

HOW TO SHARE YOUR FAITH



INTRODUCTION

What should be the driving force behind our Faith-Sharing as committed Christ-followers?

- Our love for Jesus and our sharing in His desire to see people GROW
- But why Jesus?

Jesus is the way to the Father because only He has an intimate knowledge of God that is not damaged by sin. Because He is The Way, The Truth, and The Life, He is the ONLY means of reaching the Father. Jesus is not trying to be narrow-minded or intolerant. Rather, He was stating the only possible conclusion from the fact that He, the unique Son, was and is the sole means of access to the Father. (Expositor's Commentary, John – Acts, pp. 144)

Texts To Consider: Hosea 13:4; John 3:16; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:3-7

Robert Jeffress, in his book “Hell? Yes!” shares a powerful illustration with an unbelieving passenger on an airplane: “Imagine that this plane crashed, the interior lights went out, and smoke started filling the cabin. The flight attendant stands at the front of the cabin waving her emergency flashlight and saying, ‘Follow me. There is one way out.’ Would you accuse her of being intolerant for insisting there is only one exit out of the burning jetliner? And if I took your hand and said, ‘Follow me,’ would you label me a narrow-minded bigot because I was attempting to persuade you to follow me to safety?”

“If indeed there were another exit out of the plane that was closer to you, wouldn’t the flight attendant encourage you to use it? The only reason for her dogmatic assertion that there is only one exit available would be because there *is* only one exit available, and she has a sincere desire to lead you to safety.”

Sadly, we will encounter those who struggle with the Exclusive claims of the Inclusive Jesus. They will struggle with the fact that everything they have believed up to this point is a lie because of the Gospel Truth you have just presented. Instead of embracing the truth about Christ, our world is calling Christians narrow-minded, arrogant and intolerant. In reality, in our self-reliant/entitled/self-centered culture, it is tough for many to humble themselves and admit their need for a Savior. The challenge for Christians will be to share the Gospel with grace, compassion, and patience while not backing down on the truth claims of Scripture.

Notes:

TALKING POINTS

- Our faith in Christ, our intimate pursuit of Him, spending time in His Word, letting His thoughts become our thoughts, etc., are what will ultimately drive us as Christians to develop a sense of urgency in sharing our faith and making disciples.
- Seek to extend the invitation – We cannot force anyone to trust Jesus or force them to GROW in that new relationship. (persuade=yes, force=no)
- Our desire with this material is to give you the tools and resources to assist you in walking in obedience in regard to Faith-Sharing. A common error among Christians today is to wait for the church to design a specific outreach opportunity for you to put these tools/resources into practice. Please do not follow that mindset.
- There is no foolproof 3-step or 5-step process for every Faith-Sharing situation you will encounter. Pursue Jesus through the study of His Word and let the Holy Spirit guide you.
- The best thing we can do, in my opinion, is to teach/equip you to do the following: share with others (either in a first-time encounter or thru an ongoing relationship) about your real encounter with Jesus. Be sure to share with them how that encounter has changed your life and that your story is biblically accurate.
- Be in the Word consistently so you can truly get to know Jesus (attend our Spiritual Disciplines Class: Spiritual Disciplines → Intimacy → Christ-likeness). I believe the reason why most people do not share their faith is that it is hard to introduce Someone (Jesus) to someone else you do not know very well.
- Get to know Him so well that you become passionate about what He is passionate about (Seek & Save, Luke 19:10) and this will, in turn, develop a sense of urgency compelling you to share the Gospel. “If we begin to see as Jesus sees, then we will do as Jesus does.” – Ken Freeman
- Care more about people’s eternal destination than your temporary agenda (reference Psalm 37:4, 1 John 2:15-17). As we become more like Him, His desires will become our desires. If you do not seek to become more like Him, then your desires will dominate your focus and you will not be as sensitive to witnessing opportunities as you should be.
- The problem – we tend to get distracted by our own selfish/sinful choices and the job we, as believers, have been given to do is not being given the full attention it deserves.

