

IN-SEASON AND OUT

EVANGELISM [WHY SHOULD I TELL OTHERS ABOUT GOD?]

THE HURDLE

My teammates are talking about God now and right here in the locker room! I never knew they even thought about spiritual things and now they seem to be seeking out spiritual truth. Do I say something? Who am I to tell them about God? They know my junk, and honestly, I've been struggling with some doubts about my own faith lately. How do I know for sure that Christianity is the right path among so many other faiths? And all subjects are open for discussion except for religion and politics, right? If I did talk about my faith, I wouldn't know what to say. I've only just started to read my Bible. But they keep talking about spiritual things and they really seem interested...

Can you relate to any of the above thoughts? If so, how?

Do you ever wonder if God may want to use you to help others to come to know Him? Why or why not?

What barriers keep you from sharing God's love with others?

- The culture's view that faith is a private and personal matter
- You're not sure you really believe "this whole Jesus thing" anyway
- Your lack of knowledge about what to tell people
- Fear that talking about God may get you labeled as a Jesus freak and rejected by your teammates or friends
- Lack of love and concern for those around you

What would make you feel more qualified or ready to talk about Jesus with someone else?

“**Security is mostly superstition. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.**”

Helen Keller

I HEAR YA

Even people in the Bible had to trust God, not sure if they were competent to tell others about Him ...

Jonah runs from God's calling: "Go to the great city of Ninevah and preach." ... But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed to Tarshish ... to flee the Lord. (Jonah1:2-3)

Moses' insecurity: Moses said to the LORD, "O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue ... Please send someone else to do it." (Exodus 4:1,13)

Peter denies his association with Jesus: "This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth." (Peter) denied it again with an oath: "I don't know the man!" (Matthew 26:71-72)

Paul encourages Timothy: "Command and teach these things. Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." (I Timothy 4:11-12)

LISTEN UP

Read II Corinthians 5:16-21.

1. In v16, the apostle Paul says that we don't view people from a "worldly point of view" or "according to the flesh"? What might he mean? How would one's view of someone else affect relaying the gospel to them?

2. Identify 3 things you see in these verses that God has done for those who know Him?

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3. According to v18, God gives believers "the ministry of reconciliation". After reading the following definition of reconciliation, describe in your own words what our role in this "ministry" between God and others might look like.

Reconciliation: To cause to be friendly or harmonious again; to settle differences; to bring to submission or acceptance.

4. In Ephesians 2:12, Paul uses word pictures to describe why everyone needs reconciliation with God, even if they don't look like it. How might these phrases demonstrate themselves in a person's life: **"separated from Christ, excluded from citizenship among God's people, strangers to God's promises, no hope and without God in the world"**?

5. What does an ambassador do in the political world? What does it mean for Christ-followers to be His ambassadors today?

FOR THE RECORD

People need God, but it doesn't always look like it. They may appear strong, confident, full of direction, but their primary need is spiritual, and until they address this part of life, everything else is an illusion. So God invites ALL people on the planet to hear and understand His invitation for relationship with Him. But instead of writing His message in the clouds, he chooses to use His broken, inconsistent, straying followers to communicate His message to others—he sends

you as His ambassador! He's designed the world in such that when we embrace this scary privilege by faith, we will grow closer to Him at the same time. The risks are real (rejection, being marginalized, emotional and physical persecution, sometimes even death), but the rewards include fulfilling your purpose for living on earth while participating in the greatest mission in the universe. So step out in faith and see what God will do!



YOUR MOVE

1. Think of someone who has influenced your journey with God. Describe their personal qualities and why their approach concerning the gospel is attractive to you.

2. In II Corinthians 5:14, Paul tells us that the “love of Christ” motivates or compels him to share his faith with others. If you are completely honest, what is your level of motivation for sharing the gospel with others right now and why?
 - Very low
 - Moderate
 - Very High

3. Consider two or three people in your world who don't know Jesus. Write their names here and pray for them.

God, please open the hearts of _____ and _____ and _____ so that they would come to know You. Please prepare me to be your ambassador by sharing with them something about You.

4. Get a good gospel tract. Memorize its contents so you have a template in your mind containing the basics of the gospel message. While each conversation is unique, the elements of the gospel remain the same. Ask God for wisdom in applying His truth in your conversations.

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Definition of successful witnessing: taking the initiative to share Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.

*Bill Bright
Founder, Campus Crusade for Christ*

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For additional work on your own, visit **The Training Room** on the next page to gain more insight about becoming a minister of reconciliation.

AS YOU ENTER

“FOR I DID NOT SHRINK FROM DECLARING TO YOU THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF GOD”
(ACTS 20:27)

God's Part

While God invites us to join Him in communicating His love to a lost world, He certainly is not dependent upon us. If we won't speak up, He'll find someone else to experience the thrill of this faith ride. Record your role and God's role in bringing people to Himself from:

Luke 19:39,40 _____

II Corinthians 4:6 _____

Acts 16:14 _____

I Thessalonians 2:13 _____

Isaiah 55:10-11 _____

Evangelism Perspective from the Word

What is God telling you personally as you read these verses?

1. Colossians 4:2-6 – praying for open doors and making the most of opportunities

2. I Peter 3:15 – being prepared to give a reason for your hope

3. Romans 10:9-15 – how one is saved and how God uses people to get the word out

4. Luke 5:1-11 – Jesus' call to his friends to become 'fishers of men'

5. Mark 16:15 – Jesus' charge to his followers to tell the world about Him

6. Revelation 20:15-20 – the eternal consequences of the world's response to the gospel

Story Time

Stories are the way into people's hearts ... consider these.

- Paul's story upon being asked by a middle-eastern King (Acts 26:4-23)
- A woman of a lowly race with an even lower reputation who runs into Jesus (John 4:5-26)
- Your story ... check out this resource (www.sportline.com/testimony) to help you formulate your story of coming to know God

AS YOU LEAVE

- » ALWAYS BE READY TO CARE FOR OTHERS IN THEIR MOMENT OF NEED.
- » ALWAYS BE READY TO GIVE A RESPONSE FOR THE HOPE WITHIN YOU.
- » BE PRAYING FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE CHRIST.