

## Evangelism 4 - Giving a Clear Message

The last element of contagious Christianity is clear communication of the gospel. This one is often seen as the scariest! However, if we live highly potent lives in close proximity to non-Christians, clear communication will come more naturally and more frequently!

Scripture lesson: Read Romans 10:14, 1 Peter 3:15-16, 2 Timothy 4:2

- 1) What do these passages say about the importance of preaching (or sharing) the gospel?
- 2) According to the 1 Peter passage, how should we share this good news?

Why does clear communication need to be part of our lives as contagious Christians?

Well let's be clear, our goal is maximum impact—which in turn means making disciples. For many Christians, the thought of helping their friends cross the line of faith and begin a life of discipleship is an almost unimaginable goal. However, coming to faith is simply the major milestone of a spiritual journey—a journey which our friends are on right now!

Conversions only take place after the gospel has been shared, and the gospel is shared in the midst of spiritual conversations. We must avoid underestimating our friends' interest in spiritual matters. Though religion may be a bore for some, most people are open to spiritual conversations.

To clearly communicate the gospel, we need to engage your friends in spiritual conversations. One way to do this is to ask direct questions. This can be as simple as asking a friend:

- “How are you doing...really?”
- “Where are you heading in your spiritual journey?”
- “If you'd ever like to know the difference between religion and Christianity, let me know. I'd be happy to talk to you about it.”

Other conversations that start out not so spiritual can be turned into moments for sharing our faith as well. The key to good spiritual conversations is to be open to what the Holy Spirit is doing in your friend's life.

Reflection questions:

- 3) Do you have many spiritual conversations with your friends? If so, how do they usually begin? If not, what is holding you back from initiating them?
- 4) Brainstorm several more questions that you could use to begin spiritual conversations.

One fear that holds many Christians back from engaging friends in spiritual conversations is the fear of being asked tough questions. We don't have to know all the answers to begin conversations. If we are asked a question that we don't have an answer for, the best way to respond is, “I don't know!” Honesty never hurts, and will actually build your witness more than making up an answer on the spot.

As you begin to engage in spiritual conversations, one question will probably be asked, and you need to be ready to answer this one: “What does it mean to become a Christian?”

- 5) How would you, in 2 minutes or less, explain what it means to become a Christian?

## **Your Testimony**

The most powerful tool we Christians have is our story, or testimony. People always want to be able to answer the tough apologetic questions, like “How can a good and loving God allow suffering?” And yes, there is an appropriate response to these questions. But the most important thing is for each of us to be able to share our own story of how the gospel has impacted our life. That is the one thing with which no one can argue. This tool helps you develop and tell your story, so you’ll be prepared beforehand.

“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord...” 2 Timothy 1:7-8a

Your story should focus on a specific time when you experienced God and were changed because of it. For many people, this may be your “conversion” story (or when you first came into relationship with God). For others, perhaps a better story is when God revealed himself in the midst of a tragedy, an addiction, or a major decision.

It may prove helpful to prepare several stories so that you’ll have the ability to share the right story with the right person. The Holy Spirit knows how you can best connect with someone, and what they need to hear at that moment.

When going through this worksheet, try to be as specific and concrete as possible, and use as little “religious” or “spiritual” language as you can. You may want to practice sharing your story with a few trusted friends, eventually not needing any notes.

Aim for a 2 minute story, because even a stranger can listen for 2 minutes without feeling bored or offended. When you’re sharing, it is much easier to expand it in the moment and make it 5 or even 10 minutes, rather than try to shorten it

My Story about:

1. (before) Your life before an encounter with Jesus
2. (the journey) Specific events that led you to encounter Jesus
3. (the decision) How you responded to this encounter with Jesus
4. (after) The positive change in your life since