

Gospel Stories @ College Park

The fifty stories that follow are personal accounts of gospel conversations started by people just like you, with a neighbor, a co-worker, a family member, a friend. It's the start that matters. Not every conversation leads to a breakthrough. But every conversation is a step of faith, a way to proclaim the gospel and engage people with the love of Christ, right where we are.



Mandy

01

Our neighbors have never been interested in talking about God. They allowed their young daughter to attend our backyard Bible club years ago, though they would come get her about halfway through. They came to one Christmas show a couple of years ago but haven't wanted to return.

Last week, the elderly father-in-law was rushed to the hospital with a heart attack. I sent a quick text, "I'm praying for you right

now.” She responded, “Thank you.” I figured that was the end of it.

A few days later, though, she texted: **“I think God answered your prayers**, my father-in-law is being discharged.” I celebrated with her and texted back, “I think God wants you to know that He loves you.” She responded with a heart.

I felt led to make cookies and brought them over. They weren’t home, but I left them on the porch and sent a text. That’s as far as we’ve gotten, but I’m praying they’ll accept our invitation to an Easter service.



David

02

A number of years ago I noticed a student pocket a pencil sharpener in my art class. I felt a strong push from the Lord to dig deeper. My suspicions of intended self-harm were confirmed when I had a talk with the student in the hallway. Instead of lecturing, I gently asked if I could pray for him.

Yesterday I got an email from this student asking if I remembered him and thanking me for changing his life that day. **He said he might not be here today** if I hadn’t been there for him in that moment.



Elizabeth

03

There is a couple with a young baby in our neighborhood. **We crossed paths several times on walks** and stopped to say hello, which turned into exchanging phone numbers and having them over for dinner. We are excited to continue building the relationship and are praying for opportunities to share the gospel with them.



Moussa

04

I recently started a new role with a new manager on a highly ambitious and politically complex team. From the beginning I have admired the way she carries herself. Despite the pressures of the environment, she consistently performs at a high level while maintaining genuine compassion for the people around her, something that can be rare in a cutthroat culture.

Last week she shared her faith journey with me. After growing up Catholic and experiencing significant loss, she began attending a Bible study, heard the gospel, and came to faith in Christ. In return I shared my own testimony of **growing up Muslim and later coming to know Christ.**

Since that conversation there has been a meaningful shift in our working relationship. There is a deeper level of trust and openness between us, a shared sense of purpose that extends beyond professional goals, and a greater sense that what we are doing can serve a larger mission and impact the people around us.



Abby

05

I met my friend back in 2020 **training martial arts together.** We each reached the same level before the gym closed, but we stayed connected. We both enjoy crafting, being outside, and Lord of the Rings!

Over the years I have invited her and her husband to Christmas and Easter events, and I think she planned to come once but something came up. But I continue to invite! The THINK conference encouraged me to be more invested in her life and to prioritize attending things she invites me to.

We have a shared interest in Renaissance faires, so I am planning to coordinate a time to go together and invite some friends to join us!

I am grateful for this friendship and praying for opportunities to build deeper trust, where she feels comfortable coming to me with needs or hard questions. And praying in faith for her and her husband’s salvation!



Julia

06

Ever since I moved to Indiana almost six years ago, most of my social interactions have been with people in my small neighborhood and at College Park Church. After hearing Sam Chan at THINK say, “We have to enter their world before we can invite them into our world,” I realized I needed to get out of my comfort zone.

In the weeks following the conference, I researched how I could get to know other local women. I discovered organizations that help women meet and do activities together, joined their Facebook groups, and started trying out their events. So far I have gone on a walk with a large group of women, **carpooled with strangers on an all-day road trip**, and I am now organizing a game day at my local library.

I am discovering that there are a lot of lonely women in Indiana who desire friendship but don’t know how to find it. I am hoping to make new friends and be a light for Jesus in the process.



Alonzo

07

A former colleague and I meet periodically since I retired. In a recent conversation, my colleague asked how I navigated particular challenges in my career. It **gave me an opportunity to share the importance of faith.** Following that conversation, I invited my colleague to Easter service but a travel conflict prevented attendance.

