

DARE 2 SHARE

GREG STIER



Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.
Carol Stream, Illinois

Dare 2 Share

Copyright © 2006 by Dare 2 Share Ministries, Inc.
All rights reserved. International copyright secured.

A Focus on the Family book published by
Tyndale House Publishers, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188

TYNDALE and Tyndale's quill logo are registered trademarks of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

The GOSPEL Journey is a trademark of Dare 2 Share Ministries.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*®. NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved. If bold appears within a quoted verse, the emphasis was added by the author.

People's names and certain details of their stories have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals involved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—without prior permission of Focus on the Family.

Editor: Marianne Hering
Cover design: Jessie McGrath
Character photos in chapters 24–37: Steve Stanton
Author portrait photographer: Wayne Armstrong

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Stier, Greg.

Dare 2 share : a field guide to sharing your faith with anyone, anytime, anywhere!/
by Greg Stier.

p. cm.

ISBN-13: 978-1-58997-370-1

ISBN-10: 1-58997-370-4

1. Evangelistic work. 2. Witness bearing (Christianity) 3. Apologetics. I. Title: Dare to share. II. Title.

BV3790.S84 2006

248'.5—dc22

2006004270

Printed in the United States of America
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 / 12 11 10 09 08 07 06

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	ix
Read This First	xi

Part One: Getting Ready for the Journey

1 Doug	3
2 Passion Fuel	7
3 Get Strong	23
4 Beware the Darkness	27
5 Knowing That You Can Know and What You Do Know	35
6 Sharing Your Faith with Style	43

Part Two: How to Share Your Faith

7 How to Bring It Up Without Throwing Up	61
8 Understanding the GOSPEL Journey	71
9 God Created Us to Be with Him	77
10 Our Sins Separate Us from God	83
11 Sins Cannot Be Removed by Good Deeds	89
12 Paying the Price for Sin, Jesus Died and Rose Again ...	97
13 Everyone Who Trusts in Him Has Eternal Life	103
14 Life That's Eternal Means We Will Be with Jesus Forever	107
15 How to Take Your Friends on the GOSPEL Journey ...	113
16 How to Bring Your Friends to a Point of Deciding ...	125
17 How to Keep the Message Clear to Your Friends ...	129

18	How to Share Your Own Story	133
19	How to Have L ³ Conversations	139
20	How to Defend Your Faith Without Being Offensive . . .	149
21	Know How to Use Your Seven Secret “Weapons”	159
22	How to Help New Believers Grow in Their Relationship with Jesus	169

Part Three: Your Guide to Sharing Your Faith with Anyone

23	Starbucks Spirituality	175
24	Alisha the Agnostic	179
25	Andy the Atheist	185
26	Bailey the Buddhist	191
27	Erin the Evolutionist	197
28	Hari the Hindu	203
29	Jordan the Jehovah’s Witness	209
30	Jenna the Jew	215
31	Marty the Mormon	221
32	Mo the Muslim	227
33	Nicole the New Ager	233
34	Ryan the Religious	239
35	Sid the Satanist	245
36	Tara the Typical	251
37	Willow the Wiccan	257

Notes	263
About the Author	267

READ THIS FIRST

This book is not designed to sit on your shelf or to exist under a pile of clothes in your room. It is designed to be a field guide to sharing your faith. Put it in your backpack and take it with you to school. Open it during a lunch and read up a bit and then, when that Wiccan kid or Mormon friend sits down, flip to the back and read up for a minute or two on how you can share Jesus with him in a relevant and nonthreatening way.

In the back of this book (part 3) you'll find out how to share your faith with those who hold the following belief systems:

- Agnosticism
- Atheism
- Buddhism
- Evolution
- Hinduism
- The Watchtower and Tract Society (Jehovah's Witnesses)
- Judaism
- Mormonism
- Islam (Muslim beliefs)
- Wicca (a form of witchcraft)
- And more

But what you are *not* going to find in the back of this book are some kind of spiritual bullets that you can lock and load into your gospel "gun" to blow them away with! Instead, you'll find conversation starters, complements and common ground, the areas you probably agree on and disagree about, a few key passages to focus on in your talk, and some helpful hints.

Part 3 includes more in-depth information about what each of these belief systems hold to and how they often differ from the essentials of Christianity. The last section of this book will be extremely helpful in getting you started creating conversations with those from differing belief systems, and it will help you go even deeper when you find you need more resources. Once a healthy dialogue is going, you can bust out some of the powerful facts of the Christian faith that help other teens reconsider what they believe.

