

Sharing Christ through Social Media

A 3-week pre-training series for youth groups

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Week 1 – Jesus: “Go and make disciples of all nations...”

What does the Bible say about sharing our faith?

Opener: (from the source4ym) Start by showing the video “Saving Me” by Nickelback (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVF_JOL0P1M) You may also want to print out a copy of the lyrics to hand out to your students.

Transition: The “Saving Me” video shows a man obsessed with saving someone’s life because his own life had been saved.

Discussion Questions:

- What would it feel like to be able to see how much time everyone had before they died?
- How would it change your every day life?
- Why do you think he felt so compelled to ‘save’ others?

Lesson:

When it comes to sharing your faith are you compelled to tell your friends? Do you sense the urgency to rescue them from hell?

Before we can venture out into the virtual world, the internet to share our faith using social media we must first understand what the bible says about sharing our faith. Let’s take a look at what Jesus said in Matthew 28:19-20.

*“Therefore **go and make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching them to obey everything I have commanded** you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Jesus right off tells us to GO. He’s not making a suggestion. He doesn’t say “I think you should go” or “maybe you should go.” No, he says GO! In other words you and I are to take action, to move. The guy in the video took action. He searched for someone to rescue.

If you’ve put your faith in Christ alone then you’ve been rescued. Rescued from an eternity in Hell, and shouldn’t that compel us to tell others about Jesus? Shouldn’t the fact that God loves us so much that he allowed his son to be murdered, die on the cross, so we can be rescued from our sins compel you to rescue someone?

Jude 1:23 says; Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment.

And what action are we to take? We're to make disciples and we are to teach them everything that God says, according to Matthew 28:19-20.

Let's look at one more verse to see what the bible says about sharing our faith.

1 Corinthians 9:16 – *“Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!”*

The guy in the video was compelled to save someone. In this verse Paul is telling us he's “compelled to preach” because woe (to curse yourself) to him if he doesn't. In other words it bothered Paul greatly if he didn't take a moment to tell someone the good news of Jesus Christ.

We're about to embark on a unique missions trip. It doesn't require a passport or medical records and we don't need a plane or bus. All we need is a computer, internet access and a social media website like Facebook or MySpace.

For the next several moments we're going start thinking about and praying for our online friends and asking God to give us a heart of passion so that we are compelled to share our faith. It's said that the average person has over fifty online friends (someone they don't see face to face). Imagine the impact our group can make if we each shared with over fifty people online.

Close in Prayer:

Have your students write down the names of five friends they have on their Facebook or MySpace they want to share the gospel with and use the remainder of your time to prayer for those names. You may want to have your students get into groups of two or three.

Week 2 – I Feel Like a Mute Sometimes

How to Share your Faith

Opener: Mute Organization ([from thesource4ym](#))

Simply announce that you want everyone lined up across the room by birth date. Only catch: no talking. Once they are all lined up, ask certain people their birthdays just to be sure. You can have them do the same thing, but by shoe size, height, etc.

Let me ask you a question; what kind of talker are you? I mean, there are some that love to talk and seem to be able to talk to anyone, anywhere. Then there are those who only talk to people they know; their friend and family.

And what about when it comes to telling other's about Jesus? For many of us no matter what kind of "talker" we are we have a tendency to become like the game we just played. We clam up and don't say anything.

Discussion Questions:

- What are some reasons we struggle to share our faith?
- Are you easily distracted from sharing your faith and what things distract us?
- Who do you know desperately needs to hear the gospel?

We just talked about some of the reasons why we don't share our faith as well some of the things that distract us from sharing our faith. Some of you even shared someone you know that desperately needs to hear the good news. But the big question many of you have right now is; "how do I share my faith with my friends?"

Well, before you and I can even speak one word we first need to pray. That's right, pray. We need ask God to give us the words to use when we share our faith. Paul saw the need to pray as he struggled with what to say.

Let's look at Ephesians 6:19; *"Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel."*

Second we need to be prepared to share our faith.

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." (1 Peter 3:15)

So how do we prepare to give an answer? Are you prepared to tell others what Jesus has done in your life? Maybe you stumble over your words or you change the subject when someone asks you difficult questions.

In preparation for our "Online Missions Trip" there are two keys we'll look at that will prepare us to share our faith.

