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TIPS FOR SHARING YOUR FAITH

'Your story of grace is the miracle that will change lives.' [Michael Simpson]

1. **Start by praying, "God, use me."** This is a prayer of yielding, telling God that you will do what He wants you to do.
2. **Give people your full attention.** This technique alone is so unusual that just practicing a "free attention giveaway" will touch people. Jesus was so good at this. Often when approached, even when He was in a big crowd preaching or teaching, Jesus would stop and take time, face to face.
3. **Ask for permission to share.** To open the lines of communication we need permission, which is granted on the basis of trust and friendship. Canned presentations and forceful pronouncements are in danger of being completely tuned out. This is where relationships triumph.
4. **Share your own story.** Your own faith story works not only because it illustrates the change in your life, but also because it reassures people that they can experience that change, as well.
5. **Unfold your experiences, even the painful ones.** Like a wolf that creeps off to lick his wounds in the private darkness of his den, so do we hide our past wounds, mistakes, and regrets from our friends. But God can turn around our worst, most painful experiences and use them to help us reach out to others. Make yourself vulnerable.
6. **Avoid churchy language.** The object of sharing your faith is to find common ground with people you meet. Churchy or preachy language can frighten, intimidate, or even offend people who've had bad experiences with church or with Christians. Use everyday language.
7. **Keep it simple, but know when to go deeper.** Read the Gospels to see how Jesus handled encounters with seekers. Sometimes he asked a question, made an observation, or met a need.
8. **Cultivate humility.** Becoming humble sounds simple, but it is probably the most challenging item on this list. The easiest (and perhaps only) way to achieve humility is through denying self and serving others. Paul put it this way: "Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to every one, to win as many as possible" (1 Cor. 9:19).
9. **Recognize your uniqueness.** Whatever your particular personality or talents, God can use you to touch other people God will use your uniqueness: there is no such thing as "one size fits all" evangelism.
10. **Leave the outcome to God.** Your part is crucial, because each Christian who encounters a non-believer is like a link in a chain. "It's great to be the last link in the chain," says Bill Kraftson of Search Ministries, "but it's not more important than any other link. We just need to make sure we're not the missing link." So relax, know that you are responsible for just one link, and that it's God who forges the links into a chain that stretches to eternity.

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