

How to build relationships and friendships with secular, non-religious people

Reasons why brokenness and loneliness has become an epidemic:

- The concept of cheap sex
- Technological advancement

The truth:

Secular people are looking for deep relational _____ and _____.

The cultural lie:

To love or be in relationship with someone, I have to _____ their lifestyle or worldview.

Jesus demonstrated that association and relationship with “sinners” is NOT synonymous with affirming their lifestyle.

Tribalism:

- Us versus Them
- Tribalism is a toxic trait of modern-day culture
- Tribalism existed during Jesus' day (example: Jews and Samaritans)
- Jesus defied tribalism in a radical, counter-cultural way John 4
- Jesus offended the religious people because He spent so much time with sinners Luke 15:1-2

The power of friendship:

- Friendship _____ “them”
- Friendship allows you to _____ the Gospel in actions. Philippians 2:3-4
- Friendship helps you really _____ their perspective and communicate the Gospel effectively.
- Friendship allows you to _____ the trust to challenge their views and speak truth.

Relevance versus holiness:

- Be _____ and clear that you are a Jesus follower... but not obnoxious or a “Jesus robot”
- Don’t be _____ that non-Christians act like non-Christians (language, lifestyle, philosophy, etc.)
- The _____ is not to “flaunt” your moral superiority, but the _____ is that we allow them to see our supernatural hope, love, joy, and peace.

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect

1 Peter 3:15

Adopt a missionary mindset

- Start by actively _____ people in your “Oikos,” or sphere of influence.
- Expand your “Oikos” by being _____ in secular places.
 - Hobbies
 - Causes
 - Places or events
- Ask the Holy Spirit to lead to a “person of peace” and give you _____.

Principles to remember when engaging in secular places:

1. Relax, be yourself, and have fun

- Be patient. Don't feel the need to make something happen.
- Have a long-term view of this.
- Don't take yourself too seriously, it's okay if it's awkward sometimes.
- Try to have fun, joy is contagious.

2. Harness the incredible power of asking questions and listening

- Listen, ask questions, listen.
- Do not make assumptions.
- Learn their real story.
- Really try to understand their perspective and how they came to believe what they believe.
- Remember: empathy is not the same as agreeing or affirming.

3. Find common ground and genuine ways to affirm them.

Application:

1. Explain why it's so important to understand that association and relationship with "sinners" is NOT synonymous with affirming their lifestyle.
2. Why do you think so many believers struggle with being either too holy or too relevant, when engaging lost people?
3. Ask God to highlight one person in your "Oikos" that you will actively pursue for a deeper relationship. Write down their name and begin to pray for opportunities.
4. Where (hobby, cause, place, or event) will you be relationally present in order to intentionally build new relationships with secular people? Write down your next steps.