

G.O.S.P.E.L. - 1 Peter 3:15
Pastor Burt Garwood – September 17, 2017

The first invite we make to our friend is one of belonging.

- People find a sense of belonging over shared interests, common background, similar stage of life, similar stories and common wounds.
- Belonging happens when we open our life to someone else and invite them in.

Belonging happens when we move from an entertainment mindset to a hospitality mindset.

- An entertainment mindset keeps you from inviting your friends into your life because everything in the house has to be clean and perfect and the meal has to be amazing. You bring them food from your kitchen. It's white glove service. We spend so much time and energy preparing to entertain.
- Hospitality is simpler and easier. "My house is your house. Help yourself to the refrigerator...you have refrigerator rights my friend."

God has put you where you live and where you work to bring people to Jesus. Your intentional presence and daily community with friends will win their hearts and open them up to hearing more about Jesus Christ.

- There will come a time when they open up to you about something they are struggling with: A tough day at work, a tough time in their marriage, problems with one of their kids, an illness or injury or car accident.
- These are the moments when we want to be ready to let them know we're praying for them. And to share how the Lord Jesus brought us through a tough time of our own.
- You tell them stories about where God has come through for you.
- You help them to see where God's story intersects with your story. And you help their story intersect with the cross of Christ as well.
- You have stories like this. But you may not have taken the time to mark those stories on the timeline of your life as major milestones where God has protected or healed or guided or strengthened you.
- Spend some time remembering the highlights and the low points of life. Rehearse those times where God has done something for you, so that you are ready to share your story when the timing is right.
- Talk about how God was there with you through those things. Talk about how God blessed you, rescued you, and protected you.
- Talk about how God took a difficult and painful situation and leveraged it for good. Talk about how God doesn't always prevent hardship, but that he redeems hardship and uses it for good

A great person to study in the Bible when it comes to embracing your story is Joseph. Even after all the horrible things Joseph's brothers did to him, by selling him into slavery in Egypt, Joseph realized that God leveraged the bad things and used them for good...he tells his brothers: "*You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.*" [Genesis 50:20]

There will come a time when you get to share Jesus with someone in a way that causes them to consider Jesus as an option in a way they hadn't before.

- "God created us to be with him. He created us in his image. Adam and Eve were perfect and sinless and holy. They lost that when they sinned in the garden of Eden. But God has been working to win humanity back ever since. You have God stuff in you. And it can be awakened by faith in Jesus."
- People want to talk about spiritual things. They don't realize it, but they were originally created by God to be spiritual when they were created in his image. READ: Ecclesiastes 3:11 and Romans 2:15.
- God has given us all an inner drive to know and be known by him. This is part of the God stuff inside of us that we talked about last week...a spiritual DNA that is restless inside of us until it discovers and reconnects with its Creator. St. Augustine in his Confessions said this, "Our heart is not quiet until it rests in You."

You have to be prepared to share. READ: 1 Peter 3:15

- Become a follower of Jesus who creates a low-risk, high-grace environment for your friends to pursue their need to have spiritual conversations. Create space in people's lives where they can talk about life and spiritual things and God stuff, and morals.
- And you do your best to LISTEN! We shoot ourselves in the foot way too often working too hard on our response to what others are saying. We're too worried about defending the faith. When we do this, we short-circuited their spiritual journey...their opportunity to process and wrestle with spiritual things and to have you as their trusted sounding board.
- It takes a lot of patience, a lot of biting your tongue, a lot prayer to learn to listen. And then to ask good questions that help your friend to process further what they are thinking and feeling about God.

Dare2Share: 2-6-2 Technique

Do you know for sure that you will go to heaven when you die?

If I could tell you in less than two minutes how you could know, would that be good news?

G - God created us to be with him. (Psalm 100:3)

O - Our sins separate us from God. (Isaiah 59:2)

S - Sins cannot be removed by good deeds. (Titus 3:5)

P - Paying the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again. (1 Cor 15:3-4)

E - Everyone who trusts in Jesus alone has eternal life. (John 6:47, John 14:6)

L - Life that's eternal means we will be with Jesus forever. (John 17:3)

Does this make sense?

Would you trust in Jesus as your only hope of going to heaven?