

Tips for Witnessing to Close Family Members

Does the thought of sharing your faith to friends or family members give you sweaty palms? Here are a few tips to help you.

Her heart is pounding. Her palms are sweating. Butterflies are fluttering in her stomach and her mind is racing. This isn't a description of the moments leading up to a star athlete's competition or even a performer before stepping on stage for a solo.

This is Melissa Mott, 28, describing her experience of witnessing to a close friend. "I think it's the most terrifying part," she said. "It's a true moment of nervousness; but it's also a true moment of displaying your devotion to Jesus."

Mott currently serves on the *My Hope with Billy Graham* team, but she was intimately involved in My Hope projects in Brazil and Malawi. During the international projects, she has personally served as a My Hope "Matthew," inviting friends and neighbors into her home for the special broadcast message.

My Hope with Billy Graham uses the term "Matthew" from Scripture (Luke 5:27-31) where Matthew invited friends to his home to meet Jesus, who had changed his life.

Mott's sweaty-palm experience is not unusual. Many Christians are nervous about sharing their faith with others. Recent research from LifeWay Research shows that 61 percent have not told another person about how to become a Christian in the previous six months.

While the nerves certainly play a factor in a Christian's willingness to invite their friends and family to your church

or tell them about Jesus, from Mott's perspective, it's well worth it.

"In the times I've done (*My Hope*), I've never had anyone turn me down to come over," she said. "I've had people decide not to accept Christ. But, I still have conversations with those same people. We are still talking some of those things out. So, I know the seed has been planted."

From her experience, Mott has these personal tips as you consider becoming a My Hope "Matthew" and hosting an event this November, when *My Hope with Billy Graham* culminates in living rooms across the U.S. and Canada:

- **Pray.** "Prayer is where this begins. You have to look around you and decide who the Holy Spirit is telling you to pray for."
- **Look for opportunities to further the relationships.** "I'm going to make sure I'm calling my friends, looking out for opportunities to hang out and be a part of each other's lives. When November comes around, it should not be a strange thing to be in my life and to be in my home. They will be more comfortable accepting that invitation."
- **Plan your event.** "During the night of the broadcast, you'll have your friends over. Make them as comfortable as possible. Maybe plan a meal, or just soda and popcorn."
- **Pray.** "Pray during the program. The message will be clear, but it's really the Holy Spirit moving through the house. He's the one who really changes hearts."
- **Prepare a 3-minute testimony.** "Give your testimony in about 3 minutes: 30 seconds on how your life was before Jesus; 30 seconds on how you recognized you need God; 60 seconds on the circumstances on how you received him; 30 seconds on the prayer that you prayed; and 30 seconds on how your life has been after you received Jesus. I know those are specific numbers, but otherwise you run the

risk of losing the person in the details.”

- **Look after your friends and family.** “For those who accept Christ, praise the Lord and ask them to return for a Bible study. For those who don’t, continue praying. Continue looking for opportunities to further your relationships with them. Make sure they know they are loved. Continue to be their friend and be there for them.”

For more information about how to get involved in My Hope with Billy Graham, [click here](#).