

6 Everyday Ideas

for Students to Share Jesus at School



A youth leader eBook from Dare 2 Share Ministries

DARE 2 SHARE MINISTRIES

DARE 2 SHARE (D2S) is a non-profit evangelistic ministry based in Wheat Ridge, Colorado. D2S was co-founded in 1991 by Greg Stier with the goal of training and mobilizing America's teenagers to reach their friends for Christ. When the tragic Columbine High School shooting happened just minutes from Dare 2 Share's offices in 1999, the mission of reaching teenagers with the life-changing hope of the gospel became even more urgent. That same year, Greg Stier resigned from a pastorate at a local church to focus his efforts on the cause of D2S.

For over 27 years, God has used D2S to transform, train and equip hundreds of thousands of teenagers across the country to share their faith in Jesus. Today, D2S offers a nationwide simulcast training event, week-long summer intensives, books, curriculum, youth leader trainings, and more to get every teen everywhere hearing the gospel from a friend.

DARE 2 SHARE EVENTS & RESOURCES

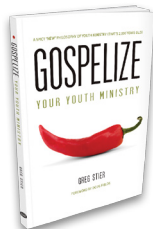


DARE 2 SHARE LIVE is a live, nationwide simulcast event where thousands of teens are unleashed to share the gospel in one day.



LEAD THE CAUSE

LEAD THE CAUSE is a one-week, urban youth mission trip where students will be challenged to grow deeper in their faith while developing strong leadership principles to impact the world.



GOSPELIZE YOUR YOUTH MINISTRY – Greg Stier unpacks the discipleship model found in the book of Acts, unveiling the key ingredients present within the early Church. He explains how you can blend them together today to create a Gospelized youth ministry that produces dynamic kingdom growth.



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Table of Contents



INTRODUCTION

PAGE **4**

How to bring the gospel up:

1

AT THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

PAGE **5**

2

WHEN SOMEONE INVITES YOU
TO GO TO A PARTY

PAGE **7**

3

WITH ENERGY DRINKS

PAGE **9**

4

USING "SEE YOU AT THE POLE"

PAGE **11**

5

WHEN YOUR FRIENDS VIEW
CHRISTIANITY NEGATIVELY

PAGE **13**

6

WHEN SOMEONE SAYS, "MY LIFE STINKS!"

PAGE **16**



CONCLUSION

PAGE **18**

Introduction

Today's high schools are filled with teenagers who have no idea that God loves them. Teenagers filled with hurt from bad family situations, broken friendships, toxic dating relationships, and all of the pressures and awkwardness of being in adolescence.

These are the ones who need to hear about Jesus. He wants more for them, so much so that gave His life for them! And your students are the messengers who can tell them.

But when we tell our students that they should share their faith with their friends, they're response probably sounds something like, "Okay, but **how?**"

It's time we add more to our talks about *why* our students should be sharing the gospel with their friends. Let's teach them *how* to do it, and build their confidence and faith in God as they step out to tell their friends about Jesus.

In this eBook, we're going to walk through six examples of how your students can **transition their conversations at school into conversations about Jesus**. These ideas will give your students practical examples of how to respond in love, grace, and the truth of the gospel when interacting with their unsaved peers. Then, your students can draw from these examples as they navigate real life gospel conversations.

Let's get started on the six ways that teens can walk into their schools with a plan and a mission to reach their friends for Christ.





At the start of the school year

The beginning of school means fresh school clothes, tanned faces, and that early morning alarm clock coming back into the picture. It's a time that some students look forward to, while others just want to be back by the pool!

This window of time offers great opportunities, though, because many students are open to trying something new and different at the beginning of a school year. Instead of waiting for friends' schedules to overflow with other commitments, the teens in your youth group can be proactive and invite their friends out to your weekly gathering.





It's important to remind students that as we invite people to find out more about Jesus, we need to back it up with our actions. For your teens, that might mean going the extra mile by offering help with transportation, activity expenses, or whatever it takes to get their friends to take the invitation seriously.

Remind your students that if they extend the invitation and get turned down, it's not a defeat. It's an opportunity to follow up with a deeper conversation and maybe get to explain why spiritual things are important to them. Here are a few suggestions for how students can get the conversation going.

“Remind your students that if they extend the invitation and get turned down, it's not a defeat. It's an opportunity...”



For the students . . .