“The job is not done in the world that Christ gave us to do and the mandate is still binding on us today that’s why we speak of unreached people groups...but the missions is the backbreaking, culture penetrating, darkness shattering, initial work to penetrate, plant the church, see it flourish, get its own elders, train its own people, evangelize its own networks...that’s the task of missions...it’s not over and Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven and the alternative is hell and millions and millions and millions of people are on their way there and we have the only means of escape in our heads and in our hearts, Jesus Christ.” – John Piper, Tears of the Saints Video

“The only career you can count on is being God’s ambassador on earth. Do that job well, and then look to Him for wisdom in work decisions.” (Stand Firm, Tuesday, May 10, 2011)

- Be sensitive to the Spirit's leading. As a Christian, you have Him in you (Acts 1:8). Ask for wisdom/discernment in how to do what God has called you to do, especially in regard to how you should approach a particular Faith-Sharing opportunity.
- Pray for encounters (Faith-Sharing opportunities, Divine Appointments, etc.). Beg God to use you and prepare you for the opportunities He will bring your way.
- Have a healthy view of success and rejection when and if it comes. Count conversations as well as conversions. Realize they are not rejecting you but the One you represent, and once they do, they stand condemned if their position does not change. (John 3:17-18)
- Reach one, and then reach another one. You are not trying to reach the whole world for Christ by yourself. We are in this together. Seek to share your faith at least once a week.
- Engage people in conversation, follow the model set in John chapter 4: Go, Engage, Transition, and Introduce to Jesus.

Notes:

A BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

John Chapter 4 – As we read the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan Woman, hopefully, we will learn to develop a passion for the Lost and overcome barriers. Reason being, when we learn to see as Jesus sees, we will do as Jesus does.

Did you notice the barriers overcome:

1. Ethnic/Racial (He was a Jew, she was a Samaritan)
2. Gender (He was a man, she was a woman)
3. Community Standing (He was a Rabbi, she was an outcast in her community)

Notice Jesus' Strategy:

1. He _____ to _____ (Intentional, "and He had to pass through Samaria." – Verse 4)
2. Found a _____ (Both needed water. Notice the timing.)
3. _____ a conversation (Asked the woman a question)
4. _____ the conversation (Physical water verses Living Water)

-How Communication is hampered:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

-Six Ingredients for the Gospel:

- a. God loves _____
- b. Humanity is _____
- c. The Person and Work of Jesus Provides _____
- d. Humanity's Response in _____, _____, and _____
- e. Humanity's Decision to Start a _____ in _____
- f. _____

Notes:

FURTHER STUDY

Paul tells us in 2 Cor. 5:17-21 that his ministry was one of reconciliation: “Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, **we are ambassadors for Christ**, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (NAS)

Paul stresses “persuasion” once again in 2 Corinthians chapter 5 and lets us know that “we are ambassadors for Christ”.

2 Corinthians 5:11 – 6:2

- “Though Paul knew that his salvation and eternal destiny were obtained by faith in Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9), the thought of one day standing before His Savior (2 Cor. 5:10) awed him.”
- This thought is what motivated Paul to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- “The purpose of his ministry was to persuade men to *be reconciled to God*.”
- “The immediate representative of God’s message of reconciliation was Paul, whose ministry is shared by all who are “in Christ”. All believers should serve Christ as His ambassadors.” (BKC-NT, 568)

Did you notice Paul’s words in this passage?: “knowing the fear of the Lord”, “we persuade men”, “the love of Christ controls us” – **it compels us**, “we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us” – **pleading**, “we beg you on behalf of Christ”, “be reconciled to God”, “now is THE ACCEPTABLE TIME”, “now is THE DAY OF SALVATION”.

- Do you sense the urgency in his voice for people to come to faith in Christ?
- The Greek word for “behold” in verse 2 of chapter 6 is used as a marker of strong emphasis. It basically means, “See!” (BDAG – PC Study Bible)
- Do you have that same sense of urgency as a Christ-follower for the people around you who desperately need to trust Jesus because they are hell bound?

