

**General Topics ::**

- posted by carters (), on: 2012/2/22 14:52

Re: How does a Christian do "friendship evangelism" in the world? - posted by Lysa (), on: 2012/2/22 16:59

Quote:
-----carters wrote:
Deep down I guess I know that I am a people pleaser. But at the same time I have no problems going up street evangelism. Just "friendship" evangelism does my head in!

Thank you for being so honest but you need to know that showing yourself as friendly has nothing to do with being a people-pleaser. Do not take a book with you everywhere you go! That is a clue that you do not want anyone talking to you and they won't!

Smiling at someone is being friendly. Helping hold a door is being friendly (with a smile!) or picking up something someone drops is being friendly. A simple smile can break down a lot of barriers and encourage someone especially if they are having a really bad day. People can just love to be around you and you don't have to preach them, they just love your spirit.

FYI: You do not have to partake of their "sinful conversations" to be friendly either. Ask your heavenly Father to make you friendlier and He will! This is definitely something to pray about if you don't have any ability to be outgoing or friendly.

God bless you and I'll be praying for you!!
Lisa

Re: How does a Christian do "friendship evangelism" in the world? - posted by twayneb (), on: 2012/2/22 18:19

carters: Every one of us shares the fact that we are humans living in flesh and inhabiting this world. In that respect we have everything in common. We as believers are born again in spirit. We belong to another king and another kingdom. In that respect we have nothing in common. But we do have the love of Christ that flows from us. We know people who are not born again. We can have coffee, talk at work, talk at the grocery store, play a round of golf, etc. In the process we can enjoy fellowship around the things we have in common, our daily lives. But coupled with that is the love of Christ flowing out of us. I have noticed that the average lost man is very likely open to frank discussions about his life and God. As you establish relationship this openness only increases. So you can often allow God to lead you naturally into discussions of how God relates to life, and ultimately to their need for the Savior. There is no need to be quiet when the uncomfortable topics come up. Share in normal conversation your own perspective. Don't be offended by the topics. They are real life for these people. Be a light in the middle of them.

Let me give you a real life example. I was working as a state highway construction inspector last summer. I worked with a contractor's foreman who was extremely foul. Every third or fourth word from his mouth began with the letter "f"...literally! As we talked I endured the language but was frank and unabashed about telling him about my own life as a Christian. I did not preach at him, but I did share the gospel. One day I found his employees trying to console him as he wept. (Mind you these are stereotypical construction guys.) I found out his mom was very ill and about to die and he was a thousand miles from her. I asked frankly if he would like me to pray for him. He said yes and I was able to minister to the man. I did the same and shared the gospel with one of his workers whose wife was ill with cancer. Now there were no confessions made unto salvation at the time and I am not sure what has happened to either man. But I did share the gospel, prayed with them, and sowed seeds. I trust God will bring another to water.

The point is that it was a natural outflow of the love of God toward people. They received it pretty well. They were not friends of mine and my contact was limited and had to be somewhat professional, but I was still able to be used of God.

Just be a believer around them. Let God work through that.

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2012/2/22 21:27

hi, i wrote a long blog full of the visiol i despise and it vanished.. i think i forgot to press the button.thank God... i get angry with myself and others who think they are better than others who have not had the great grace of God given to them yet.we all need a redeemer,grace and mercy...we should have compassion on the vile and the most bass sinner for if you are guilty of one you are guilty of all.read how Jesus treated the sinner.read thestory of the good samaritan.who are we to deny friendship and love to another son of adam who needs to know that if it were not for Jesus and what He did on the cross for us that we all would be headed for an eternity in hell.jimp

- posted by carters (), on: 2012/2/24 18:26

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2012/2/25 2:20

hi, you can't make a mistake sharing the love of Jesus to people. the Holy Spirit is the One who woos and births them into the kingdom.just be yourself and talk to people (NOT AT THEM).tell them how God sent them to you and you feel that God wants you to share what He has done for you.

Re: How does a Christian do "friendship evangelism" in the world? - posted by Koheleth, on: 2012/2/25 4:39

How does a Christian do "friendship evangelism" in the world?

