

How to Talk About Jesus—Without the Angst

If there was a guilt meter in the average church, it would spike whenever the pastor raised one of these topics:

- Giving
- Helping in the nursery
- Sharing our faith



Some things we know we *should* do, but we don't. For example, no one would disagree that talking about Jesus is important, but we get anxious or nervous when we think about actually doing it. We don't want to come across as that overbearing, obnoxious car salesman with the fake smile.

Wouldn't it be nice if there was a corner you could just stand on and people would come to you to talk about Jesus?

I found such a corner. Several years ago, I had the opportunity to go to China. College students in China want to know English because it's good for their careers, so near one of the universities in Chengdu, the students would meet on Fridays to converse with each other in English. They call it the English corner.



Imagine their enthusiasm when a couple of Americans showed up on Friday night. We were native speakers! My friend and I separated, and we were both flooded with questions by students who wanted to practice English. Their questions were all about America and American culture. Inevitably, every student—*every* student—turned the conversation to Jesus. They equated Christianity with American culture, and they wanted to learn about my faith. I just answered questions and talked about Jesus. In communist China.

Wouldn't it be nice if we had corners like that right here in America?

We do. They're just not as obvious.

We're surrounded by people who hurt. People with questions. People who are looking for something to fill that empty spot in their lives. They're in the hallways where we work. They're in our fitness groups. They're on either side of us at a kids soccer game. They're, well, everywhere.

These are momentary intersections that could morph into a changed life. Here's how to do it without getting stressed:

1. Pray. Ask God to show you how you point to Him in a conversation. Not every conversation you have may lead to the gospel. That's OK. Don't feel guilty. Just ask God to make it abundantly clear when a door of opportunity is swinging open. And if you don't see it swing open, don't worry about it.

2. Have a normal conversation. That's right, a *normal* conversation about life, sports, family, who has the best French fries, whatever. Somewhere along the way, a problem with a child, a health concern with a family member, or an issue at work will pop up. Just offer this:

Would it be OK if, when I pray, I include that in my prayers?

A door has been opened. You've pointed to your dependence on Christ without preaching. From that point, the conversation can quite possibly go into deeper conversations about faith, who Jesus is, and who He is in your life.

If this is someone you see frequently, keep the conversation going. Without pushing, periodically ask how things are going. Let them know of your continued prayer. Offer support. Maybe invite them to your church or Bible study group.

LifeWay Research shows that people are willing to hear about your faith, provided it is a conversation and not simply a lecture. So let's find those English corners. Those intersections. Those unplanned encounters. And let's just have a conversation.

"Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person." (Col. 4:6).

It just starts with a conversation.