“What you believe about the Lord’s return will have a direct bearing on how you live your life, and especially on how you share the gospel with others.” (Charles Stanley, *Preparing for Christ’s Return*, pp. 7)

Did you know that:

"The greater your understanding of God's eternal plan and the importance of salvation, the more of God's truth you will have to share with those who are unsaved, unsure about their salvation, without hope, or wavering in their commitment to follow Christ...Be bold in your witness."
(Charles Stanley, *Preparing for Christ's Return*, pp. 7)

God has called us, as believers, to be His witnesses. Read Acts 1:6-8, ESV.

"Verse 8 places the disciples' question (from verse 6) in proper perspective. The "restoration of the kingdom" involves a worldwide mission. Jesus promised the disciples two things: **power** and **witness**. The future tense here has an imperative [im-per-uh-tahy-vuh l] sense: "**you will** [must] receive power"; "**you will** be my witnesses." Luke stressed this commission from the risen Lord at the close of his Gospel (24:47-49)."

"All the same elements are there—the witness, the call to the nations, the power of the Spirit. The power they were to receive was divine power; the word is *dynamis*, the same word used of Jesus' miracles in the Gospels. It is the *Spirit's* power (2:1-21). The endowment with the Spirit is the prelude to, **the equipping for, mission**. The role of the apostles is that of "witness" (*martys*)."

"In Acts the apostles' main role is depicted as witnessing to the earthly ministry of Jesus, above all to His resurrection (cf. 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39, 41). **As eyewitnesses only they were in the position** to be guarantors of the resurrection. But with its root meaning of *testimony*, "witness" comes to have an almost legal sense of bearing one's testimony to Christ. In this way it is applied to Stephen (22:20) and to Paul (22:15; 23:11; 26:16)... **One theologian (L. Keck) notes the close connection between** the Spirit's power and the witness to Jesus, observing that what was true of those first apostolic witnesses is still true of witnesses today: "**The less Jesus is the core of witness, the less power we have.**" (NAC on Acts, Logos)

Notes:

RESOURCES TO CONSIDER

- Important Point – every situation will be different. Jesus and His Word do not change.
- Faith-Sharing: Another Approach To Consider, attached
- Testimony Preparation Worksheet, attached
- How To Use Your Bible in Witnessing, attached
- Commitment/Baptism Sheet, attached
- Reference our website – resources.revolution.church

Notes:

Faith-Sharing: Another Approach To Consider

Adapted from "Disarming Questions", Matt Mikalatos, Discipleship Journal, Jan./Feb 09, pp. 28-33

"I hate Christians," Shannon said, her hands trembling and her teeth clenched. I had mentioned going to church in a casual conversation, and this was how she responded. Her anger took me off guard. Other times when I'd run into people who openly expressed their hostility toward Christianity, I'd found it easiest to ignore them politely rather than engage in conversations about spirituality. Shannon had just moved onto my street, however, and I didn't want to respond to her that way. I wanted to tell her about Jesus. But how?"

Questions:

- What makes me uneasy about sharing my faith? Why is that?
- What are some of my struggles in the attempts I have made?
- What are some of my experiences, either positive or negative?

"Whatever the situation, interaction with people who have a lot of emotion invested in disliking Christians can be tough."

Proverbs 15:1, "A gentle answer turns away wrath."

- We need to try to use gentle words that will disarm anger and turn people toward Christ.

5 Disarming Questions:

- These are great to use after you have made the transition from the casual conversation to the spiritual by asking about church involvement.

Very Important – Seek God's direction as to how much and when – going through them all at once or spread over several conversations. Let the Spirit guide you. Avoid unloading on someone, all at one time.

Question #1 "Probing The Past" – "What would you say is the worst thing Christians have done in the last 2,000 years?"