Simple answer. You don't. These words are not found in the New Testament, but more importantly the concept is not either. "Friendship evangelism" is a worldly concept that the devil uses to make the saints less effective.

The first question for yourself is: do you know Christ and are you committed to following him? If you are, then you must follow Jesus' methods. No matter what label you put on them, evangelism, discipleship, repentance, or some other term, we should all form relationships with others based on the model Jesus gave.

A wrong model, based on insincerity and deceit, is to pursue a friendship with someone simply to get close enough to them to at some point let them hear the gospel from us. Jesus didn't wait. His model was to offer people reconciliation to God, moral teachings, and eternal life from the outset.

The gospel of John offers excellent examples. From the first chapter, Jesus called his disciples to follow him and God. He didn't try to make friends with them first. Neither was Jesus worried about staying on the good side of Nicodemus. He wasn't afraid to rebuke him. Nor did Jesus try to be make friends with the woman at the well (other than being friendly during their first encounter). Instead, he headed directly for the essential topics. And in John chapter 6, Jesus was not worried about whether people liked him or not, nor whether they would stay around. Many ended up leaving.

I believe the thoughts you are having on "friendship evangelism" are the spirit leading you. You use words like superficial, trying to build, pulled into, fake, fraud, and people pleaser. These are all accurate and are precisely the reason that "friendship evangelism" should be entirely forsaken. You cannot find an example of it in the New Testament. Instead, you proclaim the message or conduct the ministry that God has given you, and you continue on with those who respond. It is from that point, from Christ, that relationships develop. Jesus did not make friends with his disciples. He called them and those who stayed became friends. We should do the same as he did.

Re: - posted by Lysa (), on: 2012/2/25 6:18

Quote:
-----Koheleth wrote:
You use words like superficial, trying to build, pulled into, fake, fraud, and people pleaser. These are all accurate and are precisely the reason that "friendship evangelism" should be entirely forsaken...
Jesus did not make friends with his disciples.

General Topics ::

And yet Jesus did in fact show Himself friendly! Because I'm quite sure He didn't lecture them or yell at them that they would all go to hell if they didn't follow Him.

There is no law in the Bible or anywhere that is against Christians showing: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and gentleness, self-control.

God bless,
Lisa

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2012/2/25 6:43

hi koheleth, you speak as a man with great authority who knows all about this subject but i would like to know how you witness to those around you. you are soooooo wrong. paul, while in greece was on the mount where all the gods were and paul said to them "see this unknown god you have here ,this is the God i came here to tell you about....so we should disregard all of what paul said or wrote for he used cunning and oh wisdom to preach Jesus?

Re: - posted by Koheleth, on: 2012/2/25 19:50

Quote:

Quote:
-----Koheleth wrote:
You use words like superficial, trying to build, pulled into, fake, fraud, and people pleaser. These are all accurate and are precisely the reason that "friendship evangelism" should be entirely forsaken...
Jesus did not make friends with his disciples.

And yet Jesus did in fact show Himself friendly! Because I'm quite sure He didn't lecture them or yell at them that they would all go to hell if they didn't follow Him.

There is no law in the Bible or anywhere that is against Christians showing: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and gentleness, self-control.

Of course we should be friendly, and I mentioned no contrary concepts in my post. Although Jesus never put friendship ahead of discipleship, I meant to imply, and perhaps left out, that we should follow Jesus' example and always be friendly. This means treating people with dignity, politeness, and respect. But it does not mean we need to make friends with them. When Jesus sent his disciples out, he told them to not greet anyone on the way. It may be a tangent, but it is related. Jesus and his disciples were never interested in social relationships (friendships). They were interested in the work of God and bringing people to God. Interestingly enough, this is often a good way to make friends, but friendship is never guaranteed. In following Christ, we are only guaranteed Christ.

Re: - posted by Koheleth, on: 2012/2/25 20:28

Quote:
-----hi koheleth, you speak as a man with great authority who knows all about this subject

I am not sure why you use the words "great authority", but I did try to just offer what I felt was the Scriptural and Christian perspective on the topic of the original post. I didn't wish to come across with anything else than that.