This book will also help you realize that one of the most powerful persuaders when it comes to sharing Jesus is a Spirit-empowered, loving Christian who listens just as much as he or she talks!

But this field guide doesn't stop there. As you read this book you'll also discover the following:

- How to identify your style of sharing Jesus
- How to defend your faith without offending your friend
- How to share the gospel message in a clear and compassionate way
- How to make the message clear and simple
- How to share your own personal story of coming to believe in Jesus
- And much, much more!

When you are done reading this book and learning the principles it explains, you will know how to share your faith anytime, anywhere, with anyone!

Along the way there are some short and helpful parts of this book that will give you insights, information, and encouragement when it comes to sharing Jesus with your friends:

WARNING!

This section will give you a heads-up that will keep you from making a mistake when it comes to sharing Jesus with your friends.

True Confessions

Here's where I share a true story from my own experiences where I messed up sharing the gospel with somebody else.

Can I Get a Witness?

These are true stories or insights from teenagers who are daring to share their faith anytime, anywhere, and with anyone.

The 411

This will give you some tactical and practical help when it comes to Web sites, resources, and ideas to help you become better at sharing your faith with your friends.

So before you get started, realize that when you share Jesus with your friends you are taking them on the journey of a lifetime. This book can become your field guide during this dangerous and exciting adventure. Of course the ultimate field guide is the Word of God itself!

My challenge to you is to read *Dare 2 Share* all the way through once. Take a few hours, sit down, and read the whole thing (believe me, it's easy reading!). Then put it in your backpack to keep with you as a handy reference guide. This will give you easy access to the basic information you need to share your faith with anyone, anytime, anywhere!

But more than anything else, before you get started, pray. Pray that God will move in your heart, soul, and mind to give you the passionate motivation and the practical tools to reach your friends, family, classmates, teammates, and coworkers for Jesus. This life-changing adventure will not only transform your friends, it will change you on the deepest level as well.

Let the journey begin right now!

PASSION FUEL

I remember the first time that I shared my faith. It was with five or six teenagers at Sloan's Lake in Denver. They were just standing around, so I walked up to them and started asking them questions. Pretty soon we were in a conversation about spiritual things and soon after I was explaining the gospel to them the best that I knew how.

Oh, by the way, I was 10 years old at the time.

That may sound kind of weird, a fifth grader sharing Jesus with a bunch of high school kids out of the blue. But I couldn't help myself. Somebody had given me passion fuel.

What is passion fuel? It is the internal drive and motivation to tell others about Jesus! It is what my brother Doug was driven by. It is what got my engine revved up too!

How do you get passion fuel in your spiritual system? You ask God for it. You search God's Word for it. You seek it with all your heart.

When you stop to think about it, you see passion fuel everywhere. If you have a friend who is really good at sports and excels on the court or the field, he or she is probably tanked up on passion fuel. That is the burning, brewing motivation that

sizzles and simmers behind his athletic accomplishments.

For some that passion fuel is comprised of a longing to hear “Way to go!” or “I’m proud of you!” from their dad. For some it is jealousy that fuels their actions. For others it is the desire for a scholarship or popularity at their school.

There are all sorts of motivations that can comprise passion fuel, good ones or bad ones. The point is that everyone who excels at anything is usually propelled by passion fuel of some brand.

My brother and I were energized by passion fuel too. This fuel gave us all the energy we needed to share our faith in spite of our “handicaps,” my brother’s being his lack of social development and “slowness,” mine my age.

Passion fuel can overcome any inability, disability, or excuse. Passion fuel can give you the internal thrust to bust through the perceived barriers that are keeping you from sharing your faith in Jesus.

What are those roadblocks for you?

Maybe you don’t know how to share your faith. Don’t worry, passion fuel will motivate you to discover how (and reading and applying this book will help too!).

Maybe you are afraid of what your friends will think if you start sharing Jesus with them. Passion fuel will give you the internal motivation to run that fear right over and to share Jesus in spite of the quaver in your voice and knocking in your knees.

Perhaps you are not living a life that backs up your message. You are kind of afraid that if you start sharing Jesus with your friends that they will point out this inconsistency. Passion fuel will give you the strength to start living differently so that what comes out of your life and your lips are not contradicting each other.