- Ask your non-believing friends to identify some "black marks" in Christian history.
- Examples – **the Crusades** (Military expeditions in the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries to win the Holy Land from the Muslims), **Spanish Inquisition** (sought to maintain Catholic Orthodoxy), **Salem witch trials** (prosecute those accused of witchcraft in colonial Massachusetts).
- Agree with them that killing innocent people is a terrible crime. Killing people unjustly in the name of Christ is horrible.
- You do not have to misrepresent your true feelings or opinions, but you can agree with them over those wrongs even though you may not share their interpretation of history.

- What you are doing is acknowledging the evil of an injustice without becoming entangled in Christianity's role in it.

Question #2 "Uncovering The Wound" – "What is the worst thing a Christian has done to you personally?"

- Be ready for the pain you may uncover.

Shannon's Story – When she was a young woman, her parents forced her to get an abortion. Her favorite uncle heard what she had done and told her, "I cannot talk to you anymore. I am a Christian, and Christians do not have anything to do with abortion." Fifteen years later he still refuses to speak with her.

Steven's Story – Steven had a brick thrown through his window because he is gay. A list of Bible verses was rubber-banded to the brick so he could look them up and "see what God has to say about homosexuality."

Allison's Story – Allison was sexually abused by a leader at her church.

Sam's Story – Sam was mocked because he did not do well on the church basketball team.

Jennifer and Jeff's Stories – Jennifer, a modern-day witch, has received verbal abuse from Christians at her college, while Jeff's youth group teased him mercilessly because he belonged to the "wrong" political party.

- Before you get too upset, check yourself, maybe you have been the source of some form of pain for someone else. (For example – conversations you engage in at work or school?)

Suggestions:

- As they open up, be sure to lock in to what they are sharing. Keep eye contact; avoid looking skeptical by crossing your arms.
- The fact is, they have been hurt by someone claiming to be a Christian. Mourn with them.
- Just hang with them at this point. People will detect your insincerity if you push past their experiences to a gospel presentation. Be patient.

Question #3 "Discovering The Real Jesus" – "What was Jesus' main message?"

- Answer – Love and most will be able to express it. If not, this is a great opportunity to guide them through it.
- Share with them the Greatest Commandment in **Mark 12:29-31**.
- **John 13:34** is great as well where Jesus told His disciples: "A new command I give to you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

Question #4 “Putting It All Together” – “If it is true that Jesus’ main message was love, would you say that the actions of the people from the first two questions reflected the true teachings of Jesus?”

- Answer – No and most will quickly identify it.

Take Shannon for instance. She was now able to reorder the information in her mind. Her old perspective said her uncle had hurt her because he was a Christian, so she concluded, “Christians are bad.” She now realized that yes, her uncle had hurt her and yes, he was a Christian, but his unloving actions were not in line with the true teachings of Jesus. That led her to a new conclusion: “Although my Christian uncle has done painful things to me, Jesus is not reflected in those.”

Keep in mind, we must seek to avoid condoning sinful behavior without condemning a person who is lost – Love the Sinner, Hate the Sin.

Question #5 “Inviting Them Deeper” – “Would you like to know about the actual teachings of Jesus?”

Suggestions:

- Invite them to look into Scripture with you. Start in one of the gospels (John), taking a little at a time, meeting together and discussing it maybe once a week.
- Then, progress to 1 John after you have dissected the Gospel of John.
- Watch a movie together – “The Jesus Film”, “Visual Bible: Matthew or John”
- Invite them to church:
 - Be sure to meet them and go over what they can expect.
 - Do not take things for granted, they may be clueless. Church may be a whole new experience for them (when to stand, how to dress, etc.)

Remember:

- The most effective witness you have is sharing about the real encounter you, personally, have had with the risen Christ.
- But, it is hard to introduce someone to someone else that you either do not know or do not know very well.
- If we are honest, it is not that we are scared to talk to people, just intimidated talking about Jesus.
- For a committed Christ-follower, silence is not an option. Living a credible Christian life is not enough, but should be in place to give you credibility.