Quote:
-----but i would like to know how you witness to those around you

I am not sure exactly what you mean, but I try to follow the example of Jesus. I mentioned a few instances of Jesus relating to others in the Gospel of John, and I consider these my examples to follow.

Quote:

-----you are soooooo wrong

I don't mind being wrong, but you haven't pointed out a correction to anything I have said yet.

Quote:

-----so we should disregard all of what Paul said or wrote for he used cunning and oh wisdom to preach Jesus?

This discussion is neither about cunning nor wisdom. The relevant point is that Paul did not use "friendship evangelism" with those on Mars Hill. All of the apostles of the Lord followed his example. None of them used what we call "friendship evangelism". And yes, I do think we should both regard Paul's writings and use wisdom when speaking for Christ.

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2012/2/25 20:46

hi, be all things to all people so that you might win some... on Mars Hill, Paul established a common ground that he had with the Greeks. (the unknown god) to establish a rapport with them so that they would listen to him. Perfect example of friendship evangelism.

Re: - posted by Koheleth, on: 2012/2/25 21:34

Quote:

-----hi, be all things to all people so that you might win some... on Mars Hill, Paul established a common ground that he had with the Greeks. (the unknown god) to establish a rapport with them so that they would listen to him. Perfect example of friendship evangelism.

So, we need to define our terms. If Paul on Mars Hill or Jesus with the woman at the well is what you mean by "friendship evangelism", then I am all for it. I would agree, both are "perfect" examples, as you say.

However, I don't think a Mars Hill experience is what the original poster was describing, nor is it the usual definition that I hear for "friendship evangelism". I will speak here only from my own experience and what I read in the original post. "Friendship evangelism" refers to a strategy where a Christian invests time in making friends of people who at some point later they plan to share the gospel with. There are some very common results from this practice. First, Christians use up a lot of their time and energy doing something that is not in the New Testament and has nothing to do with Christ, since they put off speaking for him or about him until the relationship is "established". Second, it usually takes much longer to "establish" a relationship than is originally thought. Third, unbelievers can often detect the insincerity that is behind the "friendship". Fourth, many Christians end up being swayed in their walk with Christ by the unbelievers they spend so much time around, since they have decided not to speak of Christ. Fifth, since the focus has been friendship and not Christ, then after all of the work to establish a relationship, once Christ is mentioned, the relationship will usually begin to break down.

Although Christ never put friendship before discipleship, he was still a friend of all, including sinners and tax collectors. However, friend is used differently there than it is in the phrase "friendship evangelism". The Pharisees themselves describe Jesus' type of friendship: "This man receives sinners." We should do the same, while utterly rejecting friendship evangelism. I humbly suggest we do as jimp has said and follow Paul's example and stand up on our own Mars Hill and speak of God and Christ at the very first opportunity.

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2012/2/25 21:55

hi, i was a street evangelist (paid) in new orleans for years and saw so many people who were arrogant and haughty come through and turn the stomachs of the listeners. all i am saying is we need to use love and kindness in our time of witness. jimp

- posted by carters (), on: 2012/2/25 22:06

Re: This Post - posted by rbanks, on: 2012/2/25 22:14

Hi everyone,

I have enjoyed reading this thread!

I believe that "the Love of God" should be the primary if not the only motivation of evangelizing the lost.

Re: - posted by Solomon101, on: 2012/2/25 22:16

In the thread it has been stated;

THREAD STATED: "How does a Christian do "friendship evangelism" in the world?"

Simple answer. You don't. These words are not found in the New Testament, but more importantly the concept is not either. "Friendship evangelism" is a worldly concept that the devil uses to make the saints less effective."

I RESPOND: Interesting set of scriptures then. These certainly contain the words "friendship" with Jesus interaction with sinners. He is even known as "The Friend of sinners"

Luke 7:34 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.

Matthew 11:19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.

He obviously hung out with that crowd as several Biblical stories show. Many of his railings on the "self righteous folk" also make it clear who He preferred to hang out with when not alone teaching His disciples. What type of person were the sinners in His day drawn to in such a strong way He was known as their friend?

Re: How does a Christian do "friendship evangelism" in the world? - posted by Koheleth, on: 2012/2/26 7:11

Here is an article that discusses the topic, for those interested.