We have an upcoming coffee, and I have been praying that God will allow me to boldly revisit the importance of faith in Christ as my anchor and source of strength and then to inquire about my colleague's own source of strength. I am praying for an engaging conversation about faith in Jesus Christ.



Jacob

08

Wearing my College Park T-shirt to the gym sparked an unexpected conversation. I've received compliments on it before because of its simple yet powerful message: **"God is holy. I am not. Jesus saves. Christ is my life."** Recently, a man approached me and asked about the shirt. He shared that he had been struggling lately and wanted to know more about the message.

As we talked, he opened up about some personal struggles and asked if I would pray for him. I was grateful for the opportunity. What began as a conversation about a T-shirt became a meaningful discussion about faith, an opportunity for prayer, and the beginning of a new friendship.



Cierra

09

What started as a work relationship three years ago has morphed into a personal relationship. I worked as a nanny for a Hindu family, and their hearts were hostile towards Christianity and Jesus. I shared with them that I attended College Park Church in the first year of working for them, and the conversation ended there.

I continued our work relationship and thought our contact would end as it was time to transition to a new family. **To my surprise, but not God's surprise,** they reached out three months after my last workday asking if I could come over for dinner. The prayers and effort over the course of those three years were not in vain. The bridge has been built to share the hope of Jesus!



Tiffany

10

Our four year old has been going to Sunday school at College Park for about a year. This week **he set up a makeshift podium** so he could share the gospel of Jesus with his friends at his babysitter's house. His sitter is not a believer, so it was so cool to see God working through our son!



Kevin

11

It started with a conversation with a co-worker about my plans for Easter weekend. I shared that I would be spending time at church for Good Friday and Easter services. He replied that he wants to make his faith more of a priority but often feels intimidated because he is "not perfect."

I encouraged him that God is perfect and covers us in grace and that truth frees us. It was a bridge-building moment, and I plan to **continue pulling on this thread** as God provides opportunity.



Robert

12

“We are going to have a very special party in the clubhouse, and I need your help” was the message I received from my neighbor. Over the years I had helped her through a few home emergencies, so we had a good relationship.

On Sunday afternoon I was walking past the clubhouse when she spotted me and invited me in. The party was winding down, and family members were cleaning up. I learned that her dad had just turned 90. She introduced me as a missionary and the best neighbor she ever had.

I was wearing an IU sweatshirt, and we struck up a conversation with her brother about IU’s fantastic results last season. Within a few minutes, I was able to share how the Lord had worked in my life and what my wife and I have been doing these past 25 years, sharing the gospel and training others to do the same. He was particularly interested in our overseas work. There seemed to be some knowledge of Christianity and overall it was a very pleasant conversation.

Seeds were planted.



Sam & Rachael

13

During one of the busiest times in our lives, we received a request for extended hosting of a young adult. It is transforming into us sharing our home and life with her. The Lord is allowing our family, church members, and local community to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

I have shared my testimony with our guest three times already, and she enthusiastically allowed us to purchase a Bible for her. She also attended church with us, and the sermon was spot on what our discussions at home have been about.

We are weak and flawed, but Christ is moving and the Holy Spirit is equipping us second by second. This life will soon pass, and what is done for Christ will last. Praise God for prompting us to do hard things in our busiest season of life!



Shannon

14

I walked over to ask my neighbor something, expecting the conversation to be brief. However, it was clear that her heart was very heavy. The conversation led to her sharing that a close friend had just passed away suddenly. **What started as a quick “hello”** turned into a deep conversation about grief and God’s love and comfort. I was able to pray for her and hope to connect with her again soon.



Simon

15

About six months ago, a close friend reached out to me and two other guys about starting a Bible study with some of his new coworkers. One of the coworkers was not a Christian, and the other was far from his faith. He invited them to join us at a local coffee shop on Saturday mornings. His coworkers thought they were joining an existing Bible study and **had no idea we started it just for them.**

We started with John 1 and trusted where the Lord led the conversation from there. About three months in, the coworker who was not a Christian accepted Christ! And the other coworker made a significant life change that reflected his renewed commitment to his faith. We have been discipling

them ever since and answering a ton of questions. They are both on fire for Christ, and the work the Lord is doing in their lives is evident.



