

*Love People.*

Our **relationships** are meaningful and intentional

*Impact the World.*

We **reproduce** new Christ-followers and new churches on a similar mission.

Read: Romans 10:14

After we understand the biblical framework for evangelism (previous lesson), it is important that we become comfortable with the “how to” of evangelism. While always remembering that the foundation of evangelism is the Holy Spirit moving in and through us, **knowing and practicing** simple communication of the gospel is critical for us in terms of reaching the world with the message of the Gospel. By no means are the models discussed here exhaustive. And remember, evangelism is not a one-shot thing (1 Cor. 3:5-6), sometimes folks will respond to the call of salvation, sometimes they will not. But God is always at work, we are simply to be ready to respond (1 Peter 3:15), we must respond (Romans 10:14).

**LAB Recommendations:**

There are TOO many resources in this “LAB” handout. We recommend you focus:

- Building relationships & starting spiritual conversations (pg. 3&4),
- Your personal testimony (the irrefutable apologetic, pg. 5),
- Plus one simple tool (you pick, Do vs. Done & the Bridge are good starters).

**APOLOGETICS**

Definition: Apologetics (according to Webster) is a branch of theology devoted to the defense of the divine origin and authority of Christianity

Read Scripture: 1 Peter 3:15

Why Study apologetics? How important is studying apologetics?  
(See Evangelism resources for recommended books on apologetics)

*The following pages of the “LAB” are mainly taken from “Becoming a Contagious Christian – Participant’s Guide.” This curriculum includes a 6-session group instructional DVD and is available at the Riverside Church office. The course goes much deeper, and includes additional “models” and resources such as helping you determine your specific “evangelism style,” etc... it’s one of the first books/guides to get on evangelism.*



## **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS & STARTING SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS<sup>2</sup>**

*Genuine friendships provide the natural context and trust for deepening interactions to a more personal level. And within that context we can initiate and deepen conversations about spiritual matters. Jesus is our example. Jesus summed up his life by saying that he "came to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:10) — and he lived out those words by getting up close to the people he wanted to influence. He did that because he loved them. Like Jesus, we need to build trust and respect among those we hope to reach. We need to point them to His love and truth.*

### **1) TOWARD DEEPER RELATIONSHIPS**

*If authentic relationships provide the context to reach others for Christ, then where can we initiate these relationships?*

#### **a) People We Already Know**

*The main idea is that we need to take steps to get closer so we can deepen trust within the friendship. Here are three practical suggestions:*

- Include them in activities we're already doing.
- Take an interest in what they are already doing.
- Throw a "Matthew Party." *Matthew threw a party for his tax office buddies, in Luke 5:29. Matthew Parties are small gatherings, like a dinner or dessert in someone's home, or large ones like block parties or concerts. We can also plan and host social gatherings designed to deepen our relationships with people and to help them mix with some of our Christian friends. These are not overtly evangelistic, but they can lead to deeper friendships and conversations.*

#### **b) People We Used To Know**

*With the explosion of social networking (ex. Facebook), it is easier than ever to re-connect with people we used to know.*

#### **c) People We Like To Know**

*Here's a helpful tip as you have conversations with pre-believers. Mention spiritual matters early. This doesn't mean we force conversations about God. But it's very important to drop hints that there's a spiritual dimension to our life, even if that doesn't lead to deeper conversations.*

*For example, if a friend asks what you do in your spare time, you might mention a couple hobbies—as well as attending cell group or a Christian book you are reading. Doing that plants seeds for future spiritual conversations. Actually the longer you wait, the harder it is to bring up these things. It's usually better to be upfront about the most important thing in our lives!*

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<sup>2</sup> Mittelberg, Strobel, Hybels, *Becoming a Contagious Christian: Participant's Guide* (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007) pg. 43-50

