

Go Ahead, Break the Ice!

The biggest roadblock to evangelism is beginning a conversation. Here's how to get started.

I know many Christians who want to share their faith, but they struggle with finding a way to begin. There is no specific formula. God wants us to be spontaneous as we trust Him to give us the words.

These suggestions will help you start the conversation:

1. Discuss spirituality. You might ask, "Do you attend church anywhere?" Regardless of the answer, try to steer away from getting caught up in a discussion about religion or "your" church. Many people have had negative church experiences. But this can still be a great door opener. Keep the focus on Christ because religion doesn't change lives, Jesus does.

2. Find common ground. "Where did you grow up? Tell me about your family, where you went to school and your job." People love to talk about themselves. Asking engaging questions about someone's life (and being a great listener) equips you to identify needs and life experiences. This enables you to understand how your testimony relates to their situation.

3. Be sincerely honest. Say: "I'm sorry that I haven't talked to you about something really important that has happened in my life" or "I'm so nervous to discuss this, but it's something I feel I have to do."

Be open about your feelings of fear and intimidation. This is especially important when talking to family members and friends: those you've known a long time. Sharing your faith with a family member can be difficult.

4. Pray before a meal. Say: "I always pray before I eat, and I was wondering if you have any specific prayer request." Some

people you meet only once, such as a restaurant server.

You will be amazed how offering to pray for them leads to open doors to share your faith. Numerous waitresses have broken down in tears and shared their deepest pain after I have asked this question.

5. Ask their permission. “Can I tell you an unbelievable story?” Everyone loves a good story, and this works with close friends or even casual acquaintances.

Explain candidly how you realized your need for Christ and what a relationship with Him means to you. Offer to pray with them to accept Jesus.

6. Be completely blunt. “Have you given your entire life to Jesus Christ?” Some people really respond to this approach even though it is not as common.

You don't always have the time to develop a lengthy conversation with a passing stranger, yet the Holy Spirit wants you to share with them. In such an encounter, this may be your only chance. Swallow your fears and share your faith with confidence.