-  **Invite your friends to join you at youth group this week.** If they say yes, great! If they say “no thanks,” try to move forward in the conversation anyway and ask them what they think of church. Listen well to how they respond.
-  **Once you know what they think of church,** ask them what they think about God. Do they believe in God? Why or why not? Do they think their parents’ beliefs have influenced what they believe?
-  **Ask the ultimate question:** *what do they think happens when they die?* Is it the end or the beginning of something new? In love and grace, share what you believe and why. Make sure to draw from your own story and experience with Christ. For help with this check out the [**Life in 6 Words**](#) resources from Dare 2 Share.
-  **Ask them how they decide what’s important in life.** What things influence how they spend their time? When they have a free night to do something, do they pick what’s fun or what their parents think they should do? This conversation may open the door to talk about how your relationship with Jesus impacts your decisions, and why that makes church and youth group important to you.



With the launch of a new school year, students’ calendars can get filled to the brim overnight. Be proactive! Encourage your students to make their relationship with God the main priority at the start of the school year, and then train them to invite others to learn more about Him.

2

When someone invites you to go to a party

Teenagers have never really changed in their partying ways, they've just changed hairstyles. Sometimes the invitation to a party means good, clean fun for teenagers, but sometimes it's an open door to the drinking/drug/sex scene. How do Christian teens respond to that second kind of invitation? Are they willing to stand on what they believe and on how God calls them to live?

The Bible has plenty to say on why the typical party scene is not where Christians want to be. God's Word tells us that the Holy Spirit lives in us and that when we become believers, God sends His Holy Spirit to dwell inside us. This means we should treat our bodies like God's dwelling place—in other words, take good care of them, and let the Holy Spirit be the only thing controlling our minds and bodies. The drinking/drug/sex scene just doesn't fit with that.

Here is how the Bible puts it:

Or didn't you realize that your body is a sacred place, the place of the Holy Spirit? Don't you see that you can't live however you please, squandering what God paid such a high price for? The physical part of you is not some piece of property belonging to the spiritual part of you. God owns the whole works. So let people see God in and through your body.

(1 Corinthians 6:19-20, The Message)

Don't live carelessly, unthinkingly. Make sure you understand what the Master wants. Don't drink too much wine. That cheapens your life. Drink the Spirit of God, huge draughts of him. Sing hymns instead of drinking songs! Sing songs from your heart to Christ.

(Ephesians 5:17-19, The Message)

God wants you to live a pure life. Keep yourselves from sexual promiscuity. Learn to appreciate and give dignity to your body, not abusing it, as is so common among those who know nothing of God.

(1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, The Message)

So how can students explain this to their unreached friends without sounding preachy and self-righteous, if and when the invitation to this kind of party comes? Here are some conversation ideas for students to use as springboards to discuss this issue:

For the students . . .

It's okay to express appreciation for the invitation to the party, as in, "Hey, thanks for thinking of me! I enjoy hanging out with you too! But honestly, I'm just not into the whole party scene. Maybe we can hang out together sometime and do... (and suggest an alternative activity you both enjoy)."



If your friends want to know more about why you don't want to go, you can use that open door to explain your faith and talk about Jesus! You could start with something like, "Well, a lot of the stuff that happens at parties just doesn't line up with who I am or the goals I have for my life, and a huge part of that is my faith and my relationship with Jesus. I prioritize that over doing stuff that could be fun for a night, but will probably put me in a compromising situation."

Remember,

Jesus reached out in love and truth to those who were in the "party-goer" crowd of His day. He knew the deeper struggles of their hearts, that they were looking for pleasure, satisfaction, and purpose in all the wrong places when what they really needed was Him. Because of that, He was also very clear about who He was and the life that God had called Him to.

As you encourage your students to stand firm in their faith even under pressures to party, remind them to focus on Jesus as their role model. Like Jesus, your teens are God's representatives in a dark world and they have a mission to tell others about Him.



With energy drinks

Energy drinks are a multibillion-dollar industry, and whether it's Red Bull, Monster, Rockstar, or cans of extra-caffeinated Starbucks coffee, **many consumers are under 18 years old**. Are they a wholesome alternative to the alcohol and drug scene or just chemically induced fun on a different, though legal, level? Opinions differ, but given how popular energy drinks are, talking about them at school can easily serve as a gospel conversation starter.

Though there may be nothing inherently wrong with drinking energy drinks, we as Christians know that lasting energy, strength, and power comes from our relationship with Christ, which is far better than a Red Bull buzz. Check out how the Apostle Paul describes it in these different these verses:

- We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his **energy**, which so **powerfully** works in me. (Colossians 1:28-29)
- May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the **power** of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)
- But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing **power** is from God and not from us. (2 Corinthians 4:7)
- But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my **power** is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's **power** may rest on me. (2 Corinthians 12:9)



WITH ENERGY DRINKS – CONT'D

Of course, knowing that God gives us the power and energy to keep going in life doesn't mean we don't need anything to energize us physically. But, remind your students about the spiritual truths that God is our ultimate source for everything in life. Then, suggest that next time they or their friends down an energy drink, they can bring up some of these questions:

For the students . . .