## 2) INITIATING SPIRITUAL CONVERSATIONS

*We talked about building relationships; now we go deeper. How we can start spiritual conversations? Eventually, we want to talk about Jesus but we have to initiate the discussion, because the other person will seldom, if ever, bring it up. Again, Jesus is our example. When Jesus interacted with the woman at the well in John 4, He was intentional in turning from the everyday topic of "getting a drink of water," to the deeper subject of "drinking living water." Let's look at three approaches to starting spiritual conversations.*

### a) Bridging

*The most natural way to start spiritual conversations is "bridging." Bridging uses the topic being discussed as a bridge to a related spiritual topic. This is what Jesus did: he moved from ordinary water to living water.*

*Or if you're telling someone who's new in our country or in your neighborhood where to find good restaurants, coffee shops, and stores, you could add, "I also go to a great church, in case you're interested." There may be no interest, but it already established for you a window to talk about spiritual things.*

### b) Questioning

*The second approach to starting spiritual conversations is "questioning," Instead of making statements, we draw a response by asking a question. For example, a friend is telling you about their upbringing, so you ask a question like, "What about church — did you grow up with any particular religious training or point of view?"*

### c) Inviting

*This turns a conversation toward spiritual topics by inviting our friends to a spiritual event they might relate to. Suppose the topic of children comes up. Use this approach by saying, "This might surprise you, but in the light of your need, I think you'd enjoy a talk we're having at our church. This talk has helped many people in parenting young children. Would you like to attend it with me?"*

*Regardless of the response, your invitation can naturally turn into a conversation about spiritual matters. For example, you could follow up by asking if they've ever been to a seminar like this, or to a church, or you could simply ask about their spiritual background. Some key points to keep in mind when starting spiritual conversations:*

Take initiative: Too often we wait for others to initiate topics of conversation. Be willing to take the lead. Your friends are probably more interested in spiritual topics than you realize!

Talk to people one-on-one: As a general rule, we'll get a lot further in spiritual conversations if we talk to people one-on-one.

Engage in dialogue — not monologue: Most people are open to our talking with them about spiritual matters—but they don't want us talking at them! Communication must be a two-way street where we ask questions, genuinely listen, and then with sensitivity, express our views.

Present truth in doses: Ask God for wisdom and sensitivity to know how much to say, and when to back off and wait for another opportunity.

Make the most of split-second opportunities: These are the daily conversational turning points where we see an opportunity. For example, if someone asks you what you did over the weekend, you'll be tempted to talk about the biking trip or movie, but to skip mentioning the important things you did with your cell group or what you learned at church. Do both! Don't sidestep what matters most.

**PERSONAL TESTIMONY**

Read Scripture: 1 Peter 3:15, 1 John 1:3

Your story is valuable. Here are three reasons why:

- 1) Your friends will be interested

*A natural consequence of showing interest in them is that they will reciprocate and want to find out more about you. Real friends want to understand each other's thoughts, values, and backgrounds.*

- 2) They are able to relate to it

*We tend to get close to people with similar interests and backgrounds, so it's very likely that your friends will relate to some of your spiritual experiences. Don't devalue your story just because it may not be sensational or dramatic.*

- 3) Your story is hard to argue with

*We live in a culture today where people want to know not just if Christianity is true, but whether it works. Your story illustrates that God is alive.*

How to organize your story:

**Part 1 - B.C. (Before Christ)**

**Part 2 - J.C. (Met Christ)**

**Part 3 - A.D. (Since Meeting Christ)**

**Part 4 – Concluding Question**

Part 1	Part 2	Part 3	Concluding Question
BC (Before Christ)	+	AD (Since...)	Ex. "What's your experience with God?"  "so that's what happened to me. Can you relate to any of it?"

Regarding length: keep your story brief and to the point. Your friend can always ask for more details. The beauty of the three part outline is that you can compress or expand your story to fit any situation—telling it in a minute or an hour.

Regarding sequence: you can start and end at any of the three parts. For example, depending on the conversation, it may be more appropriate to begin by talking about your AD life and then say, "Well, I wasn't always like that," then go to your BC life, then to what's made the difference: Part 2 – meeting Christ.

