

Sharing Christ

Getting Started

⇒ *What are a couple of your favorite insights from your reading this week?*

Sharing Christ

Five Contagious Faith Styles

It's much like the topic of spiritual gifts. While we should be ready and willing to serve wherever God leads us, we'll usually be most fruitful – and more fulfilled – when we're serving in areas that fit our natural, God-given areas of giftedness. And because the Holy Spirit knows this (and designed it that way), he'll most often lead us to serve in ways that are consistent with who he made us to be.

It was the discovery of which styles were not mine, as well as which one is, that liberated me to get back on the playing field in reaching others for Christ. Finding your own natural approach will likely be liberating for you as well – but so will understanding various styles that don't particularly reflect your personality.

(Mark Mittelberg, *Contagious Faith*)

1) _____ - _____

"I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you."

(John 15:15)

Friendship-Builders are people-people. They love spending time with friends while also making new ones. They have warm personalities. They enjoy nothing more than hanging out with interesting people, sharing good coffee, tea, or food together, and engaging with them in lively conversations.

(Mark Mittelberg, *Contagious Faith*)

⇒ Matthew: Tax Collector-Turned-Evangelist (Luke 5:29)

⇒ Jesus: Friend of Sinners (Luke 19)

Key Skills For Every Christian

- Start and Strengthen Relationships
- Initiate Spiritual Conversations
- Invite Friends into Life-Changing Environment

Cautions Concerning the Friendship-Building Style

- Stay Genuine
- Establish Boundaries
- Prioritize Truth

2) _____ - _____

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”
(Matthew 5:16)

Those who fit the Selfless-Serving approach are naturally attuned to the needs of the people around them, and they find delight in meeting those needs. They usually work behind the scenes, and their efforts can often go unnoticed to everyone except the person who is being served. But because they are others-centered, they don’t mind serving without a spotlight or any kind of fan-fare to keep them motivated. They find joy in simply serving, and if that can be used by God to draw the person closer to him, that’s all the better.

(Mark Mittelberg, *Contagious Faith*)

⇒ Tabitha Selflessly Serves People in Need (Acts 9)

⇒ Son of Man, Servant to All (Mark 10:43-45)

Key Skills For Every Christian

- Nurture a Spirit of Empathy
- Make Room for Divine Interruptions
- Develop Discernment about Who to Serve

Cautions Concerning the Selfless-Serving Style

- Serve without Conditions
- Explain What Motivates You
- Practice Patience

3) _____ - _____

We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.
(1 John 1:3)

Those with the Story-Sharing style are skilled (or can become skilled) at articulating the details of their experiences with God and his grace. They illustrate in an experiential way the reality that life with God is better – even in hard times – and that anything given up to know and follow him is well worth the price.

(Mark Mittelberg, *Contagious Faith*)

⇒ The Blind Man’s Story (John 9)

⇒ Jesus’s Story-Sharing (John 8:23)

Key Skills For Every Christian

- Use Questions to Draw Out Your Friend's Spiritual Beliefs
- Communicate Your Story around a Natural Outline
 - a. Discovery – *What did you discover that helped shape your spiritual journey?*
 - b. Decision – *What did you decide based on that discovery?*
 - c. Difference – *What difference did that decision make in your life?*
- Relate Your Story to Your Friend's Situation

Cautions Concerning the Story-Sharing Style

- Embrace Your Story
- Be Honest
- Tailor to Your Audience
- Speak in Plain English

4) _____ - _____

But if your hearts revere 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)

Are you unsatisfied with merely knowing what you believe, but also adamant about knowing why you believe it – why it makes sense? Are you logical, analytical, and inquisitive? Do you find yourself constantly checking things out – researching ideas to make sure you're correct in your understanding?

(Mark Mittelberg, *Contagious Faith*)

⇒ Reasons and Evidence in Our Skeptical Culture

⇒ The Apostle Paul: Giving Reasons for Our Faith (Acts 17)

⇒ Jesus: Don't Believe My Words? Check Out My Works! (John 10:37-38)

Key Skills For Every Christian

- Be Prepared to Give Sound Answers and Evidence
- Respond to Questions with Gentleness and Respect
- Move from Good Answers to the Good News

Cautions Concerning the Reason-Giving Style

- Clarify the Question
- Study Up
- Admit It When You Don't Know
- Win People, Not Arguments
- Expect a Little Tension

5) _____ - _____

But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? (Romans 10:14)

Truth-Telling types are bold, confident and direct. They're effective at getting to the point and bringing truth to bear in a variety of situations. They tend to have hard-hitting personalities and they're often action-oriented leaders. They don't like a lot of small talk, and they don't beat around the bush. They zero in on what's important and they generally do so quickly. (Mark Mittelberg, *Contagious Faith*)

⇒ Peter: Truth-Teller for Christ (Acts 2)

⇒ Jesus, the Ultimate Truth-Teller (John 3)

Key Skills For Every Christian

- Be Bold in Initiating Spiritual Conversations
- Get to the Central Message of the Gospel
- Ask People to Respond to the Gospel

Cautions Concerning the Truth-Telling Style

- Seek God's Guidance and Wisdom
- Resist Being Overly Cautious
- Affirm the Other Styles

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Sharing Your Story

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)

Telling the story does not require that we become ordained ministers or flamboyant street corner preachers, nor does it demand we try to convert people by concussion with one sledgehammer blow of the Bible after another. It simply means we share with others what our lives used to be like, what happened when we met Jesus, and what our lives are like now. (Brennan Manning, *Abba's Child*)

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Crafting Your Story

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Your Assignment

- Write your Before-And-After story – in 100 words or less
- Read handout “Conclusion: The Power of Faith” in *The Case For Faith* (Lee Strobel)