



## Sharing Christ in Crisis

Times of great crisis provide timely opportunities to share our faith with non-Christians. The apostle Peter instructed the early Christians to always be ready to reach those outside the body of Christ with Jesus' message of forgiveness, peace and eternal hope. He said, "*In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. 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 3:15, NIV).

Here are four simple ways every believer can share Christ:

1. **Talk about Jesus.** You can learn how to share Christ simply and effectively from the preaching of the apostle Peter. Whenever Peter proclaimed Christ, he answered two questions:
  - *Who is Jesus?* The Holy Son of God who became a man, lived without sin and was put to death on a cross.
  - *Why did He give His life?* Because of His sinless life, death could not hold Him in its power. After three days He rose from death and now offers forgiveness of sin and the free gift of everlasting life to anyone who will call on His name and become His follower.
2. **Tell your story.** Tell people what your life was like before you found Christ and the peace and joy you now have knowing your sins are forgiven. You are living for the purpose for which God made you and have hope of everlasting life. Sharing your personal experience and relationship with Jesus Christ with sincerity and conviction can be the most compelling witness with some people.
3. **Pray with people.** When people express problems, ask them for the privilege of praying with them. If you truly believe God answers prayer, practice your belief by praying with and for people, trusting God to answer. Hearing a believer pray can have a significant effect on unbelievers. When you pray for their needs, people can usually tell you are sincere and have a relationship with God. And when God answers prayer, it can be the means of opening hearts to the message of Christ.
4. **Invite them to church.** Your pastor will likely have times of special prayer for our nation in the coming weeks. Simply say, "Our church is having special prayer for our country on Sunday. Would you come with me?" You will be surprised at how some will be willing to come to church to pray for our country if they are asked.

*How* you share your faith is just as important as *what* you share. Notice that Peter tells us to speak with "gentleness and respect," responding to each person individually. Here are a couple of important things to remember:

1. **Avoid political arguments.** In the face of war with Iraq, Americans have many different opinions. Talking politics with people will likely change nothing. Instead, talk about *Jesus*, who can change *everything!* Our objective is not winning arguments, but winning people to Christ.
2. **Use wisdom when you offer to pray with someone.** Be discreet, especially in a public place. Ask their permission before praying with them. If the opportunity is not appropriate to pray at that time with individuals, tell them that you will be praying for them.

May God open doors for you to share Christ with those who are spiritually lost in this time of incredible crisis and opportunity.

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