When one of your friends pulls out a Red Bull at lunch, you could start the conversation like this, "I know when I'm tired, I like to drink coffee or Red Bull, but sometimes I feel like I need a shot of caffeine for my heart and mind. Do you ever feel like that? Like you're just mentally and emotionally kind of drained? How do you handle that?"

As the conversation keeps going, here's a way to introduce your faith in God: "For me, I feel like the only thing that gets me back into a healthy place is spending time with God. I pray and read the Bible to remember that He cares about my life and has everything under control. That's what gives me that shot of energy to keep going in life. Does that make sense?"



The rush from being in a relationship with the God of the universe

tops anything that an energy drink could ever give us. In fact, Jesus Christ tops any good thing that the world has to offer, so let's empower our students to bring His love to their unsaved friends at school.

4

Using “See You At The Pole”



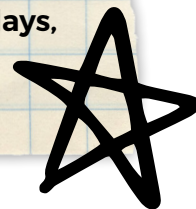
See You At the Pole™ (SYATP) is an annual student prayer gathering at school flagpoles across the country, usually happening on the fourth Wednesday in September before school starts. The theme for 2018 is “Broken,” going along with Ephesians 3:14 which says, *“I fall on my knees before the Father.”*

When it comes to seeing the lost find Jesus, prayer is the first crucial step. That makes SYATP is the perfect opportunity for your students to focus their prayers on reaching their schools for Christ. That’s already enough reason to encourage them to wake up early to attend!

But there’s more to it. Participating in this public prayer event can open doors to deeper conversations with unsaved friends. Seeing a group of people with heads bowed around the flag pole at 7:00am is pretty out of the ordinary. Other kids who don’t know Jesus or have never prayed in their life might ask questions. Here are some ways your students can respond when they’re asked what in the world they were doing around the flag pole on the morning of SYATP:

For the students . . .

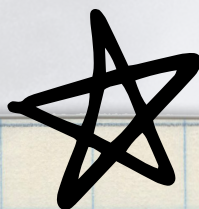
When your friends ask what you were doing, you can start with something like this: **“This morning we were part of an event called See You At the Pole which was actually happening in schools all across the country. It’s a time to get together to pray to God for our school, for protection from the crazy stuff that can happen these days, and for all of our friends inside.”**



- CONT'D ON PAGE 12

4

USING "SEE YOU AT THE POLE" -CONT'D



If your friends start asking questions like "why do you believe in God?" or "what's the point of prayer, anyway?", then you've just found an open door to explain your faith! Remember, your friends will probably respond best to hearing your own experiences of what God has done for you—not just an intellectual argument. Here's an example of how you could respond in a loving, relational way:

"I've realized that nothing in life will totally satisfy me. My relationships won't always be perfect, and even things I love won't give me the meaning that I want my life to have. I believe that God created me, loves me, and has the best plan for my life, and He's what satisfies. Having a relationship with me was so important to God that He sent Jesus to die for my sins. That means I didn't have to earn my relationship with Him. I pray to Him because I know He hears me and wants to grow me, bless me, and give my life purpose. And that's why I was at the flag pole this morning, because I believe that God loves every single person in this school and wants to be in a relationship with them too."

See You At the Pole™ is first and foremost a powerful prayer event that zeroes students in on praying for their schools—but it shouldn't be the only day of the year to pray like that. Schedule some time at youth group in the weeks leading up to and following SYATP to pray with your students for opportunities to bring up Christ with their curious friends.

And while participating in this event may be a small step of faith, God can use your students to make a huge impact on their school campuses as they bring up Jesus with their friends. It's going to be a big day—we'll See You At the Pole!

5

When your friends view Christianity negatively

"Just 16% of non-Christians in their late teens and twenties said they have a 'good impression' of Christianity," according to [a study by The Barna Group](#). What a shocking and sad commentary on the effectiveness of our Christian witness to the unbelieving world. How is it that we, who have experienced God's grace, forgiveness, love, and compassion, have represented Him so poorly to a world that so desperately needs Him?

