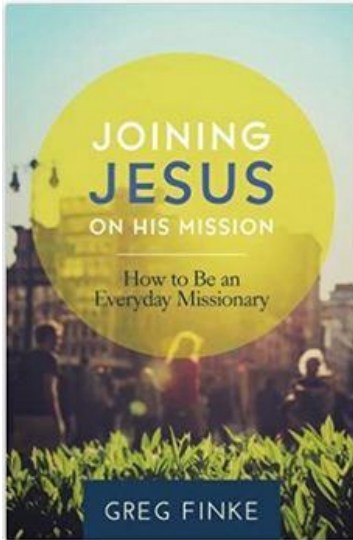


Getting Into the Conversation

The Gospel in Unexpected Places

Sometimes we feel awkward about sharing our faith with strangers. We don't want to impose on others, especially if we don't know if they are open to discussing their faith or even have one at all. Some people resist Christianity as they seek to live their lives as they choose. So, our temptation is to stay silent and keep our faith to ourselves. It is safer that way, we think.



I recently received an email from a friend. This friend is a person who “thinks out of the box” but in a great way. He seeks ways to share his faith, finding ways to bring Christ into the conversation or into everyday events in his life. In his email, he said that his Sunday School group is discussing this very topic. Here’s what he said:

A couple of things we’ve mentioned regarding everyday non-intrusive outreach:

Lov’d clothing, such as veterans caps, for instance. People wear clothes that make statements because they want recognition or have a story to tell. Those brief conversations in the grocery store provide good inroads to work Jesus into a conversation.

Body art; again, people are relaying a message. When questioning people about their art, it often leads to them telling you pieces of their life, people loved and lost, etc.,

Praying for/with servers in restaurants. Usually, a line like this works: ‘We are about to say a blessing for our food. What’s something going on in your life we can pray for?’ Usually, they’re appreciative. They always take notice.

Planting a seed with a stranger may be a catalyst for them to grow in the faith. It may be the first time they have considered God caring about them in a long time. It gives them a clear message that people of faith care about them. Who knows where it may lead, but any direction with God in the conversation is good.

When a person sneezes, the typical thing to do is say, “God bless you.” That is such a common thing to say; it probably isn’t even considered a Christian statement. But you can make it a Christian statement with a simple comment, “God really does bless you.” If they react favorably, it opens the door. In any event, it makes the conversation possible.

We also have powerful opportunities with people we know. Perhaps seeking sympathy, understanding, or support, people often tell those they trust about issues they are facing. They are struggling and want some support from someone else. This is an excellent opportunity to listen and show you care. It is also an opportunity to ask if you can pray for them. You will likely receive an enthusiastic “yes.” Rarely do they say “no.” The door is now open for an invitation to discuss their issues, reassuring them God cares for them and He will be with them during good times and bad.

God has placed you exactly where He needs you to be. God hopes you recognize the opportunity to connect with Him and be there for others. It may be the time of need for someone. One gentle interaction may propel them to faith. One comment can open the door and crack. Then, once the door is open a crack:

- Talk with someone.
- Find out who they are,
- where they're from,
- what their story is,
- and what matters to them.

Here is a frightening statistic. 53% of Americans have no one (outside their immediate family) with whom they can discuss important matters. A line in a song reads, "People who need people are the luckiest people in the world." They are lucky if God places them in proximity to someone who cares. That could be you. But the door never opens unless you make the first move. It's not luck – but God's plan all along.

It is not a daunting task. Talking with people *is less* about talking and more about listening. If you consider yourself an introvert, that is all the better. Introverts are better at listening because they are not focused on what they are going to say. When you listen, that gives you clues about the needs of the other person.

It all starts with your simple statement that opens the door to an interaction. If they do not want to engage, they will ignore your comment, and nothing is lost. But if they are open to a spiritual interaction, you will immediately know it.

You are doing this for God. It has been said, "Jesus can do more with two people talking to each other than with two people going their separate ways." What we do is not mighty works but planting and nurturing seeds. Then, let God do the rest.

We are not trying to save the world. We are bringing the Gospel in unexpected places. We are putting the God of our everyday world into the everyday world of someone else. It could be lifechanging.

To be clear, you don't need all the answers. You just need to know God. You are opening a door that may lead others to walk in the presence of Jesus.

The Bible Says: *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world (Romans 1:8).*

Question: *Where do you see opportunities to plant seeds in others?*

Prayer: Lord, be with me today as I seek ways to plant the seeds of faith in others. Amen.

Some of the concepts in this devotion are based on [Joining Jesus on His Mission](#), by Greg Finke.