



## First Steps in Faith Sharing

When someone shows an interest in learning more about God or how to become a Christian, it's important to understand their current beliefs about God and Christianity. When asked, some people may try to give you a label for their beliefs (Ex: "I'm Hindu.") Ask them to be as specific as possible about what they believe, as many people do not actually understand or accept all of the beliefs their label would imply. Everyone's faith journey is very different, but you will find most people will fall into one or more of the following categories. People will need to approach studying the Bible in slightly different ways, based largely on their current beliefs. After completing the first step, the seeker should be ready to engage in any Bible study.

Current Beliefs	First Step
Atheist/Agnostic/Practices Religion with no specific gods (Buddhism, etc.)	Need to help establish belief in God.
Believes in different god/gods/energy forces (Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Taoism, etc.)	Need to introduce the one true God of the Bible.
Believes in God/Jesus but has had bad personal experiences and/or has an extremely negative view of God/Christians.	Need to clarify the true characteristics of God and establish Christians are still sinners following the Word of God imperfectly.
Believes in God/Jesus and has expressed an interest in obeying Him. (May have been raised in the Church or be unchurched.)	Can begin studying the Bible/baptism without any preparation first steps.
Believes he/she is already a Christian, but has not followed the Bible's instructions for becoming a Christian.	Need to treat as Aquila and Priscilla treated Apollos. Praise for having attempted to serve and obey God. Establish necessity of doing everything God requires of us to the best of our ability.
Believes in the Bible and additional "Holy Books" (Mormonism, Scientology, Islam, some Catholics and other Christian sects)	Need to establish Bible as primary source for knowledge of what God wants us to do. Additional books must be set aside as uninspired to be truly successful in any further Bible study.
Wants to convert you to a different religion or sect of Christianity or seems to want to debate for the sake of debating.	Should assume they fall into one of the other categories at first. If the person insists on merely debating and not listening with an open mind after studying, you may need to take a break.