Whatever your roadblock, passion fuel will help you drive right through it!

What was the passion fuel that propelled my brother and me? To be honest, there were different kinds at different times. Just as there are different types of gasoline when you pull up to the pump, from regular unleaded to super unleaded, there are several different kinds of passion fuel you can use when it comes to sharing your faith. Among these motivations are obedience to God, compassion for the lost, and the fear of our friends going to hell.

These aren't the only kinds of passion fuel, but they are right at the top of the list. Among other motivations that can propel you is the fear of giving an account to Jesus someday (2 Corinthians 5:10), the rush from getting rewarded by Him for our faithfulness (1 Corinthians 3:11-15), the transformational power the gospel can exert in the lives of unbelievers (Romans 1:16), and so on! There are all sorts of motivations that can become your passion fuel for sharing Jesus with everyone you encounter.

But we are going to focus on three types of fuel that I believe can get you turning and burning down the road toward the finish line faster than anything! I'm going to give you three types of fuel to choose from: Leaded, Unleaded, and Diesel.

1. LEADED PASSION FUEL: BECAUSE GOD WANTS YOU TO

Right before Jesus ascended into heaven He told His disciples, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20). Basically, Jesus is telling His disciples (and

if you are a follower of Jesus then you are a disciple, too) that we have the right, responsibility, and reason to share the message of Jesus.

We have the right to share this message because Jesus has the authority and has authorized us to go and make disciples out of everybody on this planet! Even in parts of the world where sharing the gospel is illegal we have the right to share our faith. Why? Because the Son of God Himself gave you the right! He earned the right by shedding His blood for our sins!

We have the responsibility to share this message because Jesus commanded us to do it! This passage of Scripture has been nicknamed “the Great Commission,” not “the Good Suggestion,” for a reason. It is not optional. God Himself is telling you to go and share this message with everybody you can.

We have the reason to share this message because Jesus goes with us! He tells us that He is with us always, even to the end of the age. Stop and think about that for a moment. The God of the universe is with you every second of every day. Jesus is with you at school, when you drive down the street, when you are over at

your friend’s house, when you are surfing the Internet, and when you are playing sports. He is with you every day and all the time.

WARNING!

Although we have the right to share our faith, we need to make sure that we do it with love and humility. Otherwise, nobody is going to want to hear about it!

If you could see Him would you be embarrassed to introduce Him to your friends? No way! You’d go up to your friends and say, “Hey, I want to introduce you to my best friend, Jesus. Have you two ever met?” If you could see Jesus you would never be embarrassed

to introduce Him to your friends. Okay, brace yourself; this is where it gets a little convicting.

The Bible tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:7 that we should “live by faith, not by sight.” In other words, we should live as though we can see the invisible. We should walk by what we know to be true and not just by what we can see with the human eye. How does all this apply to you and sharing the gospel with your friends? Simple: If Jesus tells us that He is with us to the end of the age, then He is with us. We should live like He is right at our side all the time and talk about Him with boldness.

My Cousin Eric

I don't come from a typical religious, Bible-reading, church-going family. I come from a family of bodybuilding, tobacco-chewing, beer-drinking thugs. Many of my cousins and uncles are title-winning bodybuilders. I don't know what happened to me. I got ripped off by the gene pool.

One of my cousins, Eric, is especially big. At one point he could bench press well above 500-pounds. He is 5' 8" tall and about 5' 8" wide. Suffice it to say, he is huge.

One night when I was in high school I was at a popular mall, busy sharing my faith with other teenagers. Two teenage boys I was talking to were especially negative to the message. As I started sharing with them about Jesus they began making fun of me. That was a mistake, a big one.

Eric, who is a believer, was leaning against a wall about 10 feet away, listening in to our conversation. When these two guys started making fun of his scrawny little cousin (that would be me), he slowly lumbered his gigantic frame over to the snickering teens. With pecs flexed and biceps bulging he glared into their

eyes and said, “This is my cousin. If you don’t listen to what he has got to say you are going to want to know where you will go when you die . . . because you will die.”