<http://www.covenantnews.com/deParrie040615.htm>

Re: - posted by Mikeydarev (), on: 2012/2/27 20:22

Hi there guys,

Well this thread is interesting indeed!

If by friendship evangelism we mean that people make friends with people, avoid sharing the gospel truths, get them to gospel truth evading services, and start being churchies, then I will also express my distaste to the disrespect and defiling of the word evangelism.

However, if by friendship evangelism we mean that we put ourselves in positions to relate to non-Christians, so we can not only share, but they can also see Christ's power demonstrated in our lives; then I'm all for it. The issue then comes down to actually opening our mouths to share.

I dropped a guy home after a Salsa dance lesson last night. As we exchanged our live schedules I told him about going i

nto prisons soon and got to touch on the gospel briefly with him. He likes surfing like I do, I've got his number, I've started a friendship, I've touched on the gospel, and when I meet with my boys on Sunday I'll ask that they pray for my relationship with him. That's friendship evangelism as I understand it. I as an evangelist working with a number of churches I aim to continue modelling and teaching this.

There are other things to consider. The book of Acts talked of how the apostles and early church "preached Jesus". This is much more than preaching God=Holy, you=vile sinner, Jesus=only way to heaven because he died for you vile scum - repent now.

I have shared the gospel with people ones in following categories; lost a family member and a breast to cancer, started life in our country as a refugee and very hate-filled towards a Christianity that has allowed colonialism, disillusionment with church. In all of these I have befriended these people even if it be in a short conversation to understand their point of view and present Christ in the midst of it. Building friendships allow people to express themselves and open the door to RELATE Christ and ALL he has done to people.

Some people here need to take a chill pill, or know a bit more of the joy and freedom of the Holy Spirit. Evangelism is very easy when you're empowered and chilled out with God's grace. I remember how tense I used to be with this stuff but God's spirit brings grace and freedom and joy!

God bless

Mike

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2012/2/27 22:13

Koheleth wrote:

"A wrong model, based on insincerity and deceit, is to pursue a friendship with someone simply to get close enough to them to at some point let them hear the gospel from us. Jesus didn't wait. His model was to offer people reconciliation to God, moral teachings, and eternal life from the outset."

Amen. Jesus went straight to the issues of eternity. We see the same with the prophets, the apostles and disciples. Yes, our Lord hung out with thieves and prostitutes but within the context of sharing/preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God.

And He did not just talk about the love of God. He did not shy away from preaching the reality of Judgment Day and hell and the need for repentance and faith in Him. It's all throughout the Gospels. Yet some would have us only mention the love of God and thus water down the message!

This quote from C.H. Spurgeon seems fitting here:

"Brethren, we must preach the coming of the Lord, and preach it somewhat more than we have done; because it is the driving power of the gospel. Too many have kept back these truths, and thus the bone has been taken out of the arm of the gospel. Its point has been broken; its edge has been blunted. The doctrine of judgment to come is the power by which men are to be aroused. There is another life; the Lord will come a second time; judgment will arrive; the wrath of God will be revealed. Where this is not preached, I am bold to say the gospel is not preached. It is absolutely necessary to the preaching of the gospel of Christ that men be warned as to what will happen if they continue in their sins. Ho, ho, sir surgeon, you are too delicate to tell the man that he is ill! You hope to heal the sick without their knowing it. You therefore flatter them; and what happens? They laugh at you; they dance upon their own graves. At last they die! Your delicacy is cruelty; your flatteries are poisons; you are a murderer. Shall we keep men in a fool's paradise? Shall we lull them into soft slumbers from which they will awake in hell? Are we to become helpers of their damnation by our smooth speeches? In the name of God we will not. It becomes every true minister of Christ to cry aloud and spare not, for God hath set a day in which he will "judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." As surely as Paul's gospel was true the judgment will come. Wherefore flee to Jesus this day, O sinners. O ye saints, come hide yourselves again beneath the crimson canopy of the atoning sacrifice, that you may be now ready to welcome your descending Lord and escort him to his judgment-seat. O my hearers, may God bless you, for Jesus' sake. Amen. ~ Charles Haddon Spurgeon (From A Sermon (No. 1849) Delivered on Lord's Day Morning, July 12th, 1885)

We really do need to get away from this "seeker friendly", "seeker sensitive" and "user friendly" way of doing things when it comes to evangelism. What we need is the same kind of boldness Jesus displayed in reaching out to people with the gospel. It only comes from the Holy Spirit as we ask, seek and knock.

