

“Some of my Church friends argue with nonmember friends over religion. I know contention is wrong, but how do I let my friends know how I feel about the gospel?”

Rather than trying to share your feelings when tempers are high and the Spirit isn't there, look for opportunities to approach your friends one-on-one, at a time and in a place in which the Holy Ghost can help.

Pray for opportunities to talk to your friends about the gospel. When given the opportunity, explain your beliefs and bear your testimony. Make sure you show them that you genuinely care about them. If your friends are interested in learning more, you could give them a pass-along card, invite them to church, refer them to Mormon.org, or contact the missionaries.

Pray for the guidance of the Spirit to know what to say to your friends and how to say it. Pray for help in avoiding contention. If your friends begin to argue with you, it is often best to change the subject or leave the conversation. **NE**

Pray for Direction



Contention does not come from God (see 3 Nephi 11:29), so it's not the right way to share this wonderful gospel. A good way to share the gospel is to invite your friends to go to church or activities.

Prayer has helped me know how I can share the gospel with my friends. I know the Lord answers prayers. He will always show you the right way to do things.

Celeste R., 22, California

Teach Them How They Can Know



When you argue or contend about what you believe, the Spirit leaves. He cannot be there to testify that you speak the truth. The best thing to do is testify. Simply state what you believe and how you know it to be true. When I talk to people about our Church, I tell them they can know

it is true for themselves by praying, reading the Book of Mormon, and listening to the feelings of their hearts. Your friends can still disagree, but they can't deny the power of your testimony.

Sister Clement, 22, Tennessee Knoxville Mission

Avoid Contention

I have a friend who belongs to another church. Last year he came to me at school one day and started to try to prove to me that the Book of Mormon was not true and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was not a Christian church. After replying to all of his questions, I began to realize that he wasn't even paying attention to my answers because he kept challenging me with the same question. From what I learned from this

experience, my advice is that all you can do is explain that you don't want contention and bear testimony of the truthfulness of the Lord's Church.

Jayden C., 13, Washington

Contention Creates Resentment



Contention has never been the right way. It chases away the Spirit of the Lord and leaves in its wake feelings of resentment and hatred. It also changes your way of looking at other people. Generally, what people end up debating about are points of doctrine, so it is really important to be a peacemaker and never forget to bear your testimony about the truths of the gospel and the good fruits it has brought you.

Carlos F., 19, Guárico, Venezuela

Respect Others' Beliefs



Instead of saying to your friends, "My religion is true, and yours isn't," share with them your testimony. Find a time when you and your friend are alone, and ask if you can share your testimony. I did that once with a close friend who is a Christian and is very faithful to her church. She thought it was great that I had a testimony. After that, we discussed what we believed, but it wasn't an argument. However, when you come up and say, "Your church is not true," you'll be disrespectful to something that could be near to their heart. Friends don't do that. You may disagree about points of doctrines with your friends, but a true friend will listen to your testimony and understand that the gospel is very important to you.

Amber P., 17, Utah

Live the Gospel



Live so that those who know you and do not know this true gospel would want to know about this gospel

because they know you. Let the joy of the gospel be seen in you. Be a light, a guide, and the very best example to your friends and others that you can be.

Elder Kamah, 20, Ghana Cape Coast Mission

Bear Testimony

The best way to share the gospel is to do so sincerely and lovingly. Arguing won't get you anywhere. Jesus Christ didn't argue with the Pharisees; instead, He taught them through love, word, and example. *Preach My Gospel* states: "People may sometimes intellectually question what you teach, but it is difficult to question a sincere, heartfelt testimony" ([2004], 199). Bear your testimony of what you know is true and how you know it. When the Spirit testifies of the truthfulness of what you say, that is the best opportunity for your friends to understand.

Ephraim S., 20, New South Wales, Australia

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as pronouncements of Church doctrine.

NEXT QUESTION

"I've prayed and studied the scriptures for a long time, but I don't seem to get an answer to my questions. How can I gain a testimony?"

Send us your answer and photo by July 15, 2009.

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or

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NEmore

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CONTEND WITH NO MAN



Ours is to explain our position through reason, friendly persuasion, and accurate facts. Ours is to stand firm and unyielding on the moral issues of the day and the eternal principles of the gospel, but to contend with no man or organization. Contention builds walls and puts up barriers. Love opens doors."

Elder Marvin J. Ashton (1915-94) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "No Time for Contention," Ensign, May 1978, 8.