Suddenly these two poor teenagers were downright “interested” in the gospel message. They smiled and nodded and said they would trust in Christ right away. Trembling and terrified they prayed with me right there in the mall. I don’t know if they really became Christians or were just going through the motions because my cousin was standing by my side. All I do know is that I sure liked having Eric right there next to me while I was talking about Jesus. I thought to myself, *If I could just take my cousin Eric with me wherever I went sharing, I would never be afraid again. If someone wouldn’t trust in Christ I could just say, “Eric, beat the sin out of them.”* Just kidding. I would never do that. But the whole incident made me think about a person and a presence bigger than Eric.

I suddenly realized that the maker of heaven and earth (and Eric) dwells inside of me and goes with me everywhere I go . . . Jesus Christ Himself. When I’m afraid to share my faith I try to reflect on that promise of Jesus’ presence, and I am suddenly infused with a new sense of confidence. “I am with you always” . . . always.

He is always there to encourage, coach, strengthen, and enable us. He is always with us. This mind-blowing truth should be a big reason we are sharing our faith. He is with us and He told us in the Great Commission to tell everyone about Him.

2. UNLEADED PASSION FUEL: YOUR FRIENDS NEED JESUS NOW!

Whether they know it or not, your friends need Jesus right now. We as humans were made with an invisible, unquenchable need

for God. Life without God is like having a car without an engine, a cell phone without a service provider, or a book without words. It's the existence of God that gives us the basis for hope. It's the love of God that gives us the reason to hope.

If there is a God and that God loved us enough to send His Son to die for our sins, then life is worth living. Why? Because if this God exists then everything we do on this earth matters for eternity!

Can you imagine living a life without the hope of Jesus? Sure, there are some temporary fun fixes—drugs, sexual promiscuity, drinking, and partying, just to name a few. And, yes, there are some “non-sin” pastimes that one can enjoy apart from Jesus—friends, sports, hobbies, clothes, family, to name a few.

But at the core of every non-Christian there is a gaping hole. This hole can be temporarily filled with friends, sports, or sin. But it doesn't stick. Some who recognize this keep trying harder and harder to fill that hole. They try to pack it with more and more escape activities. But no matter how much stuff they stuff into it, it is never fully filled. Why? Because the hole is too big for anything on this side of eternity! The only thing that can truly, fully, and permanently fill that gaping hole is a relationship with Jesus Christ.

From the outside looking in, your friends who don't know Jesus may look happy and fulfilled. They may seem like they have true joy and purpose on this earth. But if you could see into the secret chambers of their soul you would see this black hole of secret longing that can only be filled and fulfilled by Jesus.

When Jesus walked the earth He could see this cold, dark rift in the souls of people. Here's what the Bible says about Jesus' ability to see into the souls of those around Him: “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed

and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matthew 9:36). *Thousands* of people were following Jesus and He could see that black hole of hopelessness in their souls. He felt sorry for them. He hurt for them.

Do you hurt for your friends who don't know Jesus? And what about the crowds of students at your school? Look at them through the eyes of Jesus. Imagine that gaping hole in their souls and then be willing to do whatever it takes to fill it with Jesus.

3. DIESEL PASSION FUEL: THERE'S HELL TO PAY!

I have a confession to make that may surprise you. I have a serious problem with the doctrine of hell. It's hard to imagine a loving God who would create an *eternal* place of suffering for sinners. Don't get me wrong; I think that sinners should suffer some. But an eternity of agony in “fire and brimstone” for all those who happen not to be Christians? Come on!

It's a lot easier to imagine hell as a place where people are not physically tortured but psychologically tormented until they regret and repent. Maybe at this point they are even given a second chance to respond to Christ. This kind of hell seems to have the best of both worlds: Sinners are punished and then mercy is demonstrated. Perhaps the exception to this rule is the worst of the worst sinners. Those who commit mass murder in the name of some warped ideology like Hitler and Stalin can burn forever as far as I'm concerned.

Or maybe hell could be mere annihilation—eternal extinction of the soul, if you will. When people are plunged into that infernal inferno, it is a final purging of existence. Their slates are wiped clean and they cease to be. As horrible as that may sound,

it is infinitely more fathomable than an *eternal* hell.

I have a problem with accepting a doctrine that condemns the sinner to a forever future without hope, without escape, without a second chance. To be honest my heart begins to hurt and my brain starts to ache when I think about it. Questions flood my mind and challenge my convictions. Questions like how could a loving God send people to an eternity in fire and brimstone? And if God is so merciful why would He cause people to suffer for so long in such pain?

