

*Sharing the Gospel:
Easy as 1-2-3-4-5!*



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Sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ is as easy as 1-2-3-4-5!

1. There is one necessity for sharing the Gospel

- The Holy Spirit
 - Acts 1:8
 - “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”
 - *If you believe in Jesus, you have the Holy Spirit within you, and He will empower you to be witnesses for Christ. You cannot engage in this task in your own strength. The salvation of the lost will not come as a result of our tactics and methodologies. We depend upon the power of the Holy Spirit!*

2. We want to tell two stories.

- Your story
 - Let’s get this straight: “your story” is not the gospel. What we will often find as we tell “our story,” is that the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Muslim, even the atheist, has their own “story” to tell. “Our story” is not the gospel, but it is the story of how our lives have been transformed by the gospel. So, it’s power is to connect with the raw emotions and experiences of the other person and to provoke a “thirst” within them for the Living Water of Christ.

- Jesus' story
 - Jesus' story is the gospel. The good news is who He is and what He has done. So, we really only want to tell one story: HIS. But sometimes in order to get to His story, it might help to tell our story.

3. Your story has three parts.

- What life was like before Christ
 - Often we can start by saying something like this: "I'd like to tell you a little bit about myself to help you get to know me better." Or, you can ask the other person to tell you about their story first. Asking questions is always great! Or, the conversation may just "open up" to you launching into your story without any segue.
 - When you share about your life before Christ, you don't have to recount all the vivid details of your sinful activities. You may feel the need to in certain situations. One key here is to speak more about feelings, thoughts, emotions, etc; things that are universal in human experience.
 - Loneliness, emptiness, fear, hopelessness, unloved, confusion, bitterness, hatred, carelessness, selfishness, etc.
 - Example: Bitterness is a key to my experiences before Christ. Experiences I went through as a young child made me bitter and filled with hate and rage. That bitterness began to drive my attitude and actions. Much of what I did as a young

person was fueled by my desire to “get back at” the people who I felt had wronged me, like my parents, other family members, friends who had betrayed me, teachers, coaches, etc.

- Sometimes, there is not “just one” feeling or emotion involved. You might pick and choose what elements of your life before Christ to share based on the context of the conversation.
 - You also don’t need to “camp out” long here. Just long enough to paint the picture. There are many more, and much better, things we want to make sure we get to share.
- How I met Christ
 - How did it happen? Try to get down to the personal, one-on-one elements of it. Someone shared Jesus with you and helped you come to know Him.
 - Example: I met some friends that I really enjoyed being around. They seemed so much happier than I was, and it made me feel better to be around them. In time I discovered that they were Christians. They began to share with me what it meant to be a follower of Jesus. I started going to church with them, and attended a camp with them. They even gave me a Bible to read, and as I read it, God began to show me in my heart that the things that my friends had experienced and shared with me were real and that I needed to know Him. I went to one of those Christian

friends to talk about the decision I needed to make, and he helped me understand more and to make the decision to trust in Jesus.

- What life has been like since I met Christ.
 - This should connect with what it was like before. You've identified a need that was present in your life before you knew Christ. Now, you want to share how Christ has met that need. Remember that the gospel is not about making bad people good. It is about making dead people live. Show how the abundant life Christ came to give you (John 10:10) is working out in your life.
 - Example: As I came to understand how God had forgiven my sins in Jesus, I was able to forgive others who I felt had wronged me, and I was able to go to them and ask for their forgiveness, and all that bitterness was gone. Because I understand how wonderful it is to be forgiven by God, I don't have to be that bitter person I used to be. I want to be quick to forgive others, and I want to be forgiven by God and others when I have done wrong to them.

4. Jesus' story has four parts.

- God
 - God is loving
 - Exodus 34:6-7a
 - “The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness

for thousands, who forgives iniquity,
transgression and sin.”

- God is holy
 - Exodus 34:7b
 - “yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.”
- *God is loving and desires to have a personal relationship with us; but because He is holy, He must punish sin.*
- Man
 - Created in God’s image, and therefore of precious worth to God
 - Genesis 1:27
 - “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”
 - Corrupted by sin
 - Genesis 6:5
 - “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”
 - Romans 3:23
 - “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”
 - Separated from God
 - Isaiah 59:2
 - “Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God,

and your sins have hidden His face
from you so that He does not hear.”

