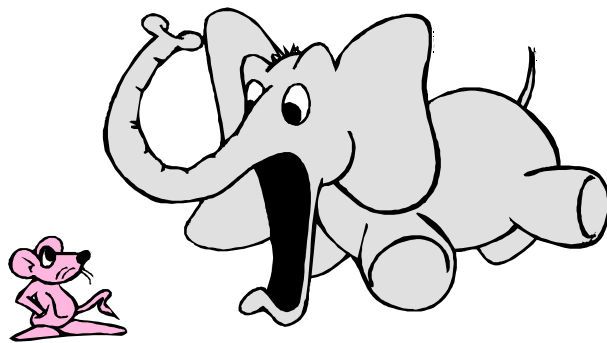


Evangelism for Scaredy-Cats



This course is designed to help ordinary Christians to speak naturally about their faith in day-to-day conversations. This DOESN'T mean Bible-bashing, buttonholing, pestering, brainwashing, manipulating, tricking, programming, cornering, embarrassing, offending, preaching. It DOES mean speaking honestly and naturally about Jesus in a way that interests and helps your friends.



To Think About

Personal evangelism is scary, risky, and hard-work. It has the potential to break down bridges and ruin friendships. So why would you do it?

1. Why would you bother getting out of your comfort zone to share Jesus with people?

2. Is it something that should just be left up to the professionals, or those with the gift of evangelism? Why/ why not?

3. Should it just involve church outreach activities? Why/ why not?



Questions To Ask Yourself?

Do you BELIEVE the gospel?

Yes

No

Have you been SAVED?

Yes

No

Has your life CHANGED?

Yes

No

Do you VALUE heaven?

Yes

No

Do you FEAR hell?

Yes

No

Do you LOVE Jesus?

Yes

No

Why should we share our faith?

- ◆ We are told to by Jesus
- ◆ We love the people around us, and want them to know Jesus
- ◆ Their eternity depends on their belief in Jesus
- ◆ We are excited about what Jesus has done for us
- ◆ Life is meaningless without God
- ◆ ?
- ◆ ?



Colossians 1:21-29 (NIV)

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. {22} But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation-- {23} if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. {24} Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. {25} I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness-- {26} the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. {27} To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. {28} We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. {29} To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

Luke 24:13-27 (NIV)

13 Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. 14 They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. 15 As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; 16 but they were kept from recognizing him. 17 He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. 18 One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you only a visitor to Jerusalem and do not know the things that have happened there in these days?" 19 "What things?" he asked. "About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. 20 The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; 21 but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. 22 In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning 23 but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. 24 Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." 25 He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! 26 Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" 27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. ... 44 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." 45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. 46 He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."



Investigate

4. Read Colossians 1:21-29. Why does Paul share the gospel?



God's Word

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:1

Sharing Jesus

5. Read Luke 24:13-27; 44-49 What events have just taken place in Jerusalem?

6. What events does Jesus say the entire Old Testament pointed to (verses 26-27, 44-47)?

7. What events are the apostles witnesses to?

8. As a result, what message were they to preach?

9. Why is it important to see that the death and resurrection of Jesus is the focus of the whole Bible?

10. Why is proclaiming Jesus' death and resurrection at the heart of following Jesus?

The great event of his death and resurrection is the focus of the whole Bible. Everything that came before this event, pointed forward to it. And we who live after this event, are to proclaim it. Everyone's real problem is their rejection of God. The only solution is God's forgiveness through the death and resurrection of his Son. As Christians, this message demands not only our belief... it demands our witness! As 1 Peter 3:15 says , we need to "always be ready to speak of the hope we have in Christ".

Good News Headlines

It's important to have a clear presentation of the gospel ready to use. A point-form summary helps us to remember the essence of the good news, as well as minimising the amount a hearer is expected to remember.

Outlines like these two are great tools to use in conversation. If you don't get all the way through in one go, you may be able to resume it the next time you talk. Each step could be a place to begin depending on where the conversation is headed. Many of the answers to common questions about Christianity come out of such outlines.



Two Ways To Live (www.matthiasmedia.com.au/2wtl)

This outline has the advantage of having diagrams that can be drawn as you speak.

1. **God** is the loving ruler of the world. He made the world. He made us rulers of the world under him.



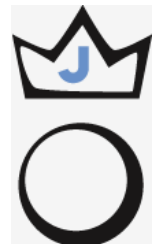
2. **We** all reject the ruler - God - by trying to run life our own way without him. But we fail to rule ourselves or society or the world.