But no matter how many times I try to explain hell away or redefine it and make it palatable to my puny brain, there it is in black and white again and again throughout the pages of the Bible. No matter how I try to imagine it away or tone it down, one thing is clear: The Bible describes hell as for real and forever.

Jesus throws kerosene on the flames when He speaks so matter-of-factly about a literal hell. Did you know that the Son of God spoke more about hell than heaven? Of the 19 times that hell is mentioned in the New Testament, 12 are mentioned by Jesus. And He never described hell as figurative, temporary, or anything less than horrific. Five different times He calls it a place of “weeping and gnashing of teeth.” I’m not even sure what gnashing of teeth means, but it doesn’t sound pleasant.

Speaking of unpleasant thoughts, check out these verses about hell:

“And they will go out and look upon the dead bodies of those who rebelled against me; their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind.” (Isaiah 66:24)



“But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 8:12)



He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power. (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9)



“[Anyone who worships evil] will drink of the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night.” (Revelation 14:10-11)

The list of verses goes on and on and on. From the Old Testament to the New Testament, from the prophets to the apostles to Jesus Himself, hell is described with real and raw adjectives as your worst fears coming true and then multiplied by infinity for eternity.

Here is where the troubling question rears its ugly head once again. How could a loving God send people whom He created to suffer in an eternal hell?

And maybe that question is the problem. Oftentimes the twenty-first-century version of the Christian God is just loving instead of *just* and *loving*. The just part of God (which demands absolute justice, holiness, and perfection) has been minimized and the loving part of God (which shows mercy, grace, and forgiveness) has been maximized. As a result, we have tailored our view

into a God who is big on love and light on bite. He becomes more of a cosmic Santa Claus who caters to our every whim, rather than the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

While most of us Christians believe in some kind of hell, we usually just don't bring it up much. It is an unpleasant subject and leads to too many questions about the character of God. Hell is that crazy doctrine that we keep locked in the basement of our belief systems. We all know that it is there, chained to the underbelly of the theology of the holiness of God. We hope that it stays in the shadows and never comes up in conversation. Why? Because if people found out what we really believed they would think we were radicals, extremists, and kooks. If hell isn't real, then maybe we are.

But if it is real, then why aren't we more intense, more aggressive, more intentional, more urgent? If hell is real (and the Bible

CAN I GET A WITNESS?

My name is Chelsi! I am 16 years old and I live in Fairborn, Ohio! I attended a Dare 2 Share conference and wasn't expecting my life to change as much as it did in a matter of two days! I watched the drama "Letter from Hell" and I took the 48-hour challenge [to share my faith with someone within 48 hours]. Honestly I thought it would be the hardest thing to do, but when I walked into school on Monday I looked at people as if they were burning in hell! I could not stand it. I could not believe I was letting my friends go to hell! From that weekend on, I opened a conversation up about God and His Son Jesus Christ every chance I could get! Many people have given their hearts to the Lord this year, and it wouldn't have happened if I hadn't told them the GOSPEL!

says it is) then we should be motivated to keep as many people as we can out of it—friends, foes, teachers, classmates, coworkers, teammates, family members, strangers . . . everybody.

I SAW THE SIGN

When I was 12 years old my youth leader, Tim Sanchez, gave me a morbid homework assignment. He told me to go to a local mall on a Saturday afternoon and just sit on a bench at a busy section and watch people for 30 minutes. As I watched them I was supposed to imagine a small sign on their foreheads with the words “Bound for Hell” written across it. This whole thing sounded kind of weird to me, but I did it anyway.

I walked to the Westminster Mall, which was only a mile or so away from my house. Once in, I made my way around the mall for a few minutes trying to find the best place to sit down and begin my “homework.” Once I found the right spot I sat down, settled in, and started looking at people intently, trying to imagine those eerie words scrawled across the foreheads of those who passed by. At first I felt stupid and self-conscious. People were watching me watch them and it felt uncomfortable. But in a few minutes I was well into my imagination exercise.

In those 30 minutes my life changed forever.

I watched young and old, geeks and freaks, herds of nerds and flocks of jocks, blue-haired elderly women and blue-haired pierced skaters, swaggering mall security guards and staggering old men, moms trying to catch their toddlers on the run and dads trying to catch a nap on the benches. Not only did I imagine these people bound for a literal hell, I imagined their lives, apart from Christ, as a living hell. This was the closest I ever came to understanding