- Incapable of making himself right with God
 - Romans 3:10-12
 - “There is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; All have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one.”
- Jesus Christ
 - Who is He?
 - He is the God-Man.
 - John 1:1, 14
 - “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”
 - Colossians 2:9
 - “In Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.”
 - What did He do?
 - He lived a sinless life of perfect righteousness.
 - 1 John 3:5
 - “In Him is no sin.”
 - 2 Corinthians 5:21

- He “knew no sin.”
- Hebrews 7:26
 - He is “holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners.”
- He died for our sins.
 - 1 Peter 3:18
 - “For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God”
 - Romans 5:8
 - “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
 - 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - “He (God the Father) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”
- He rose from the dead.
 - 1 Corinthians 15:3-4
 - “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”

- Romans 1:4
 - He was “declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.”
- Response
 - Faith
 - Acts 16:30-31
 - “What must I do to be saved?” They said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.”
 - Romans 10:9-13
 - “If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, ‘Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.’ For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for ‘Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.’”
 - *Faith is trusting in Jesus Christ alone to save you from sin and reconcile you to God.*
 - Repentance
 - *Turning to Christ means also turning away from the sinful life we have been living.*

- Mark 1:15
 - “Repent and believe in the Gospel.”
 - Acts 2:38
 - “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
 - *Baptism is an expression of our faith in Him.*
 - Acts 3:19
 - “Therefore, repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away.”
 - Acts 17:30
 - “God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent.”
 - Acts 26:20
 - “They should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.”
- *So, we see that the dilemma of how we sinful people can stand before a holy God who loves us but has promised to not leave the guilty unpunished is resolved in Jesus Christ. Through Him we can have the forgiveness of sins and the abundant and eternal life that God desires to give us by His grace. We cannot do anything to earn it. It is a free gift from God that we must receive by faith as we turn from our sins in repentance.*
 - Ephesians 2:8-9
 - “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift

of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

- Upon sharing your story and Jesus’ story, it may be appropriate to ask:
 - Do you understand God’s message of Good News in Jesus Christ?
 - Is there any reason why you would not want to receive the gift of eternal life that God has promised you in Jesus?
 - If the individual understands and is ready to turn to Christ, you can lead him or her in a brief simple prayer, assuring them that it is not the words that are said, but the true condition of their hearts as they turn to Christ by faith to receive Him.
 - *“Almighty God, I confess that I am a sinner. I believe that Jesus died for my sins and rose from the dead to save me. I turn from my sins and trust in Him, and receive Him as Savior and Lord of my life. Thank you for saving me, in Jesus’ name. Amen.”*
 - If the individual receives Christ, it is of the utmost importance to discuss the five steps of following through.

5. Five steps of follow-through:

- Become a part of a local church through baptism.
 - Baptism is the first step of obedience, and a visible testimony, for a new follower of Jesus. As a member of a local church, you will be able to build friendships with other Christians who can help you as you live your new life in Christ. We are part of God's family; He is our Father and other Christians are brothers and sisters to each other.
 - Matthew 28:19-20; Hebrews 10:23-25
- Learn to pray.
 - Prayer is as simple as talking to God about the things that are on your heart.
 - ACTS: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication
 - Philippians 4:6-7
- Study the Bible.
 - The Bible is God's Word to guide us through life as we live for Christ. Make sure the church you attend is one that preaches and teaches the Bible and helps you understand it, and learn how to study it on your own.
 - 2 Timothy 3:14-17
- Tell your story and Jesus' story.
 - Just as someone did with me, and just as I have with you, now God has commissioned you to tell the story of Jesus and of what He has done for you with others.
 - Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:18-20

- Live in obedience to God's Word
 - The Holy Spirit now lives within you and He will empower you to live in obedience to God's commands. His commands are summarized in two important statements: Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength; and love your neighbor as yourself.
 - Matthew 22:36-40; John 14:15

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About the Author

Russ Reaves has served as Pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Greensboro, North Carolina since September, 2005. He and his wife Donia have two children. Pastor Russ holds the Master of Divinity degree with a dual concentration in Christian Apologetics and Biblical Languages from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. In addition, he also has studied at Lancaster Bible College and Graduate School, Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute, and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He was licensed into the ministry by United Baptist Church of Winston-Salem in 1995 and ordained by Calvary Baptist Church of Winston-Salem in 1998. Prior to serving at Immanuel, Russ was the Pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church in Kernersville and Conowingo Baptist Church of Conowingo, Maryland. He has also taught courses in Evangelism, Church Administration, Church Planting, Pastoral Ministry, New Testament, Old Testament, Christian Apologetics, World Religions, Biblical Hermeneutics and Biblical Preaching at two Bible Colleges and the Seminary Extension program of the Southern Baptist Convention. Pastor Russ has traveled extensively as a volunteer missionary in Africa and Eastern Europe. He also serves as a volunteer chaplain with Hockey Ministries International.

Established in 1946, Immanuel Baptist Church is known as “A Church for All People.” Information about the church can be found online at www.ibcgso.org or by contacting the church at ibc@ibcgso.org or (336)299-1751.

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