

How can I use “starting points” in witnessing?

Some people will actually approach a total stranger and ask them point blank if they have placed their trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. There’s a pretty good chance that you’re not one of these people. I would not say this approach is wrong, but it takes somewhat of a special personality to have the desire to do so and to do it effectively. For the rest of us (myself included), we need to consider a different approach.



It’s ideal when you have something in common with the person with whom you wish to share your faith. However, it’s not always easy to find common ground. You might want to strike up a conversation in general just to get any kind of dialogue going. You could ask, “Do you like baseball?” but what if they respond with, “No, I hate sports!” Their answer caught you off-guard, and you respond by saying, “OK, have a good day” and walk away. How do you find common ground, without trying one thing after another after another, etc.? That’s where “starting points” come into play.

As I’ve mentioned in previous articles, everyone has to start somewhere with their beliefs. It simply can’t be avoided. Therefore, you know the person with whom you’re speaking has one, whether they realize it or not (most haven’t ever really given it much thought).

You could take a very simple, fairly direct approach and jump right in by saying something like, “You know, I was thinking the other day, there are so many different beliefs out there.... Everyone seems to have their own opinion on life. Then it hit me that everyone has to start somewhere with their beliefs, kind of a ‘starting point’. Everything else after that will be built upon whatever they’ve chosen for a starting point. I thought about that for myself and realized that my own starting point is that God exists and the Bible is the inspired Word of God. I then use these two initial beliefs to address any other issues someone might bring up for discussion. Have you ever thought about what your own starting point is, why you’ve chosen it, and whether or not you are confident it will successfully help you accurately define everything else?”

Now, that truly is a very direct approach, and you might not feel bold enough to “cut-to-the-chase” like that. However, you can also back into a conversation in many different ways. The following is just one example from a personal experience I had just 2 days ago. I was flying from Milwaukee to Tampa and felt compelled to witness to the person sitting next to me. I started by asking if he lived in the Tampa area and was returning home or if he was just visiting. That got the ball rolling. He eventually asked me why I was going to Tampa and I told him I was speaking in the area. I didn’t tell him any details regarding what kind of talks I give, but a few minutes later he asked which naturally led into a discussion regarding spiritual issues. Since the topic of God was already broached, I shared the following logical scenario with him.

Question of the Month

Considering the existence of God, we have three options:

1. He created everything, including us, but doesn't care at all about anything. We can be kind to each other or kill each other... He just doesn't care. This option doesn't seem to make sense to anyone. Why would he create all of this and not care whatsoever?
2. He created everything, including us, and does have standards of right and wrong... He just never bothered to tell us what they are! So when we die and are standing before Him, He will say something like, "Yeah, I would have let you into heaven, but what you had to do while on Earth was hop around on your left foot holding a Slinky in your right hand chewing pink bubblegum for 8 ½ minutes... then I would have let you in!" You would say, "I didn't know that!" to which He replies, "Yeah, I know, but that's my standard, too bad!" This option doesn't make sense to people either.
3. He created everything, including us, He does have standards and He told us what they are. That's exactly what the Bible claims to be... the Word of God who created everything, who chose to tell us many things we couldn't possibly know on our own.

Furthermore, it logically follows that if the Bible is truly the inspired Word of God, then everything it says is true and it is the ultimate authority for mankind (and subsequently, the only reliable "starting point"). I went on to share exactly what the Bible says about what God's standards are and how placing your faith in Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins is the only way to heaven.

This seemed to make sense to the guy on the plane and led to deeper conversations about his own personal beliefs and even his relationship with his wife and daughter. It's not my intention to record our entire conversation in this article, but simply to show one way of bringing the idea of "starting points" into conversations when you are sharing your faith.

But what if they ask, "But how do you know the Bible is the Word of God?" Or if they say, "Yeah, but I don't believe the Bible." We've addressed these situations in previous articles, but I will also continue to discuss these topics in future articles and in our resources and live broadcasts.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about this or any other issue, please don't hesitate to [contact us!](#)