The first key is God's Word. Why is it important for us to know God's Word?

God tells us; *"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."* – 2 Timothy 3:16

So when we're stumbling over our words and not sure what to say remember that every word in the Bible comes from God and is used to teach as well as equip us for the work of sharing our faith. In other words you and I can trust God's Words instead of our own. But we also need to make it a daily habit to spend time in God's Word.

"Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." – Joshua 1:8

Knowing and memorizing key verses that talk about: *who is Jesus?, why did He come?* and *what did He do for us?* will prepare you to give an answer.

The second key is knowing your style.

Some people are talkative and can use creative stories or even their own story to tell others about Jesus. Some people are bold and direct not having any fear of rejection. Others use their intelligence sharing the gospel with facts and an organized way. Yet others are more relational. They love to listen and ask a lot of questions, and they usually bring up Jesus in little bits during the conversation.

So how do you discover your style? Ask God. Pray.

"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him." – James 1:5

Second, go with how you feel. We talked about four different styles. Which one stood out in your mind and had you say; "yeah, that's me."

Discussion Questions:

- Divide into small groups of three or four and discuss which style you think best fits you and why. Then ask those in your group what they think your style may be.

Close in Prayer

Have your students take time to pray for the names on their list that they wrote down last week.

Other Resources:

- Dare2Share's: Field Guide to Sharing Your Faith

Week 3 – What if Jesus Had a Facebook?

Using Social Media to Share Your Faith

Opener: Start this lesson by showing your students the following video from YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-unvrgrZWc>

It's no secret that Obama's campaign and presidential election was won mostly by younger voters. Voters who spend hours online using social media websites like Facebook and Myspace. I mean who didn't get an invite to join one of the many Obama or MacCain support groups. Maybe you even received invites for "anti" Obama or MacCain groups. Whatever social media you use there was certainly no question as to who the candidates were as well as where they stood on political issues.

Discussion Questions:

- Do you think social media affected the presidential campaign? Why or why not?
- How often do you use social media to contact your friends about the latest events?
- Why do you use social media to contact your friends?

Now imagine for a moment if Jesus had a Facebook account. How many friend requests would he receive each day? Would we ignore his requests for the latest applications, causes, or green patches? And would we be excited every time he tags us in one of his photos? Tag me!

Let's face it. We all use or have used social media to contact new and old friends. We invite them to school events, parties, and youth group activities. On Facebook you can join thousands of groups and give to thousands of causes. And without ever leaving your home you can learn a lot about a person or even a group of people simply by paying close attention to someone's social media page.

Our culture is changing all the time and despite what some may think the gospel is relevant yesterday, today and tomorrow. Let's look at the follow verse.

*"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of **everyone** who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile."* – Romans 1:16

You and I need to share the gospel with confidence and assurance that God in His sovereignty will call others in spite of cultural differences because the gospel is powerful and is for everyone.

When Paul went to the people of Mars Hill he didn't have Facebook, MySpace or Twitter. He faced a culture that was different from his own and he had to rely on his surroundings and what was relevant at that time.

Read Acts 17:2-3

As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ," he said.

In the first part of Acts we see Paul clearly using scripture to reach the Jews (he reasoned with them from the Scriptures). But in order to reach the Greeks Paul had to resort to different tactic in order to present the gospel.

Read Acts 17:18-23

A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean." (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.

Paul saw something in the Athenian culture that he knew he could use to spark a conversation that would lead to sharing the gospel. As a matter of fact Paul ends up telling them the entire gospel story (Acts 17:24-32) As a result many become believers that day.

Discussion Questions:

- Using Paul's example; how would you explain to your friends the bible in a way that makes sense to them? (*I suggest using [Dare 2 Share s G.O.S.P.E.L.](#)*)
- What are some things on Facebook or MySpace that you can use to spark a spiritual conversation with your friends?
- What are some other tools you can use to share the gospel with your friends online?

Social media plays a big role in our culture today, but as you embark on your "Online Missions Trip" remember scripture is the most valuable tool available to you. As you reach your friends online here are some awesome online bible tools you can use to quickly look up verses based on topic or keyword search.

www.biblegateway.com | www.youversion.com

Also don't forget to use some of the links available on www.onlinemissionstrip.com found under the "Pre-trip Training" link.