

DISCOVERING GOD

HOW TO TELL SOMEONE ABOUT JESUS

There are basically two types of encounters you will have where you can share your faith.

THE FIRST, is a situation where you have your Bible open or, are perhaps reading a Christian book. The person sitting next to you on the plane or, in the restaurant asks if you are a Christian. An opportunity arises in general, to talk about your faith.

THE SECOND, is when you run into someone who is perhaps confrontational. They find out you are a Christian and begin challenging you about your faith. "I believe all religions are equal!", "More evil has come from Christianity than any other religion!" They have a negative feeling about Christianity and are not bashful in sharing that fact. **(Go to "A" below)**

When either situation occurs, we are instructed in Scripture to be ready to share our faith, with confidence. (1 Thessalonians 5:21; Colossians 2:4; 1 Peter 3:15) Here are some guidelines to help.

STEP 1 – Know where you are going in the conversation. It is as if you have a target in mind and regardless of what the question or direction the conversation takes, you take the person to the heart of Christianity. Jesus died to save us from sin. They need Jesus.

STEP 2 – Steer the response to that target.

A. Do you have any spiritual beliefs?

1. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)

Notes: Ask this question. It will often surprise you how much the person will open up. Often the person will say something like, "I used to be a Catholic but now I believe..." That is when you go direct to John 14:6. Expect them to then begin challenging you. "I believe Jesus was a good teacher but I'm not sure about..." That is when you can go to the following.

B. Why do you suppose God allows evil and suffering?

1. What do you propose God should do about it? To stop evil God would have to stop every act that causes suffering. Wouldn't that mean He would have to put a stop to you? Haven't you, by your own actions, caused some of the suffering that exists in the world?
2. God has not stopped evil because He would have to destroy us.
3. Jesus taught there is a day coming when God will stop evil. He will separate evil people, put them away forever, create a new heaven & a new earth no more death, mourning, crying or pain (Rev 21:4)
4. Mankind has sinned against God by the things we have said & done.
5. Therefore, we must go back to Him in order to have our relationship restored, not Buddha, Allah. If a person puts his faith in another savior (Buddha, Brahman, Allah), they will find on judgment day, that their god has done for their eternal well-being.

Notes: If someone says, "I think all religions..." flip it around and ask *them* this question. How do *their* religious beliefs answer this?

C. Isn't being a good person enough to get to Heaven?

1. From human perspective, a person might appear to be a good person but to God who sees the human heart", "No one is good but God." (Luke 18:19; Rom 3:30)
2. Jesus even referred to his own disciples as being evil (Luke 11:13)
3. But, the God of Bible loves sinners. (of course, not the sin)
4. Contrast Allah who does not love sinners (Surah 2:276)
5. We all need grace & forgiveness if we are to escape the judgment we deserve & go to heaven.
6. 2000 years ago God incarnate became a human and died on a cross for you. There, on that cross he took the punishment and judgment that was due sinners. (Isaiah 53) He rose from the grave 3 days later and is now offering all mankind eternal life. (John 3:16)
7. God says if you go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of truth there is nothing to look forward to separation from God (Hebrews 10:27)
8. Even if a person is very sincere, regarding faith in Jesus, the Bible says there is salvation in no one else for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved". (Acts 4:12)

Notes: Again, focus on taking the individual to the core message of Christ giving His life to save sinners. When someone is down, they

do not need to hear that their God hates sinners (the Qua'ran) or they have to do something for God to love them enough. (works)

D. How can a loving God send someone to hell?

1. Jesus teaches that the last thing God wants is for someone to be in hell. The Bible teaches that God is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9) and that God desires that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4)
2. God did not simply proclaim His desire that none should perish. He proved His desire to save people when He left the glories of heaven in the personage of Jesus & came to earth to die on the cross for our sins (John 3:16; Romans 5:8)
3. Having paid the penalty for your rebellion, God now graciously offers forgiveness & everlasting life as a free gift for anyone who will put their trust in Jesus (Rom 6:23).
4. If someone rejects grace, turns away from the testimony of their own conscience (Rom 2:15), the testimony of creation (Ps 19:1-6; Acts 14:16-17) & the wooing of the HS, saying, "I will have nothing to do with God". Because of free will, they get their wish.

E. Doesn't it seem narrow and unfair that God would only save people through Jesus.

1. I think the question we should be asking is why should God seek to save us at all?
2. When I consider the suffering caused by humans in the world, I find it absolutely amazing that God has offered to save us.
3. Far from being a narrow offer of salvation, God incarnate entering His creation to save us from ourselves (Jesus) is gracious & broad.
4. God Messiah came to the whole world (John 3:16; Romans 5:8)
5. Jesus died for the sins of all mankind (1 John 2:2)

Quotes above are taking from the book, One Minute Answers to Skeptics, by Charlie H. Campbell

Dave Ogilbee
Yorba Linda, California