

BECOMING A CONTAGIOUS CHRISTIAN

Lesson 4: The Attractiveness of Authenticity

A Bible Study of The Mount Zion Church



Contagious (adjective)

(of an emotion, feeling, or attitude) likely to spread to and affect others.

Example: "Her enthusiasm is contagious"

Taken from the book
Becoming A Contagious Church:
Increasing Your Church's Evangelistic Temperature
By Mark Mittelberg

BECOMING A CONTAGIOUS CHRISTIAN

The Attractiveness of Authenticity

Introduction: The following lesson was written to help students recognize the authentic story they have an opportunity to utilize for Christ. Modeling our sharing of Christ after the Apostle Paul, will structure our story. While Paul's story was different than yours and mine, we must all acknowledge that we have BC (before Christ) story a calling and answer to Christ, and then an AC (after accepting Christ) story. Jesus desires for you to utilize your story to help others know that what has happened in your life with Christ can happen to them as well. By the end of this lesson, students will have the framework of a conversation to utilize when they share with others!

TELLING YOUR STORY

Your Story Matters

Your story really does matter. Here are the three reasons why:

- Your friends will be interested.
- They'll be able to relate to it.
- Your story is hard to duplicate or fake!

In the chart below students will notice the three (3) handles that are useful in sharing our faith story. Handles are something we hold onto. As a believer, you have a general memory of what life was like in BC, what caused you to accept Christ, and how your life is now AC. These *handles* are held as key segments of your life. First, you will look at the handles in the Apostle Paul’s life and then you will write and discuss your own. ENJOY!!!

How to Organize Your Story

PAUL’S STORY: THREE HANDLES		
HANDLE 1	HANDLE 2	HANDLE 3
<p>BC</p> <p>Before Christ</p> <hr/> <p>Christ</p> <p>Acts 26:4 – 11 “[did] all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus...”</p>	<p>✝</p> <p>Meeting Christ</p> <hr/> <p>Christ</p> <p>Acts 26:12 – 18 “As I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven... and I heard a voice...” (vv. 13, 14)</p>	<p>AC</p> <p>After Christ (Now)</p> <hr/> <p>Christ</p> <p>Acts 26:19 – 23 “So then ... I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven ...”</p>
<p>Unifying Theme: Paul’s intense passion for serving God (first without Christ, then as his follower)</p>		

Develop your Story

During this activity, students will utilize the questions to connect to their story. Students are to then use the same questions when they ask others about their faith journey.

Six Questions

FIRST HANDLE: BC – BEFORE CHRIST

- 1. What was your early spiritual background, and how did it affect you as you grew up – your feeling, attitudes, actions, and relationships?**

Note: If you became a Christian as a young child, you may not have any real BC background to talk about. So you might say something like this:

- I grew up in a family where the Bible was taught, and don't remember ever not believing in God. So I grew up with sort of a simple belief in Him.

My Story (Question 1):

2. What caused you to begin to consider following Christ?

Note: If you came to Christ as a child, you might write something like:

- Most of what I saw in my parents, teachers, and friends at church reinforced my confidence that what I was hearing about God was true.

My Story (Question 2):

MIDDLE HANDLE:  MET CHRIST

3. What realization did you come to that finally motivated you to receive Christ?

Note: If you came to Christ as a child, you might say something like:

- I don't know exactly when it happened, but along the way, I understood that Jesus died to pay for my sins. Even though I hadn't led a wildly rebellious life, I certainly knew I'd done things that needed forgiving

My Story (Question 3):

4. Specifically, *how* did you receive Christ?

Note: If you came to Christ as a child, you might say something like:

- Even though I was quite young, I gradually realized I had done things that needed God's forgiveness. I began trusting in Him, and have been experiencing His forgiveness and leadership now for many years.

My Story (Question 4):

THIRD HANDLE: AD – AFTER CHRIST

These answers should address the problem or situation mentioned in your answer to the first question.

5. How did your life begin to change after you trusted Christ?

Note: If you became a Christian as a young child, you may not have any real BC background to talk about. So you might say something like this: If you came to faith as a child, the emphasis in these final questions should be on the difference Christ makes in your life compared to what it might have been like without him. This can be determined, more or less, by reflecting on times when you were not close to him, by considering areas of weakness, or perhaps by observing the lifestyles of old friends and classmates who didn't follow Christ. You might say something like:

- Knowing Christ makes a difference every day of my life. I know myself well enough to realize the mess I'd be in if it weren't for God's guidance. And even with that I sometimes mess up. That's when I'm most thankful for his forgiveness and grace.

My Story (Question 5):

6. What other benefits have you experienced since becoming a Christian?

My Story (Question 6):