The Barna study approached young non-Christians with twenty specific phrases (ten positive, ten negative) and asked them to identify which perceptions they most strongly associated with Christianity. Nine of the top twelve perceptions were negative and uncannily resembled Jesus's own commentary on the Pharisees and religious leaders of His day. Non-Christians said things like:

CHRISTIANITY IS JUDGMENTAL

87%

CHRISTIANITY IS HYPOCRITICAL

85%

CHRISTIANITY IS "OLD FASHIONED"

78%

Sadly, the researchers in the study noted that it was surprising how many of the respondents' negative perceptions of Christianity "were rooted in specific stories and personal interactions with Christians and in churches." This negative view is not just the result of the media bashing and trashing Christianity. This appears to be based on personal experience, especially in light of the study's observation that "frequently, young born-again Christians expressed some of the very same comments as non-Christians."

So what does this mean for our students as they encounter friends who have a bad taste in their mouth about the whole Jesus thing? How can we help our students navigate hard conversations and combat these negative perceptions?



To start, we need to evaluate what we're training our students to say as they tell their friends about God. Are we just teaching them a "turn or burn" message, or the complete gospel message of God's love for the lost? Are we helping them back up their conversations with how they live their lives and how they treat others, especially non-Christians?

Have your students do a character check and address the following questions:

For the students . . .

Do you use your faith as an excuse to be judgmental? Are you quick to condemn non-Christians when they behave in way that you define as sin? Can we expect non-believers to live by Christian morals and standards? The Bible says there's a difference between judging non-Christians and judging the sin of believers within the Body (1 Corinthians 5). Be careful about judging others' motives (1 Corinthians 4:3) or personal convictions (Romans 14:1-8). Instead of talking bad about other people's behavior, especially lost people, remember that we would all act the same way without Jesus. Approach others in a way that communicates that you are "just one beggar showing another beggar where to find bread."

Are you hypocritical? A hypocrite is someone who pretends to be something they're not. Someone who's not being real about who they are, but plays a role to impress others. Are you genuine? Is what others see on the outside really who you are on the inside? Check out Matthew 6 to explore this area of your life further.

If you say that you're a Christian, do you really let your relationship with Jesus impact your day-to-day life? Does your faith influence your priorities – how you use your time, your money, and your talents? Does it affect your Instagram feed?
Your music?
Your relationships?
Your goals and dreams?



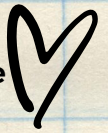
After the 'character check' conversation with God, look at these examples of how to respond when an friend starts talking negatively about your faith:



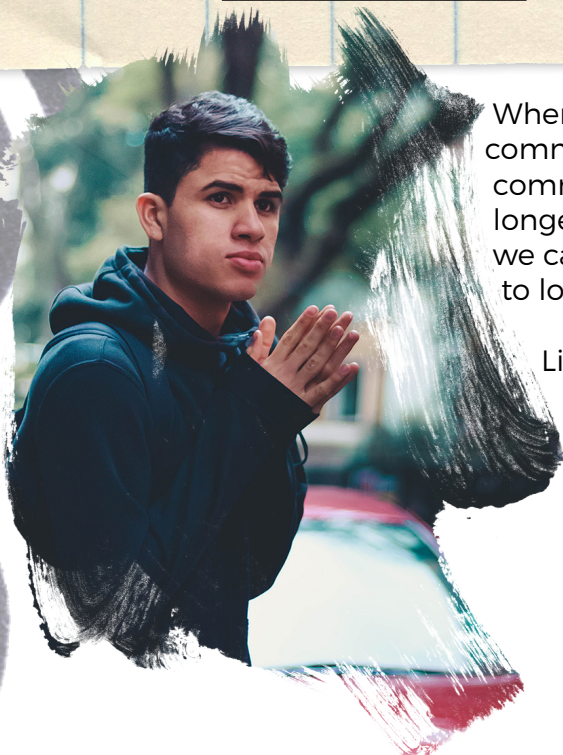
If one of your friends comments something like *"I think church is dumb," "I don't believe in God," "the Bible is an old-fashioned fantasy book,"* etc., it can be hard to respond in love and grace, let alone open your mouth at all! But when your friends make a statement like this, it means something has made them think about what they believe. Instead of getting angry and defensive, or keeping your mouth shut out of fear, view this as your open door to ask them how they got to that conclusion.

All it takes is a simple *"What makes you say that?"* to get the conversation started. While your friend explains their point of view, listen for indications that they may have been hurt by the church or by Christians in the past. Then pray for wisdom on how to respond with your own testimony. If you share your experience about a God who loves you and saved you, your conversation might make your friend want to know more.

We've all done it before—talked about a subject like we're experts when we actually know nothing about it. If your friends start spouting off facts about Christianity or the Bible that you know are totally wrong, don't get angry. Ask them if you can explain what you know about Jesus directly from the Bible.



