

Evangelism

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Witnessing
Being a Light in a Dark World
By Mark Cahill

When we are sharing our faith, there are three basic things that can happen:

1. The person can accept Christ,
2. We can plant a seed, or
3. They can reject.

As you can see, two of these are good situations and one of these is a bad one. You can also look at it as two of these are winning situations and one of these is a losing situation.

<u>Accept</u>	<u>Plant Seed</u>	<u>Reject</u>
Good	Good	Bad
Winning	Winning	Losing

As you can see, when we share our faith, we have a 66% chance of having a successful or a winning situation. After reading my Bible one afternoon, my thinking was changed forever!

1 Peter 4:14 says:

“If you are rejected for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.”

There are not any of us who would not want the Spirit of glory and of God to rest upon us. As you can see, that most definitely happens when we are rejected for the name of Christ! But believe it or not, the Bible has even more to say about this.

Luke 6:22-23 says:

“Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you, and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man, rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For great is your reward in heaven...”

When we stand up for Jesus and are rejected, great is our reward in heaven! As the Bible has shown us, the odds have changed dramatically! Being rejected now is no longer a losing situation, but a winning one!

<u>Accept</u>	<u>Plant Seed</u>	<u>Reject</u>
Winning!	Winning!	Winning!

When we share our faith, it is a 100% winning situation every single time! When is the only time that we lose when we share our faith? The only time that we can lose is when we don't share! Think about that. So many things in life are set up so that we lose. But here is one thing that God has called us to do, and we can never lose doing it!

It takes the average person 7 or 8 times to hear the gospel before they accept Christ! We must be planting seeds. Remember, according to 1 Corinthians 3, all we do is plant and water seeds. Don't forget that only God can make them grow! All of the pressure is off of us. All we have to do is be a seed planter and watch God multiply it greatly!

On the average, if a person has not accepted Christ by the time he or she is 18-years-old, there is an 85% chance that they never will! Who is sitting in the perfect position to reach the teenage crowd? You are!

On the average, if a person has not accepted Christ by the time he or she is 21-years-old, there is a 90% chance that they never will! Who is sitting in the perfect position to reach the teenage and college crowd? You are!

I can guarantee you one thing, you can't do in heaven what you can do down here and that is share your faith with a non-believer. Since that is true, let's be about the business of talking to the lost about Jesus!

How to Share Your Faith:

Now that we know that every time that we share our faith we cannot lose, what are some practical things and questions that we can do and ask? The following is a list of questions and statements that have all been used effectively. So see what works for you and put it to work for Jesus. Many teens have taken the following information and have placed it by their telephone and computers to use when they are talking with others. Keeping the information handy and using it often will make it second nature to you.

? → *Where are you on your spiritual journey?*

This is an excellent question because it is very non-threatening. You will find that anyone can answer this question whether they are Christians, New Age, Hindu's, etc. Everyone is on some spiritual journey and usually wants to talk about it.

? → *If you died tonight, are you 100% sure that you are going to heaven?*

Absolutely a fantastic question! Mainly because everyone that I have ever asked it to, has answered it! When they answer it, then we know which direction to go from there.

The typical answer that you will get is, "I hope so." Many times, though, they will give you some kind of percentage, like 90!

If they answer "Yes," ask then, "How do you know that to be true?" Remember that just because someone answer "Yes," doesn't mean that they know Jesus Christ. So we must continue to dig more to find out about their true belief.

Many people will say that no one can be 100% sure. So make sure you have the following verses handy (hopefully in your memory!) to share with them:

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes in Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life." (John 5:24)

"Truly, truly I say to you, he who believes in Me has eternal life." (John 6:37—don't forget that this is Jesus speaking!)

"...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9)

"For whoever calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved." (Romans 10:13)

"And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:11-13)

Look at Philippians 1: Paul knew without a doubt that the day that he died, he was going to be with Jesus! It changes your whole outlook on life when you know for sure that the day you die, you will be with Jesus forever and ever! It will really help you to stop worrying about what other people think about you, and be more concerned with what God thinks about you.

? → *If you did die tonight and you were standing in front of God, and He asked you: "Why should I let you into heaven?" what would you tell Him?*

I normally tie this into the question about being 100% sure that you are going to heaven. I ask the first question and then I say, "Well, let me rephrase that." Then I ask them the question above. This question allows them to give you some more information so that you know where to take the discussion.