Molly

16

After the THINK conference, my friend and I decided to have lunch out. Our waitress was delightful. **She had recently moved to Indianapolis and had not yet made any major connections.** She is a college student, and we talked with her about Jesus being her best friend, which led into a very good conversation about our faith and College Park Church.

We invited her to join us the following Sunday, exchanged phone numbers, and made plans to have lunch in our home. We are praying that our friendship with her will blossom into a wonderful spiritual relationship.



Mike

17

I had my first meeting with a guy I will be mentoring over the next six months. I asked about his spiritual background, and he shared that he grew up going to church but fell away, though he did believe in God.

I asked if anyone had ever taken a Bible and shared with him how to become a follower of Jesus, and **he said no.** So I shared four Bible verses with him, had him read each one, and explained them. I told him that typically someone becomes a follower of Jesus by praying a prayer and asked him where he was at. He said he needed more time but wanted to continue having conversations.

Over the next few weeks, we kept meeting and discussing Jesus and the Bible. **Then one day he said he was ready** to pray to receive Jesus as Savior, and we prayed together.



Riley

18

I go on walks with my kids on sunny days. We have been able to get to know another family who also enjoys going for walks with their little one. The mom and I connected almost immediately and started planning playdates and dinners for our families.

A few weeks ago **she asked for a recommendation on a Bible translation** and where to start. It has been a joy to have small conversations with her about what she is reading and share the hope I have in Christ.

Although she is not ready to attend church with us yet, I am in awe of the Spirit at work in her life and God's sovereignty to cause our paths to cross on a midday walk.



Bob

19

The last time I visited my neighbor, we talked about **the books on his shelf**. He recently texted me about a book he had read with religious themes, so I bought a copy for us to discuss together!



Nate

20

We as a church have been working to reach the Azerbaijani people since 2004. Nakhchivan is an autonomous republic of Azerbaijan that for political reasons we as foreigners have never been able to visit. Recently, Marty and I booked an Uber, and when she saw the name of the driver, she said, **"He's probably from Azerbaijan."** Sure enough, he was! And he was from the Nakhchivan region!

We had a great conversation, and I finally asked him if I could share the essence of the gospel with him. He gladly said yes. When I was done, he said he understood. I told him he should read the gospel for himself instead of just taking my word for it. I told him about the YouVersion app and later texted him the link. He said he would download it and begin reading the Gospel of Matthew.

It is incredible to be able to reach an Azerbaijani from Nakhchivan right here in the US!

Chris	21
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I have a cousin who doesn't believe in God. This came to light when I started blogging about my experience as a follower of Christ and he commented on one of my posts asking a really good question about **how God can be good in the midst of tragedy**. This opened the door to spiritual conversations.

Last year I visited him, and we have stayed in touch through a video app where we share life updates every month. Recently he referred to me as his only "evangelical friend" and asked a few questions about my viewpoints on a specific topic. This gave me the opportunity to share a biblical worldview and dispel some misunderstandings about what it means to be a Christian.

It was a brief interaction, but one that took our ongoing conversation to a deeper level.



Melody	22
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A friend shared with me about a troubling experience she had with a New Age religion. She had become **bound by beliefs that were bringing fear and anxiety into her life**. I had the opportunity to share with her about the love of Jesus and the freedom and peace that come from trusting in him.

Recently, she told me that she has given her life to Jesus, gotten baptized, and is experiencing a peace and transformation unlike anything she has ever known. She shared that she no longer desires to live the way she once did or pursue the things she used to before coming to know Jesus.



AJ

23

At an out-of-town wedding this weekend, I was catching up with a college friend. I brought up my Christian faith as we were discussing being fathers of young children, and he began to share his struggle to believe in a God who would not allow his wife, who grew up in a Daoist tradition, into heaven because she believes in other gods.

That was a difficult conversation to step into, but I tried to focus on Jesus and how he is the key in all circumstances to a saving faith. I will be praying for an opportunity to follow up and continue the conversation!



Taylor

24

I have a close friend who grew up in the LDS church and is very averse to the Christian faith, yet knows my heart for Jesus and has never pushed me away. We are currently **planning to travel together with our families**, knowing it will give us ample opportunities to connect, hear their story, care for their kids, and compassionately share the gospel with them!



