

### Should We Try to Convert People?

**Intro:** We live in a society that has elevated (relegated?) issues of faith to a level of the personal and the private. In North America we've been brought up with a "live and let live" philosophy and a "one faith is as good as another" theology. We take pride in our independent lifestyles that promote the "mind your own business" attitudes. Indeed, the movement is so prevalent that the World Council of Churches, much of the European church, the United Church of Canada, and a host of North American denominations have resolutions discouraging proselyting. In our culture there is an overwhelming swell against sharing our faith with others. So, the question is, should we even be trying?

That's what you're going to explore this week. Are authentic followers of Jesus supposed to be evangelizing those of other religions, or should we be focusing on those who are uncommitted to *any* religion? Or should we leave well enough alone? Perhaps the underlying question really ought to be "What do we have to offer that other religions don't?"

**What the Bible Teaches:** Break into Groups of Four, read the following Bible verses, and discuss the questions. You may want to jot down notes and thoughts on the back of this page.

**What do these passages teach about God's concern for those of other religions (often called *pagans, Gentiles, or the nations*)?**

Luke 15:3-6; Romans 16:25-27; Acts 9:11-15

**What do these passages teach about sharing our faith with others?**

Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; John 14:6; Acts 4:12

**According to the following passages, how should we share the faith with others?**

Acts 17:16-32; 1 Peter 2:11-17; Romans 10:12-17

**What I Believe:** Take ten minutes for silent reflection and thought. Ask yourself what you believe about converting others. Use the back of this page to formulate a response to the question:

**“Should we try to convert people of other religions (or no religion)?”**

Write your final response here: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Articulations:** Pair up with one other person and share your response with one another. Take five minutes each. Try to *not* look at your written statement; instead, try to tell your beliefs from your heart. This will prepare you to share whenever you are asked about what you believe.

**Therefore:** Jesus said His followers should Go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). One of the first steps in making disciples is being ready and able to share the reason for the hope we have (1 Peter 3:15), in other words, knowing what we believe, why, and then being able to share it. Sharing your faith is important. This week, find someone—it can be *anyone*—and articulate your belief about this issue. If you have an unchurched/unreached friend whom you can share with, all the better (you can always say you have a homework assignment from church and you'd like to share it with them). Be ready to talk about your experience next week over the meal at your House Church.