



JUST BE

YOU

*Scared of sharing the gospel?
Relax and just be yourself.*

By Alex Masterson

Your friends pull you aside and excitedly tell you that your favorite band is performing this Sunday. They even found out that you can get a group price if you all go together. It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! So what would you do? Take the tickets and go, even though the concert's on a Sunday? Or keep the Sabbath day holy after telling them you're "busy" (without mentioning that you're going to a fireside)?

Or is there something better you could do? Maybe this could be an opportunity to share why Sundays are different for you than other days.

Outside the home, choices like this one happen all the time—away from parents, missionaries, leaders, teachers, and maybe even friends. These choices may seem uncomfortable or scary, but they can also be golden opportunities to share what you believe.

As a member of the Church, you have so much to offer the world. You have specific strengths, experiences, and perspectives that make the things you say and do matter. So, believe it or not, you *can* make a difference in the lives of those around you. You just have to be willing to act.

The best part is that some of the best missionary opportunities can just happen naturally if you remember three things: live the gospel, talk to people, and keep things simple.

LIVE THE GOSPEL

The best way to *teach* the gospel is to *live* the gospel every day, because if you want to become a light to others, you have to fan your own spiritual flame first.

As you live the gospel, you'll realize that your example and your attitude are more than enough to inspire people to change for the better. A fellow teammate could stop drinking alcohol after seeing how well you perform without it. Or your friends could want to be more loving and loyal because you're there for them no matter what.

There will also be times when your very way of living will spark opportunities for discussion and questions. Your friends might ask why you decided to turn in a wallet to the lost and found instead of keeping it for yourself. Or some kids at school might ask why you don't swear.

At first, it might seem scary to be different, but remember that your differences can give you the power to help people, especially if you follow the Savior's counsel to be kind and compassionate (see John 13:34) and aren't pushy about what you believe (see Alma 38:12). Don't expect the world to change overnight because of your righteous choices, but know that eventually people will notice. That alone can be enough to bring about change.

TALK WITH PEOPLE

If you want to influence people for the better, they need to know who you are first. You don't necessarily have to be loud, chatty, or even outgoing. You just have to reach out and show some love and friendship to those around you. Show people that you care (see 3 Nephi 12:14-16).

As you get used to talking with people, this also gives you the opportunity to be open about your life and the things you believe in. That doesn't mean you need to teach them missionary lessons or anything. It just means being yourself.

So if you find out that a friend has been struggling with an issue, you can suggest prayer, because your friend most likely knows that's what you do when you have an awful day. And it won't be awkward to invite people to Church activities, because they'll already have heard about other fun Church activities you've gone to. Think about it. That's what friends do! They share.



KEEP IT SIMPLE

When people know you're a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, they tend to ask you all kinds of questions. Some will be sincere, others won't. You'll find that many people aren't looking for missionaries to come and teach them right now; they're usually just curious about your actions or beliefs.

So, no matter the question or the motive, one of the best things you can do is to keep it simple—simple truths, simple testimony, and simple invitations (see Luke 10:25-28).

For example, if some of your friends invite you to a party where you know there will be alcohol, you might be tempted to teach an in-depth lesson on the Word of Wisdom. That's more likely to confuse people or put them off. Instead, just make it clear where you stand. Tell them you don't drink, and use their questions as an opportunity to bear testimony of simple truths. Then tie in simple experiences with specific blessings you've seen.

But make sure you also listen to the Spirit. Sometimes you might be prompted to invite them to learn more or to come to a Church meeting with you. Maybe all you need to do in that moment is invite your friends to come with you to a friend's house instead of to the party. Then, you will live up to your standards and your friends will get the chance to as well.





BE YOU

Missionary work doesn't have to be stressful. It doesn't even have to be something preplanned. Some of the best missionary opportunities can come naturally. Just live the gospel the best you can. Talk to people. Keep things simple. Just be you, because your life and example can change the world. **NE**

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For more on answering questions about the gospel, visit lds.org/go/answers8NE.

What Do I Do if Someone Asks Me about the Gospel?

Here are a few other tips for how to respond when someone asks you gospel questions:

Stay Calm. Most people ask questions either because they're curious or because they just want to know more about you. Don't feel like your answer is solely responsible for their entire eternal salvation.

Be Tactful. Avoid comparing your beliefs with others. You probably don't understand all the intricacies of what they believe, so just play it safe and stick to what you know, finding common ground you can build on.

Tell the Truth. Honesty helps people better understand Heavenly Father and His plan for them. And if you don't know the answer, be honest about that too. You can always do some extra study and get back to them later.

Be Cordial When You're Asked Bizarre Questions. Some questions can be contentious or just plain weird. Instead of trying to prove and disprove every part that's true and false, just be cordial and direct, and then tell them what you believe.

Bear Testimony. Bear testimony of simple truths. Statements like these are powerful because they quickly teach truth in a way people can't disagree with. Here are a few examples:

- "I believe families can be together forever."
- "I believe our bodies are a gift from God."
- "I believe God has always called prophets on the earth."