Daniel

25

Our neighbors a few houses down are not Christians and have a son the same age as our oldest. They have been trying to get pregnant again, and it has been a difficult journey. **My wife has been able to share her own experience of struggling with infertility** and encourage them, and I have been able to pray with both of them several times.

They recently got pregnant, but it looks like they may lose this precious baby. We have been able to encourage them through prayer, invite them over to share meals, and show them the love of Christ.



Joshua

26

I don't typically go into the gas station, but that day I decided to go in and God introduced me to Muhammad. He asked me about my day, and that began a conversation about God. Muhammad is a Muslim and wanted to share what he believes with me. That opened the door for me to share the gospel with him.

After that evening we began meeting to talk about the Bible and the Quran. I read the Quran so that I could understand what he believes. Muhammad is from Sudan and does not speak English well, so we used Google Translate a lot. I visited his mosque and spoke with his imam (the spiritual leader of his mosque). I was able to share the gospel with him as well.



Laura

27

My neighbor, friend, and boss is Jewish. We have gotten close over the past few years through **backyard hangouts, working together, and school carpools** for our kids. Doing the Remember Me women’s Bible study about the Jewish feasts was helpful in opening a door to talk about his culture. He is not shy about his heritage, and it makes it easier to be open about my faith in return.

Lora

28

I was out for pizza with one of my best friends, a scientist who believes in “something,” but isn’t quite sure what. She asked a question I think a lot of people wrestle with: “If God is real, how can bad things happen to good people?”

Instead of explaining right away, I pointed her back to her own life. She has walked through real trials, the kind that could harden a person. But her instinct has always been grace, compassion, and choosing softness when it would be easier to become bitter. I asked her where she thought that came from.

I asked her if, looking back, she felt any sense of privilege in how those hard things shaped her. **I think that question started working on her.** We closed down the restaurant and never left the topic.



Ann

29

We have a neighbor who has some struggles. I have told her about the peace of Christ and how it can transform your life. Her response so far has been, **“I’m a good person and I don’t need anything else.”** This is hard, but we are trusting God to work in it.



Andra

30

I work in a very post-Christian space and my co-worker has had many trials this year. When I told her I was committed to praying for her, she wanted details. **“What are you praying?” “What do you ask God for?”** We agreed that asking God for specific outcomes is fine, but the outcome is not really a good way to measure his responsiveness. I told her that I knew she craved peace and that I wanted that for her. So I started praying for her to be filled with the peace of God, the peace that passes understanding.

She is still not a believer. Sadly. But she told me that she has never felt so calm approaching hardship before. I tried to point that to Christ, but she wants to attribute it more to my prayers than to him. I realize more and more how foreign it is to be saved by grace. I continue in prayer for her and will take every opportunity to tell her about the God who saves.



Don

31

Last January, I was asked to meet with a 12-year-old girl who had made a written contract with the Devil. She was cutting herself, vaping, and listening to heavy metal music. Her mother was alarmed when she found the contract and asked for help.

When I met with her, she had dark circles under her eyes. I asked her, “Do you want to be set free?” She said yes. I asked her to confess her sins, and she was silent. I said, “You said you wanted to be set free. This is where we start.” Eventually she confessed her sins and started weeping. **We renounced the contract with the Devil by the authority of Jesus Christ,** and she confessed that she wanted to follow Christ and have her life cleansed.

I recently saw her and she is doing so much better. She is going to church with her mom and has started wearing clothes with color, no longer just black. Praise God that he is in the business of setting people free!



Kim

32

I was recently visiting a Cru summer mission team in Southeast Asia. While there I got to meet with a Muslim university student whom a friend had befriended. We had **coffee for over two hours,** focusing on listening to her and asking curious questions about her life, family, and spiritual beliefs. She was about to celebrate a significant Muslim holiday, which made it easy to jump into a deeper spiritual conversation.