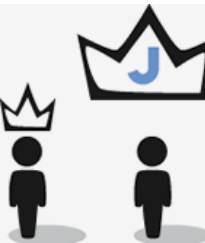
3. God won't let us rebel forever. **God's punishment** for rebellion is death and judgment.



4. Because of his love, **God sent his Son** into the world: the man Jesus Christ. Jesus always lived under God's rule. Yet by dying in our place he took our punishment and brought forgiveness.



5. **God raised Jesus** to life again as the ruler of the world. Jesus has conquered death, now gives new life, and will return to judge.



6. The two ways to live;

God's new way - **submit** to Jesus as our ruler, rely on Jesus' death and resurrection
a. Result - forgiven by God, given **eternal life**

Our Way - **reject** the ruler God, try to run life our own way

b. Result - **condemned** by God, facing death and judgment

Know and Tell the Gospel, John Chapman

How might you summarise the gospel under these five headings?

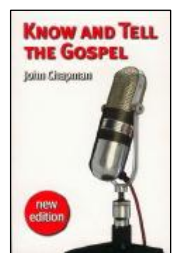
God

Man

God

What if you do?

What if you don't?

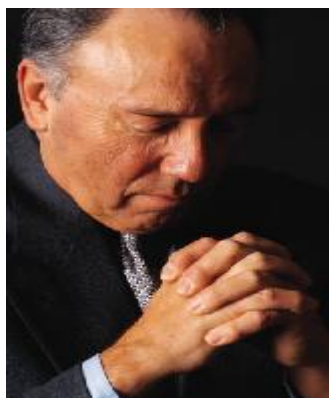


Romans 10:10-15 (NIV)

10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. 11 As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." 12 For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, 13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."
14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Colossians 4:2-6 (NIV)

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 3 And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. 4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. 5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. 6 Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.



Whom has God placed within YOUR influence who needs to know Jesus? List five people you know who need Jesus.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Tell the Gospel

I hate aerobics. There's a big difference between aerobics and soccer training, for example. The difference is this: Thursday night soccer training is put into practice on Saturday when you play the game. Aerobics, on the other hand, only leads to more aerobics... never ending practice!

Learning gospel outlines must never be like aerobics: all sweat but no outworking. Evangelistic training must be preparation for the real game. As Christians, we must not only know the gospel, but tell the gospel. The passages below will help remind us why...

Read Romans 10:10-15

11. How is someone saved (verse 10)?

12. Who is this salvation for (verses 11-13)?

13. What is needed for people to have the opportunity to be saved (verses 14-15)?

14. Who played a key part in your salvation? How?

15. Could God use you in this way? Why/why not?

Read Colossians 4:2-6

16. What does Paul want the Colossians to pray for (verses 2-3)?

17. Why is he concerned that his preaching be clear (verse 4)?

18. What does he mean by 'making the most of every opportunity' (verse 5)?

19. Why does he want our conversation to be dominated by grace (verse 6)?

20. What should fill our prayers in relation to non-Christians?

21. How can we make our message as clear as possible?

22. How can we make the most of every opportunity we have?

What are they like?

The people you have listed are *real people*, with needs and priorities and feelings. They are not just *targets*. This is the way people can sometimes feel when they are insensitively witnessed to.



Unfortunately, our perception of evangelism can easily be distorted into thinking it's about selling the gospel rather than engaging in a meaningful dialogue. Evangelism is not about being a good salesperson; it's about being a good doctor. In other words, we're not called to sell a product, but to diagnose the symptoms in people's lives (like strained relationships, financial problems, unfulfilled hopes, questions about life or purpose or meaning), then bringing these men and women to Jesus Christ. He alone can meet their deepest need—forgiveness of sin.

For each of the five people you've listed above, describe an area where they need Jesus. It might be an area of weakness or a struggle. If they seem to have it all together, it simply might be the need for God to soften their heart or open their eyes.

How can God use YOU to move that person along the road to him?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What About Strangers!?

As well as people we already know, God brings us into contact with many strangers who also need to know Jesus. It might be on the train, or the soccer sidelines, or waiting in the supermarket queue. Pray that God would give you;

- ◆ the *eyes* to recognise these opportunities (Col 4:5; 1 Peter 3:15-16)
- ◆ the *courage* to bring up Jesus in the conversation (2 Tim 1:8)
- ◆ the *wisdom* to speak the words which will be most appropriate (Col 4:6; Mark 13:9-11).
- ◆ the *faith* to leave the results in God's hands - you may never see that person again (1 Cor 3:6).