Telling Your Story: Testimony Preparation Worksheet

The following questions are meant to help you form ideas for your testimony. When you write out your full testimony later, you will be able to expand on these abbreviated responses. (Please do not spend the bulk of your time sharing about your life before meeting Christ. The emphasis should be on the life-changing encounter you had with Him and what He is doing in your life now.) Remember, your testimony should be consistent with the truth claims of Scripture.

Note: If you received Christ when you were a young child, start with the third question.

- *What was your spiritual viewpoint before receiving Christ?*

- *Before you met Christ, how did your spiritual state negatively affect your life and relationships? Use specific examples.*

- *How you did hear or learn of the gospel message that changed your life?*

- *What was it about the message that affected you?*

- *What was your response to that message?*

- *When did you trust Christ as your Savior?*

Note: If you became a Christian as a child, the emphasis on the next two questions should be on the benefits Christ has made in your life compared to either what it might have been like without knowing Him, or to those times when you have not been close to Him.

- *How did your attitudes and life change after you received Christ? (You should show that the problem mentioned in the second question was resolved.)*

- *What other benefits have you realized since receiving Christ? Again, be specific.*

- *What problems do you still struggle with, and how is God helping to make a difference?*

How To Use Your Bible-Witnessing

(Adapted from Dr. Jay Cook's Sunday PM Message Notes, 8/14/11)

- In the front or back of your Bible write: Heaven is a gift, list and turn to Romans 6:23b.
- At the bottom of your Romans 6:23 page write: God gives it, we don't deserve it...list and turn to Ephesians 2:8-9.
- At the bottom of your Ephesians 2:8-9 page write: Problem – Heaven is perfect – we are not...list and turn to Romans 3:23.
- At the bottom of your Romans 3:23 page write: God loves you (quote John 3:16)...list and turn to 1 John 4:8-10 *Stress Propitiation vs. Mere Substitution.
- At the bottom of your 1 John 4:8-10 page write: God is just...list and turn to Exodus 34:7.
- At the bottom of your Exodus 34:7 page write: Sin (disobedience) deserves death...list and turn to Romans 6:23a.
- At the bottom of your Romans 6:23 page write: Jesus took our place...list and turn to Isaiah 53:7.
- At the bottom of your Isaiah 53:7 page write: Trust Him...list and turn to Acts 16:30b-31, then Romans 10:9-10, 13.
- In the front or back of your Bible write: confess your sin (agree with God), ask for forgiveness through repentance, receive salvation by trusting in Christ alone, surrender to Jesus as Lord by walking in biblical obedience, and have prayer together...read John 6:47.
- Encourage them to read the Gospel of John and then 1 John on their own.

Confirming a Commitment and the Importance of Baptism

- Have you ever repented of your sin and trusted Christ as your Lord and Savior?
- Do you believe that, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9, NAS)...Titus 3:5-6
- What do you believe about Christ? Who is Jesus to you and does that match up with the truth claims of Scripture?

"To believe on Christ savingly means to believe the right things about Christ. There is no escaping this." – A.W. Tozer

- **Do you believe:** (Reference 1 Cor. 15, vs. 12 – 19 especially)
 - He is the **only Way** (not a way) for you to be saved (John 14:6; Acts 4:12)
 - He is God (not a god) Who became flesh (Matthew 1:23; John 1:1-18)
 - He is the Son of God (Matt 3:17; 17:5; 2 Peter 1:17)
 - He is the perfect sinless sacrifice able to pay for sin (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 2:1-2, 4:7-11)
 - He died on a cross for you, rose on the third day, and has gone to be with the Father (Matthew 28:5-6; Acts 1:9)

Please realize, if Jesus is not the above and did not do the above, then He could not save you, me or anyone else.

D.A. Carson: "Jesus is the truth because He embodies the supreme revelation of God – He Himself 'narrates' God (John 1:18), says and does exclusively what the Father gives Him to say and do (John 5:19; 8:29), indeed He is properly called God (John 1:1, 18; 20:28). He is God's gracious self-disclosure, His 'Word,' made flesh (John 1:14)."

