

Small Group Discussion Questions

- From what was discussed in the video interview with Greg Stier, what stood out to you the most?
- What's one thing you learned or had never thought of before from this video?
- If someone claims to believe in God, cries at altar calls, raises hands in worship and goes to church and youth group regularly, but doesn't follow God in obedience by sharing Him with others during the week, what would you say to that person?
- Is that person you?
- Since prayer is the first and most important step of sharing your faith, how can we best pray for lost friends and family? What types of things might we pray for when praying for them?
- Share about an opportunity you had this past week to "bring God up" with a friend. If you took the opportunity, how did it go? What happened? If you missed the opportunity, why did you let it pass by?
- How can you train yourself to be on the lookout for those opportunities to take the "fork in the road" and "bring God up?"
- If you have time, go through the handout together, *Seven Reasons for NOT Sharing Your Faith*, and discuss any thoughts, comments or questions you might have on each point.

The Big Thought

When it comes right down to it, evangelism can feel complicated and high-pressure, yet is as simple as the act of listening to a friend as they pour out their heart, and offering a comforting word. The amount of time you put into preparing yourself and training yourself will come out in the end. But remember, no matter what, whether you feel like you can't answer every question, or whether you don't think you prayed enough, or even if you think you totally screwed up your story telling, God will use it for His glory. He just asks that you step out in faith, do your best, and let the Holy Spirit take over from there.

Reasons for NOT sharing your faith

1) "I'm not smart enough"

Fact: Jesus' disciples weren't known for their brains or theology degrees. They were pretty ordinary guys, really. Take the time Peter and John were telling a hostile crowd of religious leaders about Jesus. Here's how Acts 4:13 puts it: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus" (ESV). Look at that last part again: And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. Maybe you've heard this saying: "It's not what you know that counts. It's who you know." Knowing Jesus is what matters. You are smart enough to tell others about Jesus because you have a friendship with him. And the closer you get to him, and the better you know him, the more you'll have to say about him.

2) "I don't want to make anybody mad"

Maybe you've been around Christians who are annoying. The way they act—all smug and self-righteous—can make non-Christians angry. We don't want that. So we keep quiet. Understandable. But now look at Jesus: People crowded around him. People wanted to know him. People wanted to follow him. Why? He cared about hurting and lost people (Matthew 9:36). He listened carefully and responded to their deepest needs (John 4:1-26). Now, he did occasionally make people mad. He was really good at ticking off religious know-it-alls. He found self-righteous people annoying, too. But it was the message that ticked off people, not the messenger. Sometimes the truth hurts. So, it's OK if people get a little mad sometimes—as long as it's the true message of Jesus that upsets them, and not the obnoxious messenger.

3) "My friends will make fun of me"

Here's something to think about: We often turn this fear into a bigger problem than it really is. You'd be surprised at how often people will respect you for your beliefs. They might not understand why you don't drink at parties, or avoid dirty jokes, or why you like youth group. And you might hear an occasional "fanatic" or "religious nut." But people often find genuine faith pretty interesting—confusing, but interesting. Many people will even respect you for your strong convictions. In fact, when we try our best to live and act like Jesus, we "shine like stars" in a world that's pretty dark (Philippians 2:15). So let your life shine, knowing others can't help but be attracted to the light.

4) "None of my Christian friends do it"

Ever talk to your friends about why they don't witness? There could be a ton of reasons—like those in this article. Maybe they're just not sure how to witness. Why not use this article to get the conversation going? You could also do a book study together. Suggestion: *Witnessing 101* by Tim Baker. Of course, you may need to take the lead and be the first in your group to witness. Your friends just might follow.

5) "I'm not a very good Christian"

You're a believer, but you mess up. You don't pray or read your Bible as much as you should. And you sin. Every day. So why should you tell other people about Christ if you can't even get it right? Fortunately, being a believer isn't about getting it right. It's about God's love and God's forgiveness. It's about his saving grace. (See Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:16 and Colossians 2:13.) So, does this mean you can act however you want? No. God wants us to become more like him each and every day. But he can also use us even when we mess up or aren't as good as we should be. You don't have to be "perfect" to share Christ. Not at all. Instead, make it clear to your friends: "You know, I'm sure not perfect. That's why I need God's love and forgiveness." Chances are, your friends will appreciate your honesty. They might also be kind of amazed to discover you believe in a loving and forgiving God. And isn't that what the Good News is all about?

6) "All of my friends are Christians"

It's great to have good Christian friends. God uses our Christian friendships to help us grow in our faith. And it's just fun to be around people who love God. But we also need to, as Jesus put it, "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). We can't do that if we don't have any non-Christian friends.

7) "I don't even know where to start"

Why not start by inviting a non-Christian friend to your youth group? Maybe your group has special events that are fun outreach nights with no heavy Bible studies. At least invite a non-Christian to take in a movie with you and your Christian friends. Then what? Well, when the subject of faith comes up, start with the story of how you became a Christ-follower. Or talk about why you're a Christian and how God helps you live life. Just be honest, just be real, just be you—and you might be surprised at how much God can use to reach out to others.