



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

Know God / Week 3

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

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BOTTOM LINE

You don't have to know everything to share something.

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students understand that sharing their faith is simply about sharing their own personal experiences.

SCRIPTURE

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15b NIV).

CONTEXT OF SCRIPTURE

In 1 Peter 3, Peter talks about the way we treat and interact with the people around us. In this verse (and in the

surrounding verses), Peter is specifically referring to how we interact with those who disagree with us and may wish to cause us harm. In that moment, Peter writes that we should be prepared to give answer for the hope that *you* have. Finally, Peter reminds us to be gentle and respectful. When our faith is challenged—especially by those who want to harm or do damage to us—we need to keep our cool.

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

In this series, we've been talking about habits, practices, and skills that can put you in a position to know God better.

When you want to get better at something, you need to develop some solid habits.

People you know who understand the Bible really well, or who seem to really connect with God in prayer, are people who have made it a priority to put in time and grow in these areas.

And just like you get to know people better when you talk to them and listen to them, you get to know God better through reading His Word and praying.

And today we're going to talk about *talking about it*.

TENSION

If I were to try and persuasively talk about what I believe, or if I were to vocally stand up for my faith, I'd be super-nervous!

Chances are, you have questions I haven't even thought of. Some questions are easy to answer, and some are complicated.

I want to bring it down to one simple word: Reason.

TRUTH

Whether we realize it or not, when we do things, believe things, or accept things, all of us have a reason behind it.

For us to be able to talk about our faith, knowing our reason is crucial.



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TEACHING OUTLINE

In the book *First Peter*, Peter, the guy who wrote the book, addresses those moments when we have an opportunity to talk to people about our relationship with God.

Peter is basically saying, "Be ready to talk in that moment."

Peter is simply referring to what he did in those situations—he shared *his* story and *his* understanding of Jesus.

Let's say you go the Grand Canyon with your family on vacation.

When they ask, "How was your trip," they are asking *you* what the experience was like for *you*.

All you have to know how to do is talk about your life, story, and journey with God.

Think of it this way: You don't have to know everything to share something.

Just share *your* story in a gentle and respectful way. Share what you know to be true in your experience.

APPLICATION

So let's talk about some practical steps to this:

1) Think about it. 2) Practice telling your story. 3) Don't ignore your doubts.

LANDING

As you share, and as you hear others share, you're going to find yourself knowing God better.



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YOU DON'T HAVE TO KNOW EVERYTHING TO SHARE SOMETHING.

INTRODUCTION

2 MINUTES

In this series, *Know God*, we've been talking about habits, practices, and skills that can put you in a position to know God better.

When you want to get better at something, you need to develop some solid habits. If you want to be an awesome guitar player or drummer, you're going to have to set up some habits and practices that help you develop your talent. In the same way, certain habits can help you get to know God better.

Most of the people you know who are incredible at something—like playing an instrument—have practiced the same things over and over and over. Most pro athletes aren't just making millions because they're athletic freaks (although there are rare exceptions). Most of them are great at what they do because they've put in more reps than anyone else on planet Earth.

That's what we're talking about in this series: putting in reps in your relationship with God.

People you know who understand the Bible really well, or who seem to really connect with God in prayer, are people who have made it a priority to put in time and grow in these areas.

And just like you get to know people better when you talk to them and listen to them, you get to know God better through reading His Word and praying.

And today we're going to talk about *talking about it*.

Let me explain.

If you've been in church for a while, maybe you've heard words like "evangelize," "boldness," or "witness."

These are just fancy words that refer to you sharing your faith with other people.



TEACHING SCRIPT

This practice isn't just about the people you talk TO. This is about YOU—this practice grows YOUR faith.

But if you're anything like me, the idea of talking about my faith brings a LOT of fears, questions, and insecurities.

TENSION

2 MINUTES

If I were to try and persuasively talk about what I believe, or if I were to vocally stand up for my faith, I'd be super-nervous! Here are some reasons why—see if you can relate to any of them.

- 1. What would I say?** When I'm having a conversation with somebody who isn't familiar with what it means to follow God, it's hard to know what to say about it. And how do you make it seem like a natural part of the conversation?
- 2. What if I sound stupid?** What if someone asked me what I believe about a controversial subject? And what if I fumbled my way through my explanation of my viewpoint (which has happened to me more than once)? Bottom line: What if I make an idiot of myself? **Because when it comes to something as important as our faith, we want to sound smart and confident. And if we don't feel like we're going to sound that way, then we might as well stay quiet.**
- 3. Am I even sure what I believe about certain things?** Most people's beliefs change a little bit over time, and that's a good thing. I'm not saying we abandon the core pieces of our faith. But there may be some things we once took a strong stand for or against that we now don't feel so strongly about. And there may be a time in the future when we have a hard time with things we feel 100% certain about right now. **So if our beliefs are prone to change, how can we be secure enough to talk about them right now?**
- 4. Will I make people mad?** It's no secret that faith can be a heated subject. Any Facebook search on a controversial religious topic reveals just how angry people can get! The idea of us admitting that we're Jesus-followers can instill some fear and insecurity because we don't want to find ourselves in heated, angry arguments.

Chances are, you have questions I haven't even thought of. Some questions are easy to answer, and some are complicated. Some take a short amount of time to sort through, and some take years.

But for the sake of what we are talking about today, I want to make it super-simple. In fact, I want to bring it down to one simple word:

Reason.

TRUTH

5 MINUTES

Whether we realize it or not, when we do things, believe things, or accept things, all of us have a reason behind it.