The typical answer that you will almost always get is that they are good enough, or that they have done enough good works to get in. Always be ready to answer back with Ephesians 2:8-9 (not by good works) and Isaiah 64:6 (our righteous acts are like filthy rags). Then use one of two examples with them:

Nike Shoe Example:

If your grandmother came to you on your birthday and gave you a brand new pair of Air Jordans, you would be very excited. If you then reached in to your pocket and pulled out \$120 and gave it to your grandmother, how would she feel? She would feel very insulted since she gave you a free gift and you tried to pay for it. God will feel the same way on judgment day when many people will try to pay their way into heaven instead of taking the free gift of Jesus.

Burnt Cake Example:

We have all seen a burnt cake. Ask them when you take a burnt cake and put white icing on it, how does it look? The answer will be that it looks good! When you take a bite out of it, how does it taste? They will probably say “horrible!” We are the same way with good works. We try to look good on the outside, but on the inside we are dead in our sins. Something must change us from the inside out.

The only right answer is 1 John 1:7—we have been cleansed of all sin by the blood of Jesus Christ!

? → *When you die, what do you think is on the other side? What do you think is out there when you walk out of here?*

This is an excellent question! It is my favorite survey question, and people all of the time say they love this question. It is very open ended, so you get a lot of different responses like heaven and hell, reincarnation, nothing, etc. This really helps you learn what others believe before you share Jesus with them. One guy said, “That is the million dollar question!” If that is the “million dollar question,” then we have the million dollar answer.

? → *Why do you wear that cross? Do you know that someone died on that cross?*

Use people’s jewelry to begin your conversation. Most people will tell you that they wear that cross because it looks good. Tell them what the right answer is. This is a very easy way to share the gospel. Use things like their t-shirts, what they say, or anything in your surroundings to open up an opportunity to share the gospel!

? → *Do you want to go to heaven? Then ask “How do you get there?” or “Can I show you how to get there?”*

Within one question, you can be sharing the gospel! This works well because everyone wants to go to heaven.

? → *Have you ever sinned before? What are you going to do about it?*

This is very effective. You need to let them know that the Bible says that one sin can keep you out of heaven, i.e. Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, and Hebrews 12:14. If one sin can keep you out of heaven, then they have to be able to get rid of that sin. This is when you can share what Jesus did to take away the sin of mankind.

The Bible is very explicit that we must use the Ten Commandments when we share our faith.

Romans 3:20 says, “Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

The Ten Commandments will show that they are a sinner. Ask questions like:

- Have you ever told a lie before? Yes. So that makes you a what? A liar.
- Have you ever stolen anything before irrespective of value? Yes. So that makes you a what? A thief.

- Have you ever lusted in your heart for someone before? Yes. So that makes you a what? An adulterer according to Jesus.
- Can a lying, thieving adulterer be a good person and worthy of heaven?

James 2:10 says, “For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.” If you have broken one of the Ten Commandments it is just like you have broken all of them.

Remember, this will not offend them because Romans 2:15 states that the law is already written on their hearts. They are just verbalizing what they already know in their hearts is true.

Now, ask them if they would be guilty or not on judgment day? Guilty. Would that mean heaven or hell? Hell. I then ask them if they would like them to go from guilty to not guilty? Yes.

Galatians 3:24 says, “Therefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

The law brings them right to Jesus—share the cross with them. Also, using the Ten Commandments will help you get out of just an intellectual conversation and get to their heart. It is also key to use the Ten Commandments to make sure there is a true conversion and not a false one.

? → *What is the most important thing in the world to you? The day you die, what will be the most important thing in the world to you?*

These are very effective questions to get the other person to give you some information. This gets them talking, and you will then see where you need to take the conversation.

Tombstone Example:

Ask them what the three basic things that you can find on every tombstone are. The answers will be the person’s name, the date of birth, and the date of death. Then say to them, “I will make you a guarantee. I guarantee you that you will be dead a whole lot longer than you will ever be alive. And if that is a true statement, and you know that it is, I sure would search out what is on the other side a whole lot more than I would search out anything down here that is temporary, because you will be there a whole lot longer than you will ever be here.”

The tombstone example is extremely effective. This really gets the person thinking about eternal things. Before anyone can accept Christ, they must be thinking. Satan dulls their senses, and we have to get them thinking again. Use this example. It works!

150 Years From Now:

Will it be important if you made a million dollars, drove a convertible Mercedes, graduated from college, played in the Final Four? No. The only thing that will be important is if you know the God who created you., because you will be in one of two destinations forever and ever and ever.

Again, this is a great question to get them thinking about eternity and how material things are really not all that important.

! → Tell people, “Don’t forget that Jesus loves you,” or “Do you know that Jesus loves you?” We need to use the “J” word a whole lot more! Let them know Jesus is crazy about them!

! → Use tract booklets!

Believe it or not, 89% of all Christians have never handed out a tract! Remember, we have all the information for someone to make a decision for Jesus, so we need to get that information in their hands either verbally or by things that we give them!

