a producer and development executive. He lectures at universities and theological colleges and advises Christian groups on how they can best engage with the media.

## Synopsis

In a provocative and challenging presentation Andrew offers some radical ways forward that may force many of us to ask serious questions. He suggests that as a group, evangelical Christians usually completely misunderstand what the mainstream media is for. We complain that we are misunderstood, ignored, or misrepresented, but 99 times out of 100 the evangelical community get what they deserve from the media. We have set up a barrier between the church and the media, when actually there is huge overlap between the values of the media and purposes of the church.

A far more constructive and engaged approach is needed in the relationship between the church and the media. Jesus challenges us to raise a light on a stand so people will see it. We need to provide a Christian voice in the public conversation. Here are five ways we might do that:

- 1) Treat communications as a missional activity:** Churches and Christian organisations should invest in media as a place for mission, not just to manage their reputations.
- 2) Stop spending money on sub-cultural media:** How important is it for us to run radio stations that play Christian music to Christians. Could that money be better spent?
- 3) Humbly re-engage the mainstream media:** We need to take down walls of hostility and build bridges. We need to be known for being constructive, appreciative, available, honest and ready to serve.
- 4) Support Christians' vocations to media:** Encourage talented young people to go into the industry and support them instead of making them feel like they are going over to the 'dark side'.
- 5) Equip local churches and Christians for local media engagement:** Christians are shaped by the media the same as everyone else. We need to consume and create media that is distinctively Christian.

## Questions

- 1) Andrew Graystone is highly critical of how evangelical Christians tend to perceive, and engage with, the media. Do you think his comments are fair? Can you think of examples that illustrate, or counter, his analysis of the problem?**
- 2) What positive and negative examples can you think of when it comes to Christian engagement with the media? What can we learn from these examples? How can these examples influence our approach in the future?**
- 3) Using the five ways that we might provide a Christian voice in the public conversation as a starting point, what practical steps do we need to take (as churches, Christian organisations, and individuals) in order to achieve a healthier relationship with the media?**