

L.E.A.R.N. Evangelism

Dr. Marshall M. Windsor

L.E.A.R.N. evangelism is a tool to encourage you in starting conversations and sharing your faith. God longs to bring others into a right relationship with Him, and He may just want to use you to do that! There is no one way of sharing our faith that is fruitful in every situation; that is why the role of the Holy Spirit is so important. We all have a story about what God has done in our lives, and your story may just be *THE* story that helps change another person's life for eternity.

In this short teaching tool, I hope that the Holy Spirit will reveal the importance of building relationships with others. Sometimes, relationships are God's teaching tools in our own lives. But truly, we need to be intentional in our relationships! The hope is to share Christ and reveal the difference He can make when a person invites Him into his or her life. So, take a deep breath, say fervent prayers for opportunities and the words to say, then step into a world waiting for you! Start building relationships and initiate discussions in hopes of sharing Christ with someone who does not know Him.

Learning evangelism means to:

LISTEN – Listen to the whisper of the Holy Spirit and to the person you encounter. As you listen, in your times of prayer or even throughout the day, you may sense the Holy Spirit nudging you to share a particular thought with a person you are with or to talk with a specific person. There are people waiting and hoping someone has answers to issues in their lives. God continues to use divine encounters if we will just listen to, and obey, the Holy Spirit's leading (John 16:13). When visiting with a person, make sure you are attentive and listening to them. This says: "I care and what You are saying is important."

ENGAGE – You must decide to engage another person. Many people stumble here because culture today teaches us to respect other people's privacy and to embrace tolerance. Many Christians are introverted in their social interactions, so engaging others is a challenge for them. You may prefer to engage others via a handwritten note or sending web page links to articles or blog posts that mean a lot to you. However, there is no better means of communication than actually talking to someone. For others who are extroverts, this is an exciting opportunity because they have never met a stranger - ever! Pray for God's peace and courage as you step out in obedience to His Word (Mark 16:15). Try starting mini-conversations with people about the weather, aspects of their jobs, or honest compliments for service. These can start conversations that end up talking about God's greatest gift.

ASK – After you decide to engage people about their faith, you must eventually ask some simple questions to help you steer the conversation toward spiritual matters. Here are some questions you might use:

- Have you ever thought about how God could bless your life?
- Is there anything special I can pray with you about?
- Have you ever, honestly, made peace with God?
- Where do you go to church?
- Have you ever thought about faith issues?
- What do think the word *salvation* means?
- Have you ever thought about eternity?
- If something terrible were to happen do you have a peace about where you would spend eternity?

Your listening skills and the Holy Spirit will guide you in asking the right questions. Most importantly, you need to be yourself—don't try to be something or someone you are not.

RELAY – There is no single correct way to share your faith, but at some point, you need to relay what a relationship with Jesus Christ has done in your life. You should consider sharing a combination of God's Word and your testimony or the testimony of someone you know if your experiences don't relate to the person you are talking to. In listening and asking a question or two, you will usually discover an opportunity to share your testimony – what God has done in your life (1 Peter 3:15). You may even feel inclined to ask permission to share what's God's done for you. No one can dispute your testimony, so write it down and know it by heart. Using Scripture phrased as

questions (“Did you know that God’s Word – the Bible - says in...” helps others see God’s plan and sincere love for them and their loved ones. Some Scriptures (ESV) to share might include:

- Romans 3:23, *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.* (ESV)
 - o You cannot save yourself...and no one else can save you except Jesus Christ. How?
- Romans 5:8, *...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*
- Rom 6:23, *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
 - o Jesus Christ willingly paid a price for our sins because He was the only one who could.
- John 3:16, *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life.*
 - o God loves you so much that He allowed His son to die in your place. We didn’t deserve it...
- 2 Corinthians 5:17, *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; Behold, the new has come.*
 - o Would you like to experience that kind of newness of life?
- Romans 10:13, *“For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”*
 - o When you ask Jesus to forgive you of sin and ask Him to have lordship and leadership of your life, then you are saved! That’s called salvation and only God can provide that – it cannot be earned!

What does it mean to “Be Saved?” Being *SAVED* is an expression that even Christians find difficult to define. While here on earth, being saved means we have asked God to forgive us of our wrongdoings and to have leadership of our lives. In doing so, we have an advocate or helper in Jesus Christ, who is interceding for us and who has sent his Holy Spirit to help us here on earth. Being *SAVED* also means that when we die, we will spend eternity in the presence of God. The Scripture states that “we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ” (Romans 14:10). Being saved involves accepting God’s forgiveness for our sins through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross and inviting Jesus Christ to have Lordship and Leadership of our lives (John 14:6). Then, we will avoid, or be *SAVED* from, the eternal damnation or separation from God that comes to those who reject Christ. Remember Romans 6:23 states that the “wages of sin is death.” That is a spiritual death which causes a separation from God. Only through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross is there forgiveness and the restoring of a right relationship with God.

After sharing your testimony and Scripture is a great time to ask again if you haven’t already, “Have you ever had an experience with Jesus Christ like that?” If they answer “No,” you can ask, “Would you like to?” If they avoid the question or get defensive don’t worry, just move on and let them know that God loves them and just seemed to nudge you to talk with them about their faith. However, if they say “Yes,” you can share a small prayer with them and 2 Corinthians 5:17. The exact words of the prayer don’t matter—what matters is the intent of the heart.

Prayer For Salvation

*Dear Jesus, here I am. I’m not perfect; I am a sinner. I ask you to come into my heart and forgive my sins.
Please be the Lord of my life; and lead me all the days of my life. In Jesus’ name, Amen.*

NEVER QUIT – A serious decision that will change your life for eternity is not a decision made lightly, so don’t be discouraged if someone doesn’t decide for Christ every time you try to share your faith. You must also “earn the right” to speak into someone’s life at a spiritual level (which is usually a very guarded place in most people’s lives). Sometimes we earn the right when our testimony experience connects with others. But, sometimes earning that right happens over time as we develop trusted relationships with people we care about.

We are all just links in a chain trying to lead others to Christ—no one link is more important than another. God alone knows the heart, and He alone should get all the credit for any good that happens. Survey research indicates that it may take 12 - 15 or more spiritual encounters before someone can make an informed decision for Christ! God has commanded us to scatter the Gospel seed—He will do the rest. As the apostle Paul stated, *“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.”* (1 Corinthians 3:6 KJV) So go scatter some seed today!