You can be flexible once you know the three parts. More importantly, you can be interactive as you talk about your experience back and forth in a natural conversation, rather than presenting it like a speech.

*Example of Apostle Paul using this model:*

<b>Part 1 - B.C. (Before Christ)</b>	Acts 26:4-11
<b>Part 2 - J.C. (Met Christ)</b>	Acts 26: 12-18
<b>Part 3 - A.D. (After Christ)</b>	Acts 26: 19-23
<b>Part 4 - Final Question</b>	Acts 26: 27

**GOSPEL OF JESUS EXPLAINED (IN SIMPLE WAYS) – “DO vs. DONE”**

Religion is spelled D-O, and is all about trying to DO enough to please God.

*The trouble is we don’t know if we ever do enough, and the Bible tells us we never can do enough (Romans 3.23).*

But Christianity is spelt D-O-N-E.

*Jesus has done what we could never do. He lived the perfect life and died on the cross to pay for all the wrong stuff we have done.*

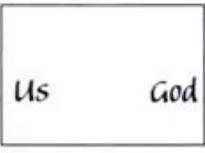
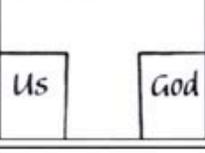
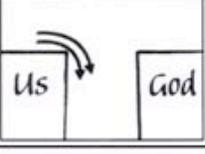
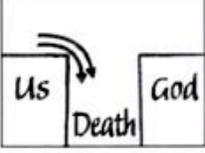
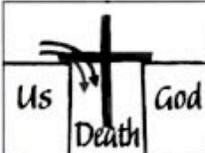
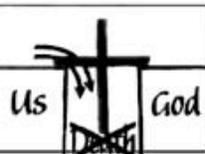
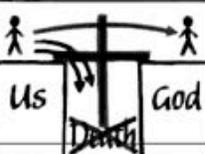
But it’s not enough just to know this; we have to receive what he has done; we have to ask Jesus to forgive us and to be the leader of our lives.

*Then you could ask them what they think, whether they understand the difference, and if they see the need for Jesus*

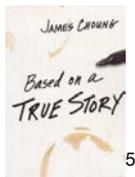
NARRATIVE	OUTLINE
<p>The difference between religion and Christianity is:</p> <p>Religion is spelled “D-O.” It consists of trying to do enough good things to somehow please God, earn his forgiveness, and gain entrance into heaven. This self-effort plan can take on many forms, from trying to be a good, moral person to becoming an active participant in an organized religion—Christian or otherwise.</p> <p>The problem is, we can never know when we have done enough. Even worse, the Bible makes it clear that we can <i>never</i> do enough in Romans 3:23: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Simply put, the “D-O” plan cannot bring us peace with God, or even peace with ourselves.</p> <p>Christianity, however, is spelled “D-O-N-E.” In other words, that which we could never <i>do</i> for ourselves, Christ has already <i>done</i> for us. He lived the perfect life we could never live, and he died on the cross to pay for each of our wrongdoings. And now he freely offers us his gift of forgiveness and leadership for our lives.</p> <p>But it’s not enough just to know this; we have to humbly receive what he has done for us. And we do that by asking for his forgiveness and leadership in our lives.</p> <p>(At this point, ask a follow-up question like “Does this make sense to you?” or “What do you think about what I just said?”)</p>	<p><b>RELIGION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is spelled “D-O”</li> <li>• Trying to do enough good things to please God</li> </ul> <p><b>THE PROBLEM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We can never know when we have done enough</li> <li>• The Bible says that we can <i>never</i> do enough (Romans 3:23)</li> </ul> <p><b>CHRISTIANITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is spelled “D-O-N-E”</li> <li>• Christ did what we could never do                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Lived the perfect life we could not</li> <li>— Died on the cross to pay for our wrongdoings</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>OUR RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It’s not enough just to know this</li> <li>• We have to receive what he has done for us by asking for his forgiveness and leadership in our lives</li> </ul> <p><b>THEIR RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does this make sense to you?</li> <li>• What do you think about what I just said?</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Mittelberg, Strobel, Hybels, *Becoming a Contagious Christian: Participant’s Guide* (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007) pg. 76

