



EquipForum

Evangelism



*"The gospel
is only good
news if it
gets there in
time."*

Carl F.H. Henry

Welcome

Thank you for coming to our Equip Forum! One of the most critical marks of a growing, healthy church is the visible ownership of the mission of God by every member. One where every believer begins to embrace the calling and the power God has given them. When that happens, the church becomes a movement of the Holy Spirit, marked by courageous steps of faith that brings the redeeming power of Christ to every area of its community.

Our equip forums are designed to prepare you for your role in God's mission. I hope you leave this forum encouraged by God's presence and power that is walking with you today, and feel a little more prepared to take your next courageous step of faith for his glory.

Pastor Spence Shelton

***MY
STORY
-
GOD'S
STORY***

Mercy Church is passionate about seeing a gospel awakening in the city of Charlotte that will carry to the ends of the earth. In order for this to become a reality, the people of Mercy Church will need to live unapologetically Christian lives at home, in their jobs, neighborhoods, and all other spheres of influence. We must be people who are ready to share the gospel at any moment. 2 Corinthians 5 tells us that God has given and entrusted to all Christians the ministry of reconciliation. This means that God has chosen Spirit-filled people to be the vehicle through which He does His best work. Salvation only happens when people share the gospel (Rom. 10:14). If people are the mission, we must be ready to take the gospel to them.

When it comes to sharing the gospel, there are many models that people use. Some use the bridge diagram, three circles, romans road, etc. All of these are good models, and countless people have been saved through each one. We want to use a model that is easy and memorable, without losing any gospel power. We want people to feel the freedom of being able to share the gospel in a conversational way.

In light of this, we have come up with a model called *My Story – God’s Story*. This simple model will teach you how to share the gospel by first telling your story and then telling God’s story - the story of the gospel. Anyone can remember their story, and every Christian knows the gospel. Why not combine two things that we know really well into a model for sharing the gospel? This is what we have done with the *My Story – God’s Story*, model.

MY STORY

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope you have.” 1 Peter 3:15

Why share your testimony?

One of the most effective tools you have for sharing your faith is your testimony – the story of how Jesus Christ transformed your life.

Each individual testimony is a relevant and real experience from their life and it's unique to them. Everyone has a different story to tell of God's saving grace.

How to share your testimony

You are simply telling the story of your life before you were saved, how you came to know and follow Jesus, and how your life was changed.

When the Apostle Paul stood before King Agrippa (Acts 26), he spoke very simply, logically, and clearly about his life before salvation, how he came to Christ, and how his life was changed. Instead of diving in to every gross detail about his former life, Paul made Jesus the hero of his conversion.

OUTLINE FOR A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

- My life before Christ
- How I received Christ
- How Christ has changed my life

Good Testimony	Bad Testimony
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focuses on Christ, not on you• Rooted in Scripture• Clearly communicates the gospel's effect in your life• Brief (1-2 minutes)• Incorporates all elements of the gospel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Makes you the hero• Brags about how 'bad' you used to be• Uses big 'Christian' words• Focuses too much on your story, forgets the gospel

After sharing your testimony

After sharing your testimony ask, "Has anything like this ever happened to you?" Then simply continue the conversation.

LET'S PRACTICE

Write down your testimony. Remember, your testimony should be 1-2 minutes long.

My life before Christ –

How I received Christ –

How Christ has changed my life –

GOD'S STORY

Creation → Fall → Rescue → New Creation

Creation

God created the world and everything in it. He is loving and holy. He created people to live in a perfect relationship with him (Gen. 1:1).

Fall

Man disobeyed God. Sin entered the world, and, like a virus, it has infected every person separating us from God. Everything in our world is now broken, and everyone is guilty before God (Gen. 3; Rom. 3:19).

Rescue

God sent his perfect son, Jesus, to rescue us by his death and resurrection. If we turn from our sins and believe in Jesus' work on our behalf, we can have our sins forgiven and can enjoy eternal life (Luk. 19:10).

New Creation

One day, Jesus will return and make all things new. He will make all sad things untrue. We will be with Jesus in the new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21; 1,3-4).

"If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our bodies. If they will perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees. Let no one go there unwarned and unprayed for."

Charles Spurgeon

THE ART OF SHARING

I. Who do I share with?

Not all of us have the gift of evangelism, but we're all called to do the work of an evangelist. If they have a heartbeat, you should be sharing with them!

Question: Is it better to share with random people or with people we already have relationships with?

Answer: We should be sharing the gospel broadly *and* through personal relationships.

II. How do I build relationships so that I can share the gospel?

Some of us have been Christians for so long that we have forgotten how to make friends!

- 1. Just start a conversation.** Talk about whatever seems natural.
- 2. Find commonality.** Do you have any similar interests?
- 3. Be a good friend.** Model vulnerability. Be the first one to get personal.
- 4. Find a bridge to the gospel.** Listen for an opening and pounce on it!

Don't hit the point of no return!

III. What do I do if they ask hard questions?

Examples:

Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people? God is homophobic. I don't trust the Bible. Christians are hypocrites.

1. Ask them if that is their biggest obstacle to surrendering to Christ. Would they commit to surrendering to Jesus if their question was answered?
2. Know that many people's objections are smoke screens.
3. Some objections come from a place of pain.

It's okay to punt the question for later. If you don't know the answer, go home and study. Make it the last time you don't know the answer to that question.

"I'm all for lifestyle evangelism, but I'm also in favor of intentionality, where we seek out opportunities for spiritual conversations and are equipped to explain the gospel and why we believe it."

Lee Strobel

IV. How do I make a normal conversation a spiritual conversation?

One of the hardest things to do is steering a conversation into sharing the gospel.

Realities:

1. Sharing the gospel is always awkward. We need to get over this by realizing that it will always be this way. After sharing enough, we get comfortable with being uncomfortable.
2. Just dive in! We assume that people are going to think the worst of us. But that's not typically true! We can simply say: "So, did you grow up in church" or "Are you religious?"
3. Use what they say to build a bridge to spiritual things.
Example: "I'm having a hard time with my kids."
Response: "I totally understand that. I have to continually remind myself that I need to trust God with my kids. Are you religious?"

"Every Christian is a missionary or an imposter."

Charles Spurgeon

1,000 GOSPEL CONVERSATIONS

We want to see people saved. We want to see God do something historic in our midst. We want to be a part of something larger than ourselves. If we want to see a movement of God, we must be a people that risks it all to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

We want to challenge the members of Mercy Church to have 1,000 gospel conversations this year. We want to track it and hear about your steps of faith, so after you share, make your way to

MERCYCHARLOTTE.COM/SHARE

and let us know about your conversation!

Let's share the gospel!

#1000conversations

