

Five Foundational Facts

As followers of Jesus, we have one mission to make more and better disciples. This requires us to point out Jesus to the people we interact with on a regular basis. Pointing out Jesus to others is called evangelism if they aren't following him and discipleship if they are.

1. Human beings are created in the image of God. Every person has value to God. [That value was established by Jesus on the cross when he died for everyone.]
2. God is already present in that person's life.... The Spirit of God is at work in all human beings, no matter what their religion, no matter what their morality or lack of it, no matter what they have done or haven't done.
3. The best things about that person are blessings from God.
4. The worst things about that person are arenas for God's redemption.
5. People are hungry for encouragement and love and need help noticing the presence of [Jesus] in their lives.

Citation: Nudge: Awakening Each Other to the God Who's Already There by Leonard Sweet (Kindle version)

Go and tell quickly

Matthew 28:7 NIV

Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

Paul's Story

Acts 26:1-29 NIV

Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defense: "King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to stand before you today as I make my defense against all the accusations of the Jews, and especially so because you are well acquainted with all the Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently. "The Jewish people all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that I conformed to the strictest sect of our religion, living as a Pharisee. And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our ancestors that I am on trial today. This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. King Agrippa, it is because of this hope that these Jews are accusing me. Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead? "I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the Lord's people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities. "On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. About noon, King Agrippa, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the

goads.' "Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' "'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds. That is why some Jews seized me in the temple courts and tried to kill me. But God has helped me to this very day; so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen— that the Messiah would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would bring the message of light to his own people and to the Gentiles." At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense. "You are out of your mind, Paul!" he shouted. "Your great learning is driving you insane." "I am not insane, most excellent Festus," Paul replied. "What I am saying is true and reasonable. The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him. I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do." Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?" Paul replied, "Short time or long—I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains."

Cardboard Testimonies

Stories of Jesus' power in ordinary people

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwpJeLSU-qQ>

Sermon in a Sentence:

Your story is part of Jesus' story; when you share your story it inspires me to trust Jesus with my story too.

Your Life BC

Think about your life BEFORE CHRIST until you can describe it in a few easily remembered words. What words would you use to describe your life Before Christ?

Coming to Jesus

Think about HOW GOD BROUGHT YOU to Jesus and describe it in a few words. What about your story? Who invited you to church? Who told you about Jesus? Who lived in a way that made you want to follow Jesus? How would you describe the way God brought you to Jesus?

Responding to Jesus

Think about your RESPONSE TO JESUS and describe it in a few words. That's the essence of all our responses. We trust and obey Jesus. How would you describe your response to Jesus in a few words?

Your Life with Jesus

Think about and describe your LIFE WITH JESUS in a few memorable words. How has following Jesus changed your life? What words would you use to describe the way Jesus has changed your life?

So what?

So, what's your story? What would your cardboard sign say? Will you take the time to prepare your story of Jesus in order to share your story and encourage someone else to trust Jesus with their story too? If you don't have a story because you've not started following Jesus yet. There is no better time and no better place to begin asking Jesus to take charge of your life.