

BUILDING: LEARNING THE ROLE OF THE BUILDER

Building Conversations

Like a builder, build a _____ to the Gospel. (John 8:32)

"Because there has been an erosion of truth today, we need to find common ground with others using planks of common understanding. Our goal is to find common ground with them and then attempt to build a positive case for Christ and look for opportunities to invite them to trust in Him." (1 Corinthians 9:22)

1. Find the right _____ in your approach. Determine whether their barrier requires a more objective or subjective approach.

"At Iconium Paul and Barnabas went as usual into the Jewish synagogue. There they spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews and Gentiles believed." (Acts 14:1)

Be mindful of the fact that your life will speak louder than your words.

"Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly." (Philippians 1:14)

2. Find _____ with those we are attempting to reach.

"To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some." (1 Corinthians 9:22)

- Build conversations with others based on common interest or hobbies.
- Look for opportunities to talk about topics (politics, news events, etc.) that have a moral or ethical theme.
- Search for spiritual common ground with _____ spiritual questions.

"They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets." (Acts 28:23)

"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by man's design and skill." (Acts 17:24-29)

3. Build a bridge from a point of shared beliefs (even those they are not aware of).

Bridges could be heart bridges or head bridges:

A. Heart Bridges

- Non-believers value humility.
- Non-believers desire to be loved and accepted.
- We can show how Jesus fulfills the inner longing of our hearts, calms our fears and realizes our hopes.
- We can show that Jesus is truly "one of a kind."

B. Head Bridges

- Comparing Jesus and Muhammad
- Build your bridge based on planks of common understanding:
 1. What you believe will affect how you live!
 2. Not all religious viewpoints can be right!
 3. Faith must have an object to have merit!
 4. Not all religious leaders made equal claims. Jesus' claims are unique compared to any other major religious leader.
 5. The proof of Christ's claims has no parallel among major religious leaders.
 6. Without God, some people find it difficult to find meaning in their life.

"I and the Father are one (John. 10:30), Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."(John. 14:6). Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

Conversational Evangelism Seminar

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man named Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5)

4. Remember the goal.

To remove the _____ so that we can help people take one step closer to Jesus Christ each day. (2 Timothy 4:2-5; 2 Corinthians 10:5; 1 Corinthians 3:6)

"Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage with great patience and careful instruction." (2 Timothy 4:2)

5. Actively seek for opportunities to transition to the Gospel.

Example: Has anyone ever explained to you the difference between Christianity and all other religions?

Explain "do" versus "done."

- Muslims believe that salvation depends upon man measuring up and not on God's grace. (Do)
- Buddhism teaches that salvation comes about when one desires to stop desiring. (Do)
- Hinduism teaches that if one does enough good he can pay off his karmic debt and escape the cycle of reincarnation. (Do)
- Jesus says accept the gift I offer. It has already been "Done" for you (you can do nothing to earn God's gift). Invite me to come into your life and change you from the inside out. (John 1:12; Philippians 2:13)

Invite them to take a step of faith!

Conversational Evangelism in a Nutshell

We want to remember to **LISTEN** to them, **LEARN** their stories, and **HEAR** the gaps (sour notes) in their beliefs. We can then help them illuminate these gaps by **ASKING QUESTIONS** that will "**CLARIFY**" their ***BELIEFS*** and "**SURFACE**" ***UNCERTAINTY***. Then we want to **UNCOVER** the ***REAL BARRIERS*** that keep them from Christ and **BUILD A BRIDGE** to help them take one step closer to Jesus Christ each day (1 Corinthians 3:6)

Recommendations for Further Reading

Listed in order of importance according to the speaker for teaching the C.E. seminar:

Geisler, Norman and David Geisler, *Conversational Evangelism: How to Listen and Speak So You Can Be Heard*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2009.

Pollard, Nick *Evangelism Made Slightly Less Difficult*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997.

Copan, Paul. *True For You But Not For Me*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1998.

Moreland, J. P. *Love Your God With All Your Mind: The Role of Reason in the Life of the Soul*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1997.

Halverson, Dean. ed., *The Compact Guide to World Religions*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1996. House, 2009.

Sire, James W. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*. 3d ed. Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1997.

McCallum, Dennis. ed. *The Death of Truth*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1996.

Ravi Zacharias and Kevin Johnson. *Jesus Among Other Gods: The Absolute Truth of the Christian Message*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000.

See also our resources at Meekness and Truth Ministries <http://www.meeknessandtruth.org> including the PowerPoint for this seminar on the front page.

Helpful Books In Establishing The Case for Christianity

Norman Geisler and Patty Tunncliffe. *REASONS FOR BELIEF*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 2013.

Geisler, Norman. *Christian Apologetics*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2013.

Gary Habermas and Michael Licona. *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2004.

Komyszewski, J. Ed, M. James Sawyer, and Daniel Wallace. *Reinventing Jesus: How Contemporary Skeptics Miss The Real Jesus and Mislead Popular Culture*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2006.

Barnett, Paul. *Jesus and the Logic of History*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997.

Dr. Norman Geisler's E-Book publishing company at: <http://bastionbooks.com/>