- If you have a boyfriend or girlfriend, there's a *reason* why you're dating or hanging out with him or her. There are things you like about them.
- If you play a sport, there's probably a *reason*. Maybe it's the sport your dad or older brother played with you when you were a kid.
- If you do musical theater, there's a *reason*. Because you're a great singer, or because you love the people who are involved in that program.
- If you have a favorite class at school, there's probably a *reason*: You love the teacher or the subject matter (or there's someone in that class you're obsessed with!).

See what I mean?

No? Let me give you some *weird* examples, then.

- *Why* do crocodiles swallow stones? Because it helps with their digestion.
- *Why* do goats have rectangular pupils? To give them better depth perception to see predators.
- *Why* do honeybees have hairs on their eyes? To help them collect pollen.

Random, I know! But my point is this: By themselves, the details on those animals may not make sense to us. But when we understand the reason they have those details, it does make sense. And I think the same is true when it comes to your relationship with God—it's important to know the *why* and the *reason*. **For us to be able to talk about our faith, knowing our reason is crucial.**

In the book *1 Peter*, Peter, the guy who wrote the book (and who probably spent more time with Jesus while He was on Earth than anybody), addresses those moments when we have an opportunity to talk to people about our relationship with God. He says this:

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have (1 Peter 3:15b NIV).

Let's say you have a friend, classmate, teammate, or bandmate who asks you *why*—the REASON—you believe what you believe. Peter is basically saying, **"Be ready to talk in that moment."**

Now, before you break into cold sweats, let's clear some things up. When Peter says, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone," he's NOT saying you have to . . .

- Become a preacher,
- Understand 100% of the Bible,
- Or be able to explain dispensational eschatology. (Yeah, you've probably never heard that phrase before.)

TEACHING SCRIPT



But don't miss the phrase Peter mentions at the end of the verse: "for the hope that YOU have." Peter is simply referring to what he did in those situations—he shared *his* story and *his* understanding of Jesus.

But that may still sound overwhelming, so maybe this illustration will help.

Let's say you go the Grand Canyon with your family on vacation.

This would be amazing! Unless it's *not* amazing because it's hot, your dad wants to hike every square inch of it, your little sister gets injured within the first five minutes and has to be carried every step of the way, or you find out your crush back home has gotten into a romantic relationship with your best friend.

Sorry to throw that cloud over your trip!

But let's say none of that happened and it was an awesome trip. You loved it, and your family got along better than usual.

When you get home, there would probably be people who would ask about it: friends, teachers, classmates, and family members. They're all going to ask the EXACT same question:

"How was your trip?"

In that moment, they're asking for you to recap the experience as *it happened to you*.

- They don't want to hear about your cousin's trip there.
- They don't care what the guidebook says about it.
- You don't have to know what types of rocks are in the walls of the canyon or the difference between the North Rim and South Rim.

No, when they ask, "How was your trip," they are asking you what the experience was like for you. Was it awesome? Was it awful? Was the canyon way bigger than you imagined? Did you do anything cool while you were there? Did you love the trip? Did you wish it went on forever? Were you counting the seconds until it was over?

You and I are used to talking about our *experiences* this way. But did you know that the same is true when you talk about your relationship with God? You don't have to be able to explain Old Testament stories like Jonah and the whale. You don't have to know why bad things happen to good people.

All you have to know how to do is talk about your life, story, and journey with God.

Think of it this way:

You don't have to know everything to share something.

And that "something" is what you have experienced, felt, enjoyed, or benefited from in your own personal faith.



TEACHING SCRIPT

Then Peter concludes this thought by saying:

But do this with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15c NIV).

Which is not just an afterthought. This is crucial. Because when you think about how conversations usually go when it comes to religion and faith, *gentleness and respect* aren't the words that tend to describe them.

So how do you talk about your faith with gentleness and respect? Well, you . . .

- Don't talk about it just to start an argument.
- Don't talk about it shame or judge someone.
- Don't talk about it because you're convinced you're right, and everyone who believes differently is stupid.

Just share your story in a gentle and respectful way. Share what you know to be true in your experience.

When you share what's real for you, it makes you more real to others. It makes the conversation more authentic. Because people can see through some type of fabricated church talk. They can tell when you're just saying the things that your student pastor told you to say, or rattling of a list of facts in attempt to force someone to believe something.

But when you share out of your heart and your experience with God, you come across as a real person who's had a real encounter with Jesus.

APPLICATION

2 MINUTES

So let's talk about some practical steps to this . . .

1. **Think about it.** What has already happened in your life? What have YOU experienced in your faith? Why do you go to church? Why do you pray before meals? Why do you believe in God? Why are you nice to people? No detail is too small, and no experience is disqualified. Think through all the ways you've seen God work in you and through you. Those things are a big deal! And worth sharing!
2. **Practice telling your story.** Write it, type it up, or say it out loud. The more practice you have at getting your thoughts in order, the more prepared you will be.

But also keep this in mind: Your story doesn't just have to be things that have affected *you*. **It can also be things that have affected people around you.** If your parents' marriage was rescued by faith in God, that's part of your story. If your mom is a single mom, and she says, "The only way I

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survived this is God," That's part of your faith story, because she's your mom. The people who are around you are a key part of your story, so feel free to write down the ways God has impacted their lives as well.

- 3. Don't ignore your doubts.** Questions about faith are part of your story and experience as well. And sometimes, it's good for other people to hear that. As you search for answers, I believe you'll learn about God in a new way. Just know this: You don't have to have it all figured out to talk about it.

LANDING

1 MINUTE

As you talk about your relationship with God, you're going to discover more about Him. As you talk with outsiders, you're going to be forced to really examine the *reasons* behind what you believe, and that is going to stretch your faith. As you talk with people who *do* believe, you're going to learn more things about God, because you're going to hear about faith from their unique perspective.

You don't have to know everything to share something. And as you share, and as you hear others share, you're going to find yourself knowing God better.



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
