

Young Evangelist Revels in Billy Graham Online Ministry

He doesn't have kids. He's never been married. He works part-time at Olive Garden and, at 19, just cast his first vote.

Jeremy is one of the youngest trained volunteers involved in Search for Jesus (SFJ), an online BGEA ministry that shares the gospel around the world. SFJ reaches people battling alcoholism and depression, people with marital problems, the critically ill and people who have never been to church or question their salvation.

It reaches people seeking answers to their spiritual questions and points them to Christ.

Jeremy heard about SFJ when he volunteered at Rock the Lakes, a BGEA youth event in Rochester, N.Y., earlier this year. He was encouraged after taking the Christian Life and Witness Course, which equips believers to share their faith.

"I wanted to make an impact somehow," he said, so he sought out more information about SFJ. Online evangelism is an inexpensive way to minister to people around the world without leaving his home or asking off work.

Jeremy is trained as both an e-counselor and discipleship coach. As an e-counselor, he chats with people who ask questions on SFJ's evangelistic website, . As a discipleship coach, he follows up with new believers through one-on-one online mentoring.

But wait. How can a guy fresh out of community college possibly know what to say to someone struggling with addiction, coping with the loss of a spouse or wondering why God isn't answering prayers?

"I can't always say I understand," he said. He recently talked to a person online who was going through a job loss, and he couldn't relate. But he *could* encourage and show compassion while sharing the hope and love found in Christ.

He thinks about 1 Timothy 4:12 where Paul tells the young Timothy, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." Jeremy also prays for God's guidance as he communicates the Gospel.

No one knows Jeremy's age when he talks to them online, but with young people finding on a daily basis, he is an asset to reaching out to them. And without a family of his own yet, he has more time to volunteer on the weekends.

Jeremy has chatted with and prayed for people from China to Mexico, "which is really cool," and recently used a translation tool to communicate in a person's native tongue.

"I really want to help," he said, and has become a better listener. He's learned to let people talk instead of "jumping right into the Gospel or giving them a verse" right away. As Billy Graham once put it, "A suffering person does not need a lecture—he needs a listener."

For Jeremy, the hardest part about online ministry is that he can't help someone in person like he can on a mission trip. He can, however, "plant a seed or water it" when sharing the Gospel. With more and more people going online, he said, having an online tool like SFJ is key to reaching them.

"It's opened my eyes," he said. It's easy to forget about people in other states or countries, but "there are just so many people in need. ... The more volunteering I do, the more I realize, wow, this is a broken world."

Jeremy went to school for culinary arts and hospitality, but is contemplating ministry outside of SFJ—possibly as a youth

or college pastor. His training in SFJ will definitely help, he said, and it's already coming in handy when reaching friends. One co-worker saw on Jeremy's Facebook page that he's a Christian, and after asking questions about Jesus, Jeremy was able to use his training in communicating with his co-worker.

To learn more about SFJ or to volunteer, visit [.](#)