General Topics ::

For those who have not listened to it, I would really recommend "Hell's Best Kept Secret" by Ray Comfort.

Blessings,
Oracio

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2012/2/28 0:02

Koheleth, just got done reading the article. Great read. Thanks for sharing.

Re: Mikeydarev - posted by Lysa (), on: 2012/2/28 6:30

Quote:
-----Mikeydarev wrote:
However, if by friendship evangelism we mean that we put ourselves in positions to relate to non-Christians, so we can not only share, but they can also see Christ's power demonstrated in our lives; then I'm all for it. The issue then comes down to actually opening our mouths to share.

Some people here need to take a chill pill, or know a bit more of the joy and freedom of the Holy Spirit. Evangelism is very easy when you're empowered and chilled out with God's grace. I remember how tense I used to be with this stuff but God's spirit brings grace and freedom and joy!

Amen, brother, well said! Friendship evangelism doesn't mean you MUST make friends with every unsaved person within your sphere of influence but it does mean that you show yourself friendly. I appreciated your testimony.

God bless,
Lisa

Re: - posted by Mikeydarev (), on: 2012/2/29 15:31

Hi again guys,

I agree with the statements that we should not compromise on preaching the return of Christ. Anyone who is familiar with how I operate could vouch for that.

Is there anyone out there with any more experiences they have where they have shared the gospel uncompromisingly in the context of a friendship or in the context of developing a friendship? I'd be interested to hear.

Cheers y'all

Mike

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2012/2/29 19:35

hi, i have shared this story before... i was working for the chaplain of bourbon st., bob harrington as a street evangelist in the quarter and the place next door was called the office lounge where judges and attorneys and such hung out. it was run by a mafia leg breaker and bar tender manager, lloyd. my nick name was wages (wages of sin is death) and i would visit and share three times a week. one day lloyd asked me to meet him across the street at tony's for breakfast. i did not get much sleep that night for it was impossible to read lloyd. at breakfast lloyd told me that he had watched me and listened to me and that he was raised by a christian mom. that day he wept and repented. he said he was going to leave n.o. and get out of the business and serve the Lord and gave me a tithe offering. within a month he was in jackson ms. in the roofing business serving the Lord. jimp

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2012/2/29 20:50

Anyone keen to share their experience in witnessing to Catholics and Mormons?

Striking up a friendship might not be difficult... but I struggle with being sensitive to Catholics/Mormons, yet not compromising on the gospel of Jesus Christ. Even with simple issues like whether to address Catholics as 'Christians', to pray together, etc.

And also to ensure that friendship with Mormons and Catholics conforms to the following verses set out in 2 John 1:9-11 :

"Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.

If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds."

On a slightly humorous note, I once said to a Catholic buddy of mine that our bibles were different - his had more books (re: the Old Testament apocrypha). To which he replied - "No, it is *your* bible which has less books!"

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2012/2/29 21:41

hi, i feel like i am saying too much here... i have seen hundreds of catholics saved and one sunday a whole convent of nuns were emerged in water at our church professing their faith in Christ. the jerusalem bible(catholic) has a great footnote in John. to know Him... this means to have a intimate personal relationship with Jesus and not just a head knowledge. the intimacy is like adam knew eve and produced a child...also if you know the apostles creed ...i believe in God the Father almighty and in Jesus Christ etc. has all the doctrine one needs to get saved if you stop after on the third day He rose from the dead and sits at the right hand of the Father...they pray this prayer ever mass and you can incorporate it in your witness. do not look for a problem or point out how dumb some of their doctrine is but look at the solution. Jesus

Re: - posted by yuehan, on: 2012/2/29 22:18

Thanks, jimp. If you feel like you're saying too much, you can instead choose to pray for my witness to them - in word and in deed =) I messed up badly during a conversation I had with Mormons yesterday btw, but I learnt what not to do through that episode.