Katelyn

33

I have been in my work position for several years, and for much of that time, I have been discouraged about the lack of opportunities to share my faith. Around a year ago, I started mentoring a recent graduate we hired. Our weekly meetings cover work but also more personal things, and early on I had the chance to tell her I was a Christian. This opened the door for conversations about how my faith influences all aspects of my life and helps me navigate difficult situations in the veterinary field.

Sharing with my mentee has made me more bold with other coworkers as well. Another great opportunity came when **coworkers knew I was taking time off for a mission trip**. Once back it was natural to talk about how our team provided water filters to villages while sharing the gospel.

Every day I pray that the Lord will use me to be a light to my coworkers. I am grateful for the chances he has given me to minister to them and will keep praying for boldness.

Kyle

34

At the gym, I kept seeing a young man working out each day at the same time I was working out and our paths kept crossing. One day the Spirit led me to say hello and introduce myself. I kept talking with him and inviting him to different things, and he kept saying no. Then one day he said yes.

Then we had lunch together. **A little over a year from the moment we first shook hands and shared names**, he accepted Christ and got baptized! When the Holy Spirit is drawing a person's heart to Jesus, there's no stopping him! Hallelujah!





Bethany

35

I have the privilege of serving a mom connected to a partner ministry of our church. **While driving around together as I helped her with some errands,** she brought up questions about faith and how she was viewing her relationship with God. I had the opportunity to share with her more about Jesus and did my best to answer her questions. Praying this mom senses God's love for her as I seek to love her well.



Bob

36

I have been able to get brunch a few times with my neighbor friend, and I'm so glad that he was interested in **reading *More Than a Carpenter* with me** and discussing it! This has led to some great conversations about purpose, the Bible, and Jesus.



Tom

37

As an airport chaplain I see people from every spectrum of life. As I approached a man, I had no idea he had experienced divorce after 30 years of marriage. **His face did not indicate the hurt he had been through** or that in the midst of it he had found God. Soon he told me his life story.

Because of his fear of flying and uncertainty about his future, we looked up Psalm 34 on Bible Gateway together. He seemed very excited to do something new by looking up Scripture on his phone. I left rejoicing over God's Word and over a new friend who seemed touched by the Spirit of the Lord.



Robert

38

It started with a brunch we organized for our neighbors. We got to meet a young woman and her husband who had recently moved to the area. The Portico, playground, and walking path came up in our conversation.

A week later I **received a text from this Hindu neighbor asking about using The Portico** for a graduation. I called her for more details and in talking with her, she and her husband agreed to come over for a game night at our home. She was amazed by the opportunity College Park Church offers to the community to use the Portico as a meeting place, open to everyone and not just church members.



Tyler

39

Our neighbors across the street moved back in after being away for a few years working overseas. **We saw them playing in their driveway and went over** to hear about their time away. It was a sweet time of reconnecting and the dad invited us over to see his slideshows from his time overseas and cook dinner for us.

This was just a relational bridge being built, but we are praying for the opportunity to connect again over dinner!



Kyle

40

I met a guy while working out who casually mentioned he was of a non-Christian faith. **I casually mentioned I was a Christian.** And then it began! It was a friendly conversation covering the Devil, suicide, why there is evil, and more. He was very open to the discussion and had good, thoughtful questions.

In years past I may not have been so direct, but so many people are lost, hungry, and frequently don't truly know what they believe. I think many are also starving for a knowledgeable, thoughtful, and genuine conversation with someone who doesn't have all the answers.



Steve

41

A simple walk in my neighborhood led to meeting a Hindu neighbor. Now we have started taking walks together and are building a friendship.



Ryan

42

One of the easiest ways I have found to plant gospel seeds is by offering to pray for the server who waits on us at a restaurant. Just today I was having lunch with one of our church missionaries home for the summer. When the server brought our food, I mentioned that we were about to pray and **asked if there was anything we could pray for her about.**

She wasn't tremendously talkative, but she paused and mentioned we could pray for her kids. This gave us the opportunity to have a short conversation about them and

then briefly pray for God’s blessing on her kids and on her as a parent.

While it wasn’t a lengthy interaction, I am grateful we had the chance to plant a small gospel seed by praying for her in Jesus’s name. And then by leaving a good tip!



Charlie

43

I have been told and believe our first mission field is our family, both immediate and extended. Many, including myself, have found that non-Christian family members are the hardest to reach with the gospel.