**GOSPEL OF JESUS EXPLAINED (IN SIMPLE WAYS) - BRIDGE<sup>4</sup>**

Key Characters	Narrative	Picture
GOD	God loves us, and wants to have a relationship with us.	
US	However, we blew it by rebelling against God, and this broke off that relationship.	
	We do things to try to get back to God, but our efforts fail.	
	Our sins have to be punished, and the penalty is spiritual death — which means separation from God for eternity in a place called hell.	
CHRIST	But there's good news: God build a bridge back to Himself.	
	How? Christ paid for it by dying for us on the cross as our substitute and rose from the dead to give us His life.	
YOU	It's not enough to just know this. We must receive him by admitting that we have sinned against Him and by asking for His forgiveness and leadership. Conclude by asking your friend where they think they are on the diagram.	

**GOSPEL OF JESUS EXPLAINED (IN SIMPLE WAYS) – BRIDGE UPDATED**



To see a 3-minute video, go to:

[www.YouTube.com](http://www.YouTube.com)

Search for: “James Choung”

See in the results: “The Big Story”& “The Big Story, Part 2”

<sup>4</sup> Mittelberg, Strobel, Hybels, *Becoming a Contagious Christian: Participant’s Guide* (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007) pg. 69-70

<sup>5</sup> Choung, James, *Based on a True Story* (IVP, Grand Rapids, MI, 2008)

## GOSPEL OF JESUS EXPLAINED (IN SIMPLE WAYS) – “THE FIVE-SCOND GOSPEL”<sup>6</sup>

"God Loves us,  
we \_\_\_\_\_ it,  
Christ paid for it,  
we must \_\_\_\_\_."

### Character 1: God. "God loves us."

God is loving:

*"God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him." 1 John 4:16,*

God is just:

*"The LORD is known by his justice" Psalm 9:16*

### Character 2: Us. "We blew it."

God created humans to be morally good, but we became sinful

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" Romans 3:23*

We deserve death.

*"For the wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23a*

### Character 3: Christ. "Christ paid for it."

Jesus Christ, who is God, became man.

*"Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, [was] made in human likeness." Philippians 2:5b-7*

Christ died as our substitute

*"For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God." 1 Peter 3:18*

Christ offers his forgiveness as a gift

*"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8-9*

### Character 4: You. "We must receive him."

We must respond

*"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12*

We receive him by asking Christ to be our forgiver and leader

*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9*

The result of receiving him is our spiritual transformation by the Holy Spirit

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" 2 Corinthians 5:17*

## GOSPEL OF JESUS EXPLAINED (IN SIMPLE WAYS) – THE SPIRITUAL EQUATION<sup>7</sup>

The Spiritual Equation, comes from John 1:12. It's especially helpful for religious people who think that merely agreeing with the right facts makes them a Christian. *"To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12*

This verse contains three operative verbs: *believe*, *receive*, and *become*. Put into a spiritual equation it would look like this:

### **Believe + Receive = Become**

**Believe:** It is important to **believe** the right things. The Bible presents certain truths that we need to understand and agree with.

**Receive:** It's not enough to just believe these things. The Bible says that "even the demons believe ... and shudder" (James 2:19). *We need to act on what we believe and receive the forgiveness and life that Jesus offers.*

**Become:** When we sincerely believe in and receive Jesus' forgiveness and leadership, the Bible is clear. At that moment we are forgiven of all our sins and we **become** his adopted son or daughter. From there we begin the adventure of following and serving him.

End by saying. "It's Believe + Receive = Become."

Then ask: "Where do you think you are in this spiritual equation?"

<sup>6</sup> Mittelberg, Strobel, Hybels, *Becoming a Contagious Christian: Participant's Guide* (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007) pg. 66-68

<sup>7</sup> Mittelberg, Strobel, Hybels, *Becoming a Contagious Christian: Participant's Guide* (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 2007) pg. 73