Some Hints

Knowing when to share the gospel with someone is something many of us struggle with. We can be worried about rejection, or about seeming too pushy. However, while a few of us may err on the side of being too 'in your face', most of us err in the other direction! There are a few important things that can help us here:

- ◆ Remember that sharing the gospel isn't doing something terrible to someone! Rather, it's doing them a favour, like giving them a gift - the greatest gift!
- ◆ Try not to focus on your own fears but on the other person's needs - this is a message they need to hear.
- ◆ Realise that most people are actually more willing to hear about Christ than we've guessed they might be.
- ◆ When you're getting to know someone, don't leave it too long to bring up your Christian faith. It can get harder to broach the subject the longer you leave it.
- ◆ Often our conversations with friends about Jesus are very 'bits and pieces'. Ask them if they'd mind getting the 'big picture' - doing a short study like the Two Ways to Live Bible Study.
- ◆ Remember that it's ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit to change someone's heart towards God. So speak with confidence knowing that their response doesn't rest on your cleverness.
- ◆ Especially in the light of the previous point, above all PRAY. It's our job to speak, but God's job to save people! And KEEP PRAYING!

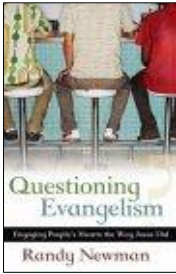


Bringing it up!

Recognising, and making the most of, opportunities is an important skill. Often it's only AFTER the opportunity that we think of what we could say. Taking the opportunities takes PRACTICE. The chart below lists some situations which may arise with people you meet. What approach could you take to steer them towards Jesus?



Who Said It?	What did they say/ what happened?	What did it show? What is their need?	What approach could you take? What could you say?
Friend whose children have grown up and left home	'The house seems so empty now and life is so boring'	<i>Eg. Life and purpose centred around family. Few interests, low self-worth.</i>	<i>Eg. Build social opportunities, encourage them. When appropriate, share the value God places on them since Jesus died for them.</i>
Neighbour who has recently had a promotion	'I've got the job I always wanted - now I'm on the way to the top'.		
A young couple with their first baby	"Look at those tiny fingers. It's a miracle that something so small can work!"		
A single woman getting over the death of her father.	She withdraws, says very little, keeps to herself		
Socially-aware friend upset at the detention of refugees.	"I just can't believe our government's policy on refugees!"		
Meeting a workmate on Monday morning	"I got drunk on the weekend. It was great. What did you get up to?"		
Workmate angry about unfair treatment	"I hate it when I get blamed for someone else's mistakes. It wasn't my fault!"		



Questions, questions, questions!

Randy Newman, in his book “Questioning Evangelism” reminds us of the importance of asking questions before giving answers. Too quickly we rush in, giving our opinion before we’ve really heard where the other person is coming from. An insightful question can help the other person to see the inadequacy of their own position, as well as helping us to better respond. Newman gives a personal illustration;

“So I suppose you think all those sincere followers of other religions are going to hell!”

“Do you believe in hell?” I responded.

He appeared as if he’d never seriously considered the possibility. He looked so puzzled, perhaps because he was being challenged when he thought that he was doing the challenging. After a long silence he said, “No, I don’t believe in hell. I think it’s ridiculous.”

Echoing his word choice, I said, “Well then why are you asking me such a ridiculous question?” I wasn’t trying to be a wise guy. I simply wanted him to honestly examine the assumptions behind his own question.

Another way of saying this is that we “dialogue” with people. It’s a constant to-and-fro of questions and answer. Hearing the way they see the world, and then responding. God gave us two ears and only one mouth for a reason!

“We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.”

Epictetus (Greek philosopher AD 55–c.135)



What’s YOUR story?

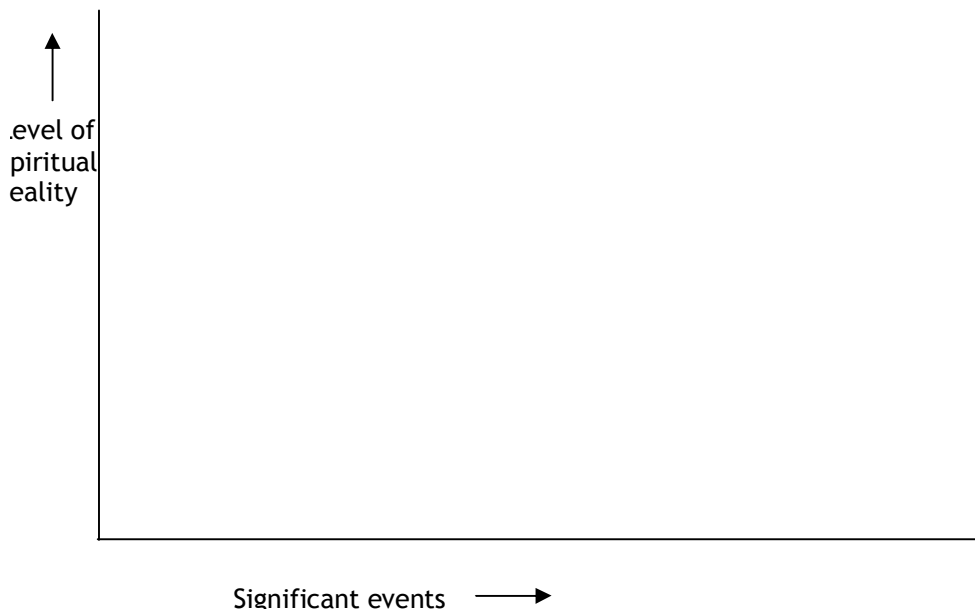
Your own experience of God will help and interest others. It’s important to be able to put it into words. Look at Paul’s testimony in Acts 26.

