

Campus Evangelism- Tips for College Students

This article was originally written to members of Students for Christ (SFC), which is essentially a Campus Crusade for Christ group, at Ithaca College. By Chris Staron.

Over the years we helped freshman move in and get established (the single most rewarding thing I did to reach out to college kids). You will not regret going. Believe me, it's worth a few less days stocking shelves at a grocery store. There are really no good excuses not to go and do it. Here are the tips:

- *Go to every freshman event and meet as many people as you can.
- *Get their names, phone numbers and dorm addresses in the first few days while they're still willing to give it out.
- *Stop by regularly to check and see how they're doing.
- *Play video games with them.
- *Really get to know them.
- *Be there for them during their ups and downs. If they're sick, bake cookies or make soup. If they have a birthday, get them a card.
- *Invite them to hang out.
 - *Don't spend even one night of the first two weeks of school away from the freshman. Your apartment will get unpacked eventually, things will get taken care of. After the first two weeks (including the freshman week) people close off and are not as easy to get a hold of. This may mean missing a few meetings. That's okay.
- *Find out who the "Christians" are and get them to come to church with you ASAP. People who grow up in Christian families often give up on God the first few weeks of college. Carpool everyone, even if you have to make extra trips or go to more than one service.
- *Advertise like crazy about Campus Crusade. Hang posters in every building. To get them in dorm rooms, go to ResLife with a stack of flyers and give them to the staff there. They will distribute them to the RA's who will then post them. This saves hours of work and is legal on campus. Put together a team of people to get this done so that the first person to arrive on campus can deliver the posters so they are up immediately. My freshman year there was not a single poster about SFC on campus. I'm serious. Not one.
- *Events are okay, but people generally come to Christ because of relationships. You must visit non-Christians. Meeting them first-thing their freshman year is a great way to start witnessing. If you talked to my non-Christian friends outside my major, at least 50% of them I met their first 2 days of college. Really, if you want to witness on a college campus, freshman week is not an option. It's a requirement.
- *A lot of people don't like the idea of being evangelized. In other words, they don't like the idea that a group of people is out there being nice to others because they want them to believe something. It's scary to people. That's why I recommend keeping your info and SFC's separate. Also, not claiming that moving people in is an SFC event, but when people ask you why you're doing it (don't cheese out and say because you're a nice person, c'mon!) you really need to say something like, "I'm a follower of Jesus. I know that He saved my soul, and I'm trying to give to others what He's given to me". It's far more effective. Then it doesn't sound like a cult that's trying to entice people into a venus flytrap. Instead, it is a personal, well thought out sharing of what Christ has done for you. Remember: The important thing is not that they come to SFC meetings, but that they meet Jesus.
- *Do not skip out on a chance to share the gospel with someone because you're going to be late for a class or meeting. Especially not an SFC meeting. Being that the meetings are moved to Friday, you'll (hopefully) be invited to events where you can meet people and share Christ with them. Or else, you can take your friends out for a chat. That may mean you have to skip a meeting. Which

leads me to a next point:

*Students for Christ (ie, Campus Crusade) is not about you. It is about reaching out. Actually, that is Campus Crusade's main objective. Here is the mission statement:

Campus Crusade for Christ International is an interdenominational ministry committed to helping take the gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations. We cooperate with millions of Christians from churches of many denominations and hundreds of other Christian organizations around the world to help Christians grow in their faith and share the Gospel message with their fellow countrymen.

Working together with these fellow believers, our goal for this decade is to help give every man, woman, and child in the entire world an opportunity to find new life in Jesus Christ. Our commitment is based on our Lord's command:

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."
Matthew 28:18-20 (NAS)

Do not allow SFC to become a social group for Christians that serves as a way for Christians to hide themselves in meetings, support groups, movie nights, officer get togethers, red tape and excuses. I graduated in December and let me tell you that the real world is a lot harder than college. So don't tell me you're too busy to share the gospel or visit people. And when I look back, I don't think about how many more papers I could have written, or how nice it would have been to have yet another small group. Instead, I think about all the time I wasted watching movies, alone, in my apartment while there were people out there who did not know the gospel or at the very LEAST had never met a Christian who was intelligent and could love them. So many people in Ithaca think Christians are unloving, biased, racist, sexist, pushy, uninformed jerks. And they think that

BECAUSE MOST OF THEM HAVE NEVER MET A CHRISTIAN WHO BELIVED IN JESUS AND LIVED OUT THE GOSPEL.

Be that person for them and for Ithaca. And do so with the blessing of the Holy Spirit. Don't try to do it on your own steam, it is the Holy Spirit that brings people to Christ. But don't let that be an excuse for laziness or hiding in some Christian hole. God bless you all. My experience at Ithaca has let me with some really great memories. You're all great people. Now let the world know you exist.