For the best tracts:

www.raycomfort.com (1-800-437-1893)

www.chick.com



→The Bible stands for:

Basic Information Before Leaving Earth

This is a great acronym that people really like and usually don't forget. I normally tell them that it doesn't matter if you are Bill Clinton, Michael Jordan, you, or me. We will all be leaving earth one day. If you have the right information and do something about it, you will wind up in the right destination; but, if you have the wrong information, you will wind up in the wrong destination!



→ I care where you spend eternity. It is very important to me where you spend eternity.

If you can look someone in the eyes and say this and mean it, it has a huge impact on them. Most people on this planet care about each other in a temporary way, but very few in an eternal way!

These are pillow questions/statements!

When they go home that night and for the nights to come, they'll think about the questions that you've asked them. One teenager told me that he would be thinking about these questions for the next two or three months!

Make a friend, be a friend, lead a friend to Christ!

We need to be about the business of making friends who do not know Jesus. The key is that they do not pull us away from Christ, but we lead them to know Jesus! 87% of all people who come to Christ come through a friend! A real friend tells a friend about Jesus!

"But speaking the truth in love..." (Ephesians 4:15)

We need to be about the business of loving people into the kingdom! We need to love people so much that we tell them about Jesus, and no one on the planet should be able to out-love a true believer in Jesus.

"And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15)

Jesus said this and we need to obey it! We need to go into all the world and share our faith! The motto we go by is: If they are breathing, they need Jesus! It is too late to ask someone and a funeral or once you read their name in the obituary page whether they know Jesus. So let's ask them now to make sure that we don't have temporary friendships, but eternal ones!

If you ever need legal advice on what you can or can't do when it comes to witnessing, call the Christian Law Association. They have helped me many times, and they do it for free! They call themselves legal missionaries to keep the doors open so that we can plant seeds to get souls into the Kingdom of God.

Christian Law Association

727-399-8300

www.christianlaw.org

The Four Deadly Questions:

1. What do you mean by that?

This question makes the other person define their terms. For example, the word agnostic means many things to many people. When someone tells me that they are agnostic, I ask, "What do you mean by agnostic?" That gives me some information so I can decide where I want to go next in the conversation. Ask things like: "What

do you mean by Christian?" or "What do you mean by New Age?" These questions will give you a lot more information to work with. The other thing that they do is give you some extra time in the conversation to think about where you want to go next. So if you get kind of stuck, this is a very good question to give yourself some time to formulate your next thought.

2. How do you know that to be true?

What you are trying to do with this question is just to get them to admit that they don't know if their position is true. A guy said one time that there were 18 different authors to the book of Matthew. When asked, "How do you know that to be true?" he said he didn't know. If they say Jesus didn't rise from the dead, ask them this question. This question is very effective with people trying to preach the evolution theory. When they say the earth is 18 billion years old, ask the question—they don't know the answer. Use this question a lot. Do not use it to embarrass someone, just to make sure that they understand what is truth and what isn't.

3. Where do you get your information?

What you are trying to find out here is the information source they have for believing something. If someone says they believe in reincarnation, ask them, "Where do you get your information?" They normally say from nowhere, that they just believe it in their heart. Then simply ask, "Could you believe something that isn't true?" They will almost always answer yes. All you are trying to show is that they could possibly be wrong. If someone says that they are good enough to go to heaven, ask them this question. They will not have a source. We have a source of truth that is called the Bible. Since there is no error in this book, the information that we have is very solid.

4. What if you are wrong?

This is a tremendous question to get the other person to think about: the possibility that there might be consequences to their actions. When someone tells you that there are many different ways to heaven, ask them the question, "What if you are wrong and there is only one way to heaven?" The Bible says that there are major consequences if you choose to reject what Jesus did for you on the cross. The Bible says that there is only one right answer when we walk off of the planet. We need to get people to think about the possibility that they might be wrong, because if they are, there is a great chance that they will search for what is right!

Twenty Questions:

Transitions you can use to turn a conversation to spiritual things

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1. People invest time and energy into developing their career, their bodies and relationships, but often neglect the spiritual dimension of their lives. How do you actively pursue spiritual growth?
2. Do you think much about spiritual things? (This usually leads to conversation about what "spiritual" means—i.e. religion vs. relationship.)
3. How has this experience affected the way you look at God?
4. We've never had a chance to talk about your religious background. Where would you say you are in your spiritual pilgrimage?
5. I'd like to tell you how I established a personal relationship with God. (Tell your personal testimony of how you became a Christian. Keep it to three minutes, using the following outline: Before—What characterized my life before I trusted Christ. During—How I came to trust Christ. After—How I am different now.)

