

How to initiate conversations

Many ways to initiate evangelistic conversations and share the gospel exist. In your own context, feel free to modify any of this as the Holy Spirit leads.

Always start in prayer, asking God to direct you to whom He wants you to tell a story. Here are a few ways you can start a conversation that leads to a story:

- “I’ve been learning some short stories from the Bible with my group at church; and, my homework is to tell a story to someone and get their feedback on the story. Would you be willing to help me out? I’d love to hear what you think about it.”
- “I’ve been getting people’s opinions on some stories about Jesus. Do you have two minutes to hear one and let me know what you think?”
- Connect it with their name. “Oh, I know a story from the Bible about a man/woman named _____. Can I share it with you?”

Ideally, we will be so intimately acquainted with Jesus and His Word that it just naturally flows out of us. This takes some time and a bit of practice. Be watching and listening for situations and themes that tie in with the stories.

Here are a few examples of how you could do this with people you know a little better:

- Your neighbor complains that his boss doesn’t keep his promises. “Man, that stinks. You know, that reminds me of a story I heard from the Bible. But in this one, God kept His promises to a guy named Abraham. Could I tell it to you?”
- A family member grew up in a tradition that taught a works-based salvation. “I just learned this story from the Bible where Jesus forgives a sinful woman. I’d love to share it with you and hear what you think. Do you have a few minutes?”

A few things to remember:

- People enjoy helping others out, especially on homework assignments.
- People like to give their opinions.
- Make sure you mention it’s a story from the Bible or a story about Jesus, especially if you don’t know the person’s spiritual background.
- Give them an expected time frame for the story.

- Be courteous to people who are working; they might not have time to listen to a story while they're on the clock.
- Not everyone wants to hear a story or talk about Jesus. You don't have to force it. And don't take it personally. If this is someone you've never met, just smile and say "Ok, have a great day." If it's someone you know, you can always try again another day.