

COMMON WITNESSING MYTHS

THE LIES THAT KEEP US FROM SHARING OUR FAITH

How do you feel about sharing the gospel face to face with your peers? Are you afraid? If you are, that's a very normal reaction. Most people feel nervous, anxious, and fearful when they begin witnessing. However, at the core of those emotions are often lies that we believe. The devil does not want us sharing the gospel with others. So he will try to stop us from sharing the Good News at any cost, even by lying to us about witnessing to keep us paralyzed in

fear. Ultimately, those deep-rooted lies hinder us from stepping out in boldness and urgency to share Christ with those around us.

It's time we start believing truth so that we no longer live in fear of these myths that have become engrained in our culture and lives. This training will reveal some common lies and myths that you and your club members may believe, and it will show you the real truth about witnessing for Christ.

MYTH ONE

THEY'VE PROBABLY HEARD THE GOSPEL ALREADY.

Truth: Some people may have heard bits and pieces about the gospel and some have been introduced to it, but most cannot clearly explain it. Let's not gamble someone's eternal destiny on the assumption that they already know everything when they may not.

Truth: Most people encounter the gospel several times before making a decision to receive Christ. You have the opportunity to bring them one step closer to salvation.

"FOR HERE THE SAYING HOLDS TRUE, ONE SOWS AND ANOTHER REAPS. I SENT YOU TO REAP THAT FOR WHICH YOU DID NOT LABOR. OTHERS HAVE LABORED, AND YOU HAVE ENTERED INTO THEIR LABOR" (JOHN 4:37-38).

MYTH TWO

PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT GOD.

Truth: God has made us so that we are restless until we find rest in Him.¹ Nothing else that the world offers satisfies (Isa. 55:1-6). Why do we so often assume people do not want to hear about the only source of living water, about the most compelling man of all of human history? Statistics show that eight out of ten people will come to church if they are simply asked.²

This means that people are open to God and Christianity—they just need to be invited!

Truth: People have questions and often don't know who to talk to about them. Most people are respectful and open to having a conversation about God if they are given the opportunity.

MYTH THREE

THIS PERSON WILL NEVER GET SAVED.

Truth: Think of all the people in the Bible who would never have been saved if they had been written off like this: the city of Nineveh, Nebuchadnezzar, a demon possessed man (Mark 5:1-20), a woman who had sinned greatly (Luke 7:36-50), the Apostle Paul who persecuted Christians. No one is beyond God's power and reach.

"The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost" (1 Tim. 1:15).

Truth: Remember we cannot save people—that is God's job, but we can be used by God to share in His work for the Kingdom!

MYTH FOUR

I MIGHT NOT KNOW THE ANSWERS TO THEIR QUESTIONS.

Truth: If you don't know the answer to a question, it's OK! In fact, your willingness to say "I don't know" demonstrates humility and may help defeat stereotypes they have about Christians. Just tell them you'll research the question and get back to them. Meanwhile, use your fear in this area to push you to learn more and really know how to articulate what you believe.

¹Saint Augustine of Hippo. *Confessions*. Book I. trans. Edward Pusey. Web. 4 Sept 2013. <www.sacredtexts.com/chr/augconf/aug01.htm>.

²Thom Rainer. *The Unchurched Next Door*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003).

“Always [be] prepared to make a defense to anyone who ask you for a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Pet. 3:15).

Truth: Just because you don’t know everything, doesn’t mean you don’t know anything. For conversations with most non-believers, you probably know more than you think.

“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).

“Do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you” (Matt. 10:19-20).

MYTH FIVE

I DON’T KNOW HOW TO BRING UP THE SUBJECT OF JESUS.

Truth: Sharing Jesus is really quite simple. Jesus is someone we love, so tell people about Him like you would about your family, friend, boyfriend or girlfriend. Talk about Him so others will want to get to know Him. To start a conversation, talk about your church, something you read in Scripture, something God is showing you, etc.

*“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. **And they recognized that they had been with Jesus**” (Acts 4:13).*

MYTH SIX

WITNESSING IS IMPERSONAL AND PEOPLE WILL BE OFFENDED.

Truth: Witnessing is simply having a personal conversation with someone because you care about them. Whether you know them or not, because of Christ, you love them and have compassion for them. Witnessing is only impersonal if you make it impersonal.

Truth: When you are filled with the Holy Spirit and are motivated by a heartfelt love for the souls of men and women, the people you share with will know you care about them. If you ask the Lord to help you boldly and graciously speak the truth in love, He will answer your prayer.

Despite our best efforts to share graciously, some people will always be offended by the message of the gospel. Let's ask God to help us so that if people are offended, it will only be because of the message and not the messenger. Then let's trust Him and leave the results to Him.



Application

- 1 After reading about the myths above, which myths have you believed?
- 2 Which truths will you remember to help counter myths that have kept you from talking about Christ?
- 3 Ask the Lord to give you a spirit "of power and love" (2 Tim. 1:7) and to "take every thought captive to obey Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5).



Hear it from

CRAIG HAZEN

CRAIG HAZEN IS THE FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR OF THE M.A. PROGRAM IN CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS, THE DIRECTOR OF THE M.A. PROGRAM IN SCIENCE AND RELIGION, AND A PROFESSOR OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION AND APOLOGETICS AT BIOLA UNIVERSITY

“I grew up in a non-Christian home with my only church contact being occasional attendance at a liberal Episcopal congregation. The issue that haunted me most even as a child was that there appeared to be no ultimate meaning to life. Although Christianity was intriguing, there were significant intellectual roadblocks I wrestled with even as a student in high school.

From my perspective, Christian faith did not square with what we knew about the real history of the Bible and certainly not with Darwinism.

Some of the intellectual roadblocks were softened, however, when I saw a compelling Christian life lived in front of me five days a week in high school chemistry class. This teacher reflected the love and grace

of Christ and, most attractive to me, appeared to **approach life with a purpose and meaning to which I did not have access.**

Because of the softening effect of this teacher, when I heard the gospel preached at a local church, I responded to the clear urging of the Holy Spirit and went forward at an altar call. Soon thereafter, with the guidance of some knowledgeable Christians, the factual issues that held me back were answered and my mind and heart were satisfied with the truth of the gospel.

I have recently celebrated my thirtieth year in the faith and look forward to continued growth in Christ for many more.”

Craig Hazen considered himself a staunch atheist before coming to Christ, showing us that God can reach anyone. Since then, Craig Hazen has trained tens of thousands of believers to defend their faith.