- 6.** What is your concept of God? Do you view Him positively or negatively?
- 7.** Have you ever come to a point in your life where you trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord, or do you think that is something you're still moving toward? May I share with you how I came to that point?
- 8.** Do you find that faith and spiritual values play a role in your (work, day, marriage, perspective on life)?
- 9.** If you could be sure there is a God, would you want to know Him? Or if you could know God personally, would you want to?
- 10.** Bring a friend to your church or a Christian event, then ask:
- *What did you think of it?*
 - *Did it make sense to you?*
 - *Have you made the wonderful discovery of knowing God personally?*
 - *You'd like to, wouldn't you?*
- 11.** Do you go to church? Why or why not?
- 12.** I'd hate for you to come to my church and not understand what it's all about. Would you want to get together and discuss our basic beliefs?
- 13.** We've been friends for quite some time now, and I've never really talked to you about the most important thing in my life. May I take a few moments and do so?
- 14.** Is church something that has had an influence in your life? Are you at a point now that you want church to be a bigger part of your life? What prompted this? Would you want to hear our basic beliefs so you'll know if that fits in with what you're looking for?
- 15.** How do you think someone becomes a Christian?
- 16.** Can I share the thing I've found most important to me as a (dad, mom, boss)?
- 17.** What do you think about when you go to sleep at night? (If anxiety or guilt rob them of sleep, introduce the peace found in a relationship with Christ).
- 18.** Most people in America say they believe in God. What does believing in God mean to you?
- 19.** Before I came to know Christ personally, God was a vague concept that I could not relate to or grasp. How would you describe your view of God? Jesus? Is He a reality to you or more of a vague concept?
- 20.** If you were to die tonight are you sure you'd go to heaven? Has anyone ever explained how you can know for sure?

Once you've transitioned to the gospel, what do you actually tell your friend? Whatever approach you use, never argue or condemn the other person's beliefs. Focus on God's love for the person, Jesus' death on the cross for our sins, His resurrection, and the person's need to make a commitment to follow Christ. Invite the person to actually pray with you and commit his or her life to Christ.

Is Evangelism Inconsiderate?

Selection from "Loving God With All of You--Part 7" by Dale Fincher
Used by permission. (www.rzim.org/publications/slicetran.php?sliceid=603)

The present culture casts a negative tone over the terms "evangelizing" or "making converts." While this is what happens in the technical sense, the reality of evangelizing is that we are trying to help others see what God is like so that they too can enjoy being a whole human person. When the culture speaks of "evangelizing" in a derogatory way, they are in essence saying, "Don't get too excited about that religion stuff. We know it isn't real. And you shouldn't trick others into believing it is." Indeed, if Christ were not real, then, yes, we would agree that evangelism is immoral. But if God happens to be real and manifested in Jesus Christ, and if He is really offering an abundant complete life, then it is actually wrong not to share it. There is no better news. And our sharing must be both spoken and acted out.

Resources

Articles:

An Ancient Message, Through Modern Means, to a Postmodern Mind by Ravi Zacharias
www.rzim.org/publications/jttran.php?jtcode=JT98FRZ

The Apologetic of Humility by Betsy Childs
www.rzim.org/noindex/jtprint.php?seqid=94

The Evangelism Habit: Living a Life of Sharing Christ by Jose Zayas
www.billygraham.org/DMag_article.asp?ArticleID=493

The Postmodern Puzzle: When there are no absolute truths and no rules of logic, how do we defend the gospel? by Dennis McCallum
www.leaderu.com/real/ri9802/mccallum.html

Witnessing Tips: Apologetics, Truth, and Humility by Douglas Groothuis
www.equip.org/free/DA152.htm

Books:

One Thing You Can't Do In Heaven by Mark Cahill (Living Water Publications, 2002)

Websites:

www.dare2share.org—Impacting Christian teenagers to influence their culture with the love of Jesus Christ.

www.EffectiveEvangelism.com—This website by ChristianAnswers.net trains “normal” Christians in how to respond to what the lost say, different ways to share their faith, and ways to help converts grow in Christ.

www.evangelismtoolbox.com—“A large and growing database offering multi-lingual, multi-format Christian resources to share your faith in Christ, provided by many of the top evangelical organizations you trust worldwide.”

www.leaderu.com/menus/missions.html—This specific section of LeaderU.com focuses on evangelism and world missions with articles and links to other sources.

www.livingwaters.com—“Living Waters, the ministry of Ray Comfort, has been equipping Christians across the world for more than 15 years—teaching them to witness the way Jesus did.”

www.livingwaters.com/witnessingtool/browse.shtml—Homepage for Answers from *The Evidence Bible*.

www.markcahill.org—Mark Cahill’s official website.