This is true with my elderly widowed sister-in-law. Even though she has attended church most of her life, **she believes there is no life beyond death.** Even though we live miles apart, I still have the responsibility of sharing the gospel with her.

I do this through in-person conversations, first sharing how I pray for her every Monday morning and asking if those prayers are being answered. Then we discuss family members who have made a profession of faith, which seems to cause her to pause and think. That is good.

I only see her once a year and look forward to another chance to lead her to a profession of faith.



Bob

44

I had a contractor come over to help me **fix and move a shed** in my yard. After we got to talking about church and spirituality, he said he wanted to visit College Park and might even bring his family to Easter!



Robert

45

As I was talking with the son of an elderly man, I quoted my mother-in-law, “This getting old ain’t fun.”

“Well, it is better than the alternative,” he replied.

“Not for me,” I said. My answer surprised him.

“How so?” he asked.

“Because I know where I am going.”

“Good comeback.”

Earlier I had told him about my life as a missionary, so he knew I was talking about heaven.



Nate

46

A lost drone led to an open door! We had Muslim neighbors move in last fall two doors down from us. Other than waving and one brief conversation, we had never really had an opportunity to chat. Last Friday as I was preparing my sermon at home, the doorbell rang and then a knock. Marty wasn’t home, so I answered the door. It was the Muslim lady from two doors down! She said her son-in-law’s drone had gotten stuck on our roof and would I mind retrieving it? Of course not!

When I returned it to her, we began chatting. I found out she is from Lebanon, from the very region where our ministry partner Heart for Lebanon works. She was dumbfounded that I knew about her country and even her town. She said she would like to meet my wife sometime and that all we had to do was knock.

So we will!



A Friday afternoon call from an executive leader at work opened an unexpected door. As people often do, he asked what my weekend plans were. I told him it was an exciting weekend for our church because we were voting on whether to approve a new lead pastor. That led him to ask what kind of church I attend.

I explained that College Park is an evangelical Christian church and not part of a denomination. He grew up Catholic and asked how College Park differs from the Catholic Church. This led to a conversation about the gospel, the reliability of the Bible, and how faith in Jesus makes us right before God.

To confirm he understood, he said in his own words, “Faith in Jesus is what purifies us before God.” I said, “That’s right.”

It was a good reminder that God often uses simple, everyday conversations to create opportunities to share the gospel.



Twice now a group of neighborhood volunteers have organized a community meal. We called it **Meet, Greet, and Eat**. We made flyers and attached them to trash carts after they were emptied or taped them to garage doors.

This time we are going to knock on doors and personally invite our neighbors, leaving a flyer with information in their hands. We pray this personal touch will result in lasting relationships and conversations that lead to spiritual discussions.

The bottom of the flyer will read: “A Love Your Neighbor Initiative.”



Joshua

49

My friend is battling addiction. It has been difficult to spend time with him because he often forgets when we make plans or is high when we are together. I was able to share the gospel with him and describe the change that Jesus has made in my life. Even though he doesn't know Jesus yet, **I continue to make time to spend with him** and share the hope that he can have in Jesus.



Jill

50

My roommate and I live in a diverse neighborhood close to church. We both value intentional relationships and are grateful for how the Lord has opened doors with our neighbors.

Walking my dog multiple times a day has been an amazing bridge-builder, leading to conversations and invites to church and events like the Christmas Concert.

For Easter this year, the young couple next door joined us and friends from College Park for dinner. It was a sweet time merging our worlds and celebrating our risen Savior with friends from different backgrounds.

On the other side live neighbors whose way of life has stretched us, but we are determined to love them as image-bearers who need Jesus, with faithfulness to God's Word and a spirit of compassion. The Lord has been gracious to help us find common grace as we trust him in this unique friendship.

Gospel-neighboring is not easy work, but we know God is going before us, one conversation at a time.

These fifty stories are just the beginning. Someone in your life is ready for a conversation that could introduce them to the hope of Jesus. You don't have to be perfect, just start. When you do, share the story at yourchurch.com/gospelstories.

The story continues with you.



COLLEGE PARK CHURCH