

How to tell your friends about Jesus – Sam Chan

Sharing Jesus with our friends requires a lifestyle change, not merely learning a new technique according to Sam Chan. So, Sam suggested four things that we need to change if we are to live a life of sharing Jesus, these are:

1. **We need to our friends to be their friends**
2. **We need to learn to listen to their story**
3. **We need to learn to tell our story**
4. **We need to tell a Bible story that resonates**

1. We need to our friends to be their friends

Why do we believe what we believe?

We are greatly shaped by our ingrained **plausibility structures**, which have three components :
(in descending influence)

- Our Community
- Our experiences
- Facts, evidence, data, etc.

Our community has a much more profound impact upon us than we realise. Sam shared that they decided to give their son a unique name, the balanced the conservative and outrageous and decided upon Cooper, only to find it was in the top 10 for that year! Community is important. In the Bible – up to 500 people saw the resurrected Jesus, people joined a community of believers.

Community is important, however when we try to do evangelism we often try to go solo – only to find we're the weirdo on the out. If we merge our Christian and unbelieving friend universes, we are not one lonely voice, our Christian convictions are a bit more plausible.

How can we invite our unbelieving friends to our Christian things?

If we want to invite our unbelieving friends to our Christian events, we need to invest in the relationship – we need to go to their events first.

What can we talk about in our culture?

Our Western culture has been greatly impacted by the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, particularly in sacred/secular divide. Kant divided the world between the phenomenal and noumenal realms:

Phenomenal	vs	Noumenal
Public/Secular <i>(facts, observable)</i>		Sacred/Private <i>(subjective, opinion)</i>

In our culture, religion is firmly in the realm of private, subjective, opinion. It is the area of debate and fights, and so we have learned to avoid these areas to keep the peace.

How do you start to talk about Jesus (and the other private things)?

Coffee → Dinner → Gospel

- Coffee is public, we make small talk, staying mostly superficial. If things get too deep our friends can safely make their escape.
- Dinner means entering into our private space. Small talk is exhausted and we move into sharing more private things – personal values and worldviews. There is openness to discuss religion. But we need to move from safe to the more personal, and so:

2. We need to learn to listen to their story

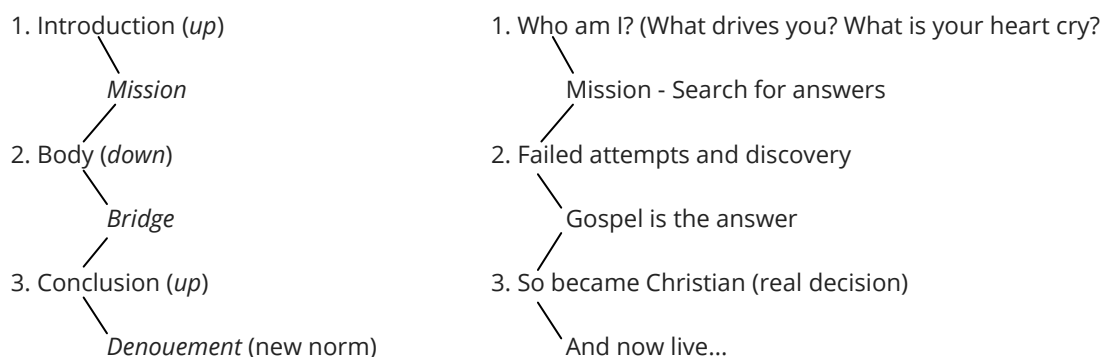
We need to listen to people if we want them to listen to us. The key is to ask safe questions and try to get them to share for as long as possible. The longer you listen to them, the longer they will be willing to listen to you.
e.g. Do you have a faith? Do you pray? How did you come to believe that? What values do you want your kids to have?

Listening involves demonstrating that you have heard the thought, understood it, and empathise with the feeling. I hear, I understand, I feel something of what you feel.

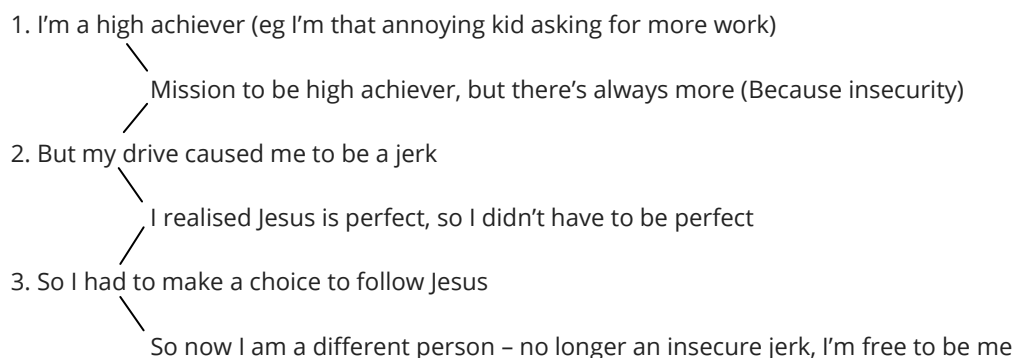
3. We need to learn to tell our story

Once we've gained a hearing, we need to be able to share our story in an engaging way. But Christians tend to short cut our stories with the result that they're uninteresting and bland (to the point of being interchangeable with other Christians)

When telling our stories, we need to remember the **Greek Rule of 3s** (*which involves 3 sections plus transitions*)



Sam's example



Now, you can do your own. (*Homework*)

4. We need to tell a Bible story that resonates

Once we have shared our story, having a Bible story that aids or illustrates, particularly a story of Jesus, is really helpful. Sam uses Parable of Pharisee and Tax Collector to illustrate his story.

Questions to ask after story:

- What did you like about the story?
- Are there any questions people might ask in response to the story?
- What is Jesus saying about God in the story?
- What is Jesus saying about people in the story?
- What is Jesus saying about us/you?