

Helping Others Develop A Heart For The Lost

Whether we're working with new Christians who are just learning to reach out or with older Christians who simply have no experience in outreach, how can we impart a heart for the lost to others? Four ideas apply to setting the example in daily living:

1. Take them with you. If you have the ability to casually share the gospel in everyday circumstances or to meet people's needs in simple ways, allow a brother or sister you are discipling to see you in action. Imitation is basic to the process of discipleship (Mt. 4:19, Lk. 6:40, 1 Cor. 11:1).

2. Reschedule. One of the great traps of Christian fellowship is that it is so easy to absorb all available time in Bible study, worship, and Christian growth. In contrast, if you want to impart a vision for reaching lost people, reschedule your time with other Christians so that together you're going into the world to listen to people and then engage them in discussion about the gospel. Illustrate by your schedule that a heart for the lost is a priority.

3. Lead them to the Scriptures and let them reach their own conclusions. If a biblical conviction about the eternal fate of the lost underlies a heart for outreach, allow others to catch that vision for themselves—not by lecturing or preaching what you believe, but by pointing them to the Scriptures (Jn. 3:16–17, Jn. 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5, etc.) and letting them inductively conclude that lost people need Jesus Christ. The convictions go deeper when the student discovers the truth for himself or herself. (See the article “Everything You Wanted to Know about Hell But Were Afraid to Ask,” by Norman L. Geisler, in the previous issue of *Discipleship Journal*.)

4. Talk about benefits. Let others know what witnessing will do for them. Talk about the stimulation of sharing the gospel with others and the spiritual vitality that results. It is one of the best ways to motivate others to demonstrate compassion and reach out to lost people. When people realize that in giving, they receive, they are often more willing to reach out.

—Paul Borthwick

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