And apart from shedding of blood there is no remission. (Hebrews 9:22)

In the matter of forgiveness of sin, one may fancy that he has to try his best to do good in order to obtain forgiveness; but he has no idea as to how many years of good works he must do. Another imagines he needs to keep on praying until one day he thinks he has got peace. We must say, though, that these efforts are done in and of themselves.

We know we cannot compensate for sins by good works, for it is simply our duty to do good anyway. Neither can we petition God to forgive our sins. Nor can we pray till we forget our sins and thus regain peace. The only way to have them forgiven and cleansed is through the blood. "Apart from shedding of blood there is no remission." It is the blood of the Lord Jesus that solves the problem of our sins. It is His blood which cleanses us from all our iniquities (1 John 1.7). Do we believe? (2/5/12, Nee devo.)

- "Being a Christian is not just about making a one-time decision; it's about a faith and repentance that yield a whole new pattern of decisions. It's about submitting to Christ as Lord." (Leeman, "Church Discipline", pp. 126-127)

I love how LifeChurch.tv describes Baptism: (Baptism at LifeChurch.tv)

Jesus commanded us to celebrate our new life through public baptism...celebrating your new life through Jesus.

"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" 2 Corinthians 5:17 NLT

Baptism is...

A step of obedience ([Matthew 3:13-16](#)) – Jesus set the example for us by being baptized to fulfill all righteousness.

A statement of commitment ([Romans 10:9-10](#)) – Baptism serves as a public statement that we have surrendered our lives to Christ and that we believe in Him. In baptism, we are declaring to the world that we belong to Christ and He is our Lord and Savior.

A symbol of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ ([Romans 6:3-11](#)) - Just as Christ gave His life for us and died, in making a decision to follow Christ, the person we were prior to becoming a follower of Christ is also dead. Modeling how Christ was buried and then resurrected from death, (baptism shows our death to sin, being washed clean and now raised to walk in our new life in Christ, emphasis mine).

Some Important Questions To Ask In Regard To Baptism:

- Have you ever participated in believer's baptism by immersion?
- Are you willing to meet with a Pastor or a Response Team Member about a commitment you are ready to make?
- Do you understand the importance of baptism?

General:

- Baptism is an outward expression of an inward commitment (Reference Acts 8:35-38).
- New Testament teaches that we trust Christ, then we get baptized...
- "Believe" in the New Testament is followed by action. Something must follow belief.
- Confession, Repentance, Change—in action, an expectation of change, a new life that now bears fruit.
- Greek word for baptism is "baptizo", which means to immerse.

"Baptism is a command of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not optional. It's an obligation for every single believer. It is not only an obligation, but it's an awesome privilege. In baptism, we make a public confession of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—in His death, burial and resurrection, and the fact that we, too, are going to follow Him."
(Baptism: Option or Obligation, Charles Stanley, James 1:5-8)

So, To Recap:

Who should be baptized? Only those who believe in Jesus.

What is the proper method of baptism? According to the example of Jesus set forth in the New Testament and the Greek word used for Baptism, immersion is the proper method.

What is the relationship of baptism to salvation? Baptism follows salvation, but not a part of it. It's a visual picture of what happened to us in salvation. (Acts 2:37-38; John 3:1-6; Mark 16:12-16)

Why should we be baptized? Jesus commanded it.

- It's a public confession of becoming a follower of Jesus.
- It represents what happened to Jesus in terms of His death, burial and resurrection.
- It also represents what happened to us at salvation.
- It identifies us with the body of Christ.

"Church membership is the church's public affirmation of an individual Christian's profession of faith in Jesus, and it's the individual's decision to submit to the oversight of the church." (Leeman, "Church Discipline", pp. 128)

Equipping You To Advance The Kingdom,
Jordan White, Adults Pastor