



Lesson 2

Starting Spiritual Conversations

Learn to share Faith Stories.

John 3:16 GOOD NEWS...made simple!

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Starting Spiritual Conversations

For many of us, starting spiritual conversations is like jumping off a cliff. They are leaps of faith. The first step is the hardest. Anxiety of the landing makes you cautious or wanting to flee the scene.

For many, starting spiritual conversations is more challenging than explaining the Gospel. However, as "ambassadors" for Christ, He wants to help us!

General Principles

PRAYER

Seek God's help. He is working at drawing people to Himself. Let Him know you are willing and available.

Colossians 4:2-6 provides Biblical guidelines in preparing your heart for sharing.

*Devote yourselves to **PRAYER**, being **WATCHFUL** and **THANKFUL**. And pray for us too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ for which I am in chains. Pray that I may **PROCLAIM** it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always **FULL OF GRACE** seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. Colossians 4:2-6*

Download the **Evangelism Prayer Bookmark** on website.

CARE

Seek to **genuinely** care about others. Care about their physical, emotional and especially their spiritual needs. **Ask God to help** you.

Be **empathetic** about circumstances they are facing. Be quick to **listen**.

Caring about their spiritual well-being will help you be **sensitive** and watchful for opportunities to share your faith.

ASK QUESTIONS

Get to know others better by asking questions. Questions that show you are **interested** to know more about them. What interests they have. How they **feel** about things. What is **important** to them. Find out what they **like** to talk about.

Ask questions that "**draw them out**" and develop trust in you. Ask about how they "think" or "feel" about things. Ask questions using "what", "how", "when", etc. as they encourage more than simple "yes" or "no" responses.

Genuine caring and being interested go a long way in building **trust**. Trust that will help them be **open** to your offer to talk about spiritual matters.

BE SENSITIVE

Sensitive to the **Holy Spirit's promptings**. He will **guide** you in caring, asking questions and **showing** you openings to share on a spiritual level with someone.

Learn to trust Him.

Share "Faith Stories"

Coaching Tip:

NOT A SALVATION TESTIMONY

*Faith stories are **different than a "salvation testimony"** where you tell what your life was like before you came to faith in Christ, how you came to faith in Christ and what your life is like now since you came to faith in Christ. (Faith stories are more about a specific circumstance and generally **shorter to tell**. They tend to speak to a similar circumstance or struggle of the person you are talking.) However, there are times when your salvation testimony is very appropriate to share.*

For help in [Preparing to Share Your Salvation Testimony](#) see website.

GOD'S HELP IN LIFE'S STRUGGLES

Faith Stories are short "testimonials" of how God has **helped** during a personal difficulty; how your faith in Him has made a **positive difference** during a struggle in your life. They tell specific ways a situation was *influenced for the good because of your faith*.

RELATE TO THE OTHER PERSON

As you ask questions and get to know other people, often **they mention a problem**, difficult situation or **challenging circumstance** they are dealing with. And, because God is at work, it's likely you have had or may be dealing with a **similar situation**. However, **your faith** in God has been very **helpful** to you.

For example:

They may share about a difficult person at work. Perhaps someone you know and have had similar difficulties. However, the **Lord has helped you** with patience and forgiveness towards that person. You share a "Faith Story" telling how your faith in God has helped you deal with that person to have **peace**, be **patient** and be **forgiving** so anger doesn't control you.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL ISSUES where your faith may have helped you:

- Difficult **Relationships**
- **Family** issues (marriage and kids)
- Work and **financial** challenges
- **School** issues
- **Health** problems
- Safety and **security** issues

EMOTIONAL ISSUES where faith in God has helped you:

- **Anxiety** and fear.....*God's peace*
- **Anger**.....*calm*
- Abandonment and **rejection**.....*God's love, care and acceptance*
- **Bitterness**.....*forgiveness*
- Insecurity and **inferiority**.....*God's love and acceptance*
- Insignificance and **emptiness**.....*purpose and meaning*
- Aimlessness and **restlessness**.....*direction and guidance*
- **Failure**.....*grace and a second chance*
- **Unforgiveness**.....*freedom of forgiving another*
- **Hopelessness**.....*hope*

BE SPECIFIC

Avoid general statements and seek to share a "life experience". Talking about specific circumstances will make your story more **genuine** and credible. Share as much **detail** as you are comfortable and seems appropriate.

BRINGS GOD INTO THE CONVERSATION

Telling about your faith in God **naturally** *brings Him into your conversation*. He has become a natural part of your life. Therefore, be natural and **mention** how He is making a favorable difference in it.

CREATES INTEREST AND CURIOSITY

Sharing how you have found **help** often creates interest in others to hear more. If someone really wants help, they'll **seek** it out. If God is at work they likely will **listen** to how you discovered God's help for your life.

PEAK BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Now that you have brought God into your conversation, **ask a follow-up question** to see if God is stirring their heart to hear more. Something like:

- What's your spiritual background; do you, or have you ever gone to church?
- Have you ever heard of John 3:16, a verse in the Bible that tells how God wants to help us?

Ask PERMISSION to share:

- **May I share** what God desires for us to have and experience?

COACHING TIP:

ALWAYS ASK PERMISSION TO SHARE

It shows respect. Their answer will tell you if you should proceed.

Also it helps you as a witness to not have to "force it to happen".

If they say "no", take it as an indication that God would not have you share with them at this time. Thank them and silently pray for an opportunity sometime in the future.

An exercise to learn how to tell Faith Stories:

(You can use the Faith Story Guide for this.)

Look at the lists and pick out 2 or 3 issues where you've experienced God's help.

Develop several Faith Stories asking:

- What issue were you struggling with?
- Explain the situation.
- How did God make a positive difference?

Watch for issues people are dealing with where God has helped you. Share your stories.

LEADERS: SUGGESTIONS FOR LESSON 2

- *Using your Leaders notes to encourage **Prayer, Caring, Asking Questions** and learning to trust the leading of the **Holy Spirit**.*
- ***Explain the concept of Faith Stories** and how they differ from a "salvation testimony".*
- *How to **listen** closely to other people and letting the Holy Spirit help you recognize areas or issues He has helped you.*
- *Discuss the **issues** listed and how God can make a difference.*
- *Go over the **Faith Story Guide**.*
- *Allow participants time to formulate a Faith Story and have them **share** it with another participant.*
- *Give an **assignment** to develop 2-3 more Faith Stories to engrain the concept and make them more sensitive to opportunities to use them.*

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