Many unbelievers get tripped up about Jesus because the Christians they know don't represent Him well. Encourage your unsaved friends to focus on the *real* Jesus, not the one they associate with old-fashioned, hypocritical, or judgmental Christians. The Jesus of the Bible is the one who wants to be in a relationship with them and save them from their sins. An amazing tool for explaining who He is and what He's done is the [Life in 6 Words video](#) from Dare 2 Share.



When young people in the survey were asked to freely comment on their impressions of Christianity, one of the common responses was "Christianity in today's society no longer looks like Jesus." While we can't change society, we can, through God's grace and power, change ourselves to look more like Jesus!

Like a pebble in a pond, just one person accurately representing Jesus's love can create a ripple effect. Pour into your students, encourage them to be in the Word, and let the way other teenagers view Christianity be changed by their example!

6

When someone says, “My life stinks!”

At some point, all of our students will have an angry, distraught or depressed friend come to them and say, “My life stinks!” (or some other set of words that express the same sentiment).

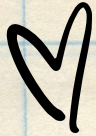
Teenagers might complain about little things, like a) it’s raining and they just washed their car, b) they broke their nail, or c) their teacher assigned thirty minutes of homework. But then there are the big, life-altering things that can happen in a teen’s life, like a) their boyfriend/girlfriend just broke up with them, b) their parents are getting divorced, or c) someone they know has a serious illness.

First, we need to preface that there are some hard situations that students just aren’t equipped to handle at their age—that’s where parents, teachers, or school counselors are needed to step in and help. It’s important to talk to your students about when to go to a trusted adult in serious situations, like when a friend is seriously depressed or is struggling with suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

But for the days when they’re called upon for support or advice from a stressed-out friend, how can we help them respond in a loving way that ultimately points to Jesus? On the next page are some ideas on how your students can respond with God’s love to a friend who says, “My life stinks!”



For the students . . .



The saying goes *"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."* When a friend is having a bad day, start by showing them that you genuinely care about what's going on. Your actions can reflect God's heart for them because He cares about every detail of their lives. You, as His representative on earth, get to show them His love!

Say something like, "Hey, _____, I'm sorry that you're having a rough day. Is there anything I can do help make it better today?"



When a friend is going through something really difficult, something that makes them question their identity or what life is really all about, they are in a place where only God can provide the love, comfort, and answers they need. You can help them discover His love for them and how a relationship with Jesus can give them hope for this life. Here's an example of how you could respond with love and bring up your faith in a kind, "non-preachy" way.

"I'm so sorry that you're going through that. I'm here for you and am going to be praying for you. I truly believe that God loves you and wants to be here for you right now, and I'd love to talk with you about Him if you ever want to. For now, is there anything I can do for you?"

As the conversation progresses, explain your own testimony of how God has helped you through hard times. Explain the gospel and that Jesus came to give us hope in this painful, sinful, fallen world where disasters happen, sickness takes those we love, and people hurt each other because of the sin and selfishness in our hearts. Jesus came for the broken, and this is the perfect time to tell your friends about His love for them.

It's easy to just shrug off the complaints of others when they moan "My life stinks!", especially when it doesn't affect our lives. But with the ever-tightening grip that the enemy has on teenagers often resulting in suicides, school-shootings, and more, those complaints cannot be taken lightly.

Train and encourage your students to really listen to their friends and give some thought and prayer to the complaints they hear at school. This isn't asking them to carry all of their friends' burdens, but empowering them to combat those burdens with the hope of the gospel. After all, our students are the ones on the front lines of reaching their friends for Christ, so let's help them take every opportunity to bring their angry, distraught, and depressed friends to the God who loves them.

Conclusion

Your students don't have to travel to a remote, third world country to find the lost and broken of the world—they can simply enter their school hallways. Whether they let on or not, every student who doesn't know Jesus is struggling to find their identity, purpose, and peace in this crazy world. The students in your youth group know where to find those things, though, and it's all in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Let's help our students bring the light of the gospel into the darkness that consumes too many schools today. Let's train them to, as Peter tells us in 1 Peter 3:15, ***"...always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect..."***



Learn More About Becoming a Gospel Advancing Ministry

Want to see your youth group advance the gospel and multiply disciples? A Gospel Advancing Ministry is one that's based on the seven time-tested, biblical values found throughout the book of Acts. These values help build a mindset—not just a method—of advancing the gospel through teenagers.

GET A BRIEF LOOK AT THE 7 VALUES BELOW:



1. Intercessory prayer fuels it



2. Relational evangelism drives it



3. Leaders fully embrace and model it



4. A disciple multiplication strategy guides it



5. A bold vision focuses it



6. Biblical outcomes measure it



7. Ongoing programs reflect it

Visit GospelAdvancing.org for more information on how you can transform your youth group and reach the world for Christ, one teenager at a time.



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