



The Basics of Faith Sharing

- **Take advantage of any opportunity someone gives you to share your faith– even if it is just answering a question.** Often people have a small window of time when they are interested. If you allow the opportunity to pass without sharing something about God, the person may not give you or anyone else another opportunity.
- **Realize you don't have to know all of the answers.** You should be comfortable sharing the basics and answering simple questions. For more complex questions, it is legitimate to respond, "That's a great question. Can you give me time to do a little research and I will get back to you (specific day) with an answer?"
- **Be prepared to share your faith.** Faith sharing is often a team effort. Sometimes though, circumstances will make you the best or even the only person who can share their faith with the seeker – at least at that time.
- **When someone expresses an interest in learning more about God or becoming a Christian, begin by asking some respectful questions.** (If the person has asked you a question about God or some other related topic, answer their question first before asking your own questions.) You need to determine what their current beliefs are about God. Good possible questions are "Can you tell me a little about your faith journey so far?" "Can you share with me a little about what you already know about God/becoming a Christian?" "Can you tell me about your experiences with church and God?"
- **Once they have shared their current beliefs, determine what first steps may be needed before the person is ready to study a typical study on baptism.** (See *First Steps in Faith Sharing* handout for possible options.)
- **Complete any necessary first steps before beginning a study on baptism.** (Note: This process may take anywhere from a few minutes to a few years.)
- **Share your faith/study baptism with the person who has expressed an interest.** You can use the free baptism study with leader guide found on the Teach One Reach One website (<http://teachonereachone.org/lessons/baptism-study/>) or create your own.

A basic Bible study with someone who has expressed an interest in becoming a Christian should include:

- **Teach them some basic Bible history.** Include the story of God's perfect Creation and the Garden of Eden. Teach them about Adam and Eve, the first sins and The Fall. Make sure they understand the implications of The Fall for all of mankind. Talk about the Law of Moses,

especially the need for sacrifices and how they were imperfect (even though the animals sacrificed were supposed to be perfect.) Show them some of the many prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament and how Jesus fulfilled them. Share with them the story of Jesus.

- **Help them understand sin and its consequences.** This will review some of the information you covered in your basic Bible history. First, make sure the person understands the differences between sins and mistakes. Make sure they understand sins are disobeying God's Laws. Explain the age of accountability and how the Bible and early Christian history confirm committing one's life to Christ in baptism was always an informed decision by a person old enough to understand what they were doing. Read scriptures about the consequences of remaining in sin and how baptism removes our sins and cleanses us.
- **Teach them how to actually become a Christian.** Read some of the conversion stories in Acts. The "Five Steps" are an organizational tool to help them see the path they are on and where they might be on that path. Talk about whether or not they have or are ready to hear, believe, repent, confess and be baptized for the remission of their sins.
- **Share personal stories of how God has touched/changed/blessed your life.** These personal stories can be shared at any time during the process of sharing your faith when they seem appropriate. Telling someone specific examples from your own life will help them see how God might change their lives.
- **Be prepared to address concerns.** It is extremely common for the person studying with you to express doubts and concerns right before they make the decision to become a Christian. Don't let this discourage you. Most of the time the concerns are similar to these:
 - **What about Grandma?** This is a concern that becoming a Christian or being scripturally baptized is somehow condemning dead and very loved relatives to Hell. Reassure the person that doing what God requires of them does not change anything for the person they loved who is gone. It is important for them to obey God not only for themselves, but so they can share the news with others they love who are still living.
 - **Do I have to get my hair wet?** This person expresses all sorts of concerns about the physical process of baptism. It can be anything from their hair getting wet to the water being cold to a fear of drowning. Talk to them about every step of what will happen during the actual baptism. Take them step-by-step through the entire process. Usually, some basic reassurance and praying with them for courage and peace will calm these fears.
 - **What if I can't keep my promise to God?** This is a common doubt people are often afraid to express. They understand the enormous importance of the commitment they are about to make to God. Usually, a discussion of what happens when we sin after becoming a Christian (and that it is expected) will ease this fear.
 - **What if I want to "have fun" first?** This person has gotten the mistaken impression that the Christian life is dull and boring. Share with them all of the fun, joy and godly adventures one can have as a Christian. Remind them of the negative earthly consequences of their "fun" behavior. (Note: It is tempting to remind people they could die in their sin if they wait. Be very careful when using fear as a motivator. Repentance means

they are willing to turn from the sins they once committed, not that they are frightened temporarily into saying they will repent.)

- **What is the gift of the Holy Spirit and will it be weird?** A young person or someone who has only seen horror movies or heard about people doing strange things in the name of God usually expresses this concern. Reassure them by showing them scriptures about the Holy Spirit and sharing your personal experience with the Holy Spirit. Talk about how you felt immediately following your own baptism.

Continue to study with the person after they are baptized. New Christians, need to continue to study the Bible. They will need your help understanding topics like church structure, their role in the church and how to live a Christian life.

Please note that these are merely general guidelines to help you as you share your faith with others. Every person is different and you may need to adjust this list to meet their needs. Pray throughout the process for the Holy Spirit to give you the words you need to say and that God is with you as you study the Bible with others. Try to remember you are a seed planter or perhaps one who waters seeds others have planted earlier. Not every person with whom you share your faith will decide to become a Christian. Remember "God gives the increase" (I Corinthians 3:6-7) and may be using you to plant or water seeds of faith in someone. Both are equally important to help others find and follow God's Plan for their lives. May God bless you as you share your faith!