From Paul’s testimony we can learn

- Be completely honest. Don’t exaggerate -even to bring extra credit to God.
- Don’t look for credit for yourself - but don’t adopt false modesty either.
- Bring the story up to date - don’t stop at your conversion. What difference does Jesus make in your life TODAY?
- Don’t be afraid to mention things that may appear strange.

Our experience may not be dramatic like Paul’s - we may not be able to pinpoint an exact moment when we became Christian. The important thing is to be able to speak about an experience that is real and meaningful NOW.

Look back over your own experience. When did you first become aware of God? When did you become a Christian? How have things gone *since* then? When was your faith most alive? Least meaningful? Rather than write it out, try plotting it as a line on the graph.



Acts 26:9-23 (NIV)

"I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. {10} And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. {11} Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to persecute them. {12} "On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. {13} About noon, O king, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. {14} We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' {15} "Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. {16} 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. {17} I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them {18} to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' {19} "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. {20} First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds. {21} That is why the Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. {22} But I have had God's help to this very day, and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen-- {23} that the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles."

It's not **MASTERMIND** you know!

It doesn't take long talking about Christian things before your friends will ask you a curly question. Defending the Christian faith is an area called **apologetics**. It's probably the fear of not knowing all the answers which scares Christians as much as anything.

Christianity is a reasonable, rational, historical, explainable and defensible religion. It's not about "blind" faith, but faith that has a reasonable foundation.

Most questions non-Christians ask are just variations on 5 major questions.

1. *How do you know God exists?*
2. *How can I trust the Bible?*
3. *What about suffering?*
4. *Won't my good works be enough?*
5. *Uniqueness of Jesus/ other religions*



Rather than answer specific questions here we'll just list some DO's and DON'T's.

DO

1. Try to find out the real problem
2. Try to steer the conversation to Jesus
3. Say what you really think
4. Draw support from the Bible when you can
5. Try to be positive
6. Speak from your own experience
7. Hook the questions into your gospel outline

DON'T

1. Be afraid to say you don't know
2. Get side-tracked
3. Make everything seem to be just your own opinion
4. Pretend there aren't any problems
5. Be argumentative
6. Defend Christian history - we've made mistakes!

Ready, Set, Go!!

Pray. Ask God to stir hearts and to give you opportunities to tell people about Him. Our words are merely His tool—only He can change people.

Providence: Remember that it's God who is in control. It's God who chooses people, who opens their eyes to see, gives them faith to trust, makes them alive, and forgives their sin. Trust his power and his timing.

Personalize. Write out and memorize your testimony

Plan. While God provides spontaneous opportunities for evangelism with friends and family, many people find it necessary to be intentional. Set time aside in your schedule to initiate conversations about Jesus with people you don't know.

Practice. Take some time to familiarize yourself with the gospel: that God loves us, that our sin separates us from Him, that Jesus died to pay our penalty for that sin, and that we need to surrender to Him with repentant hearts.



Some Helpful Books

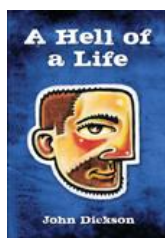
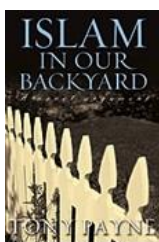
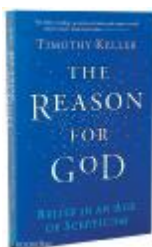
The Reason for God: Belief in an age of Scepticism, Timothy Keller

Islam in our Backyard, Tony Payne

A Sneaking Suspicion, John Dickson

A Fresh Start, John Chapman

A Hell of a Life, John Dickson



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