



## Reachout Subject Guide

### Doorstep Dialogues

#### What Not To Do

- 1.** Do not panic or react: Some Christians think that if they fail in any way they have really blown it and so don't even try. Others cannot stand to hear some of what cultists routinely say and wish to jump in and correct them as a matter of urgency. Either way you close the door on an excellent opportunity. If you have nothing else to share you have your testimony.
- 2.** Do not exchange insults: If you get to know these people, you often find that they do not fit the stereotype picture many have of cultists. Insulting them is the same as shouting at foreign people in the foolish belief that they will understand better.
- 3.** Do not feel obliged to talk if it is truly inconvenient: Tell them you're busy and arrange for them to call back, perhaps at a time when you can have someone with you.
- 4.** Do not be afraid to say that you don't know: There are things they do not know and they often get asked questions on which they have to do some research. Say you don't know and offer to find out.
- 5.** Do not do anything you are too uncomfortable doing: We all can feel a little on the spot when people call and that should not put us off talking to people. However, you are not obliged to meet them on your own, have them in your house if you don't want to, go to their meetings or take lots of literature.
- 6.** Do not try to win the argument, try to win the person.

## WHAT TO DO

- 1.** Do listen: You win the right to be heard by first listening.
- 2.** Do seek to understand: They get so many people who slam doors in their faces, misrepresent them, caricature them and abuse them that if you listen and seek to do some genuine bridge building you will touch their hearts.
- 3.** Do ask Questions: Turn your remarks and counter-arguments into questions if you can so that the onus is on them to think and respond rather than listen and react. Have a question ready for them.
- 4.** Have literature ready: They will expect you to take theirs; it is reasonable to expect them to take yours in exchange. May not happen with the Jehovah's Witness.
- 5.** Know what to do next if they respond: They have a prepared plan and know how to proceed if you show interest and will invite you to church or set up a study programme, or both. Be prepared, invite them to church, to Christianity Explored.
- 6.** Have a back up: Someone who knows more than you or literature with which you are familiar that can fill the same role. Nobody knows everything.
- 7.** Go to church and be involved: Otherwise you will be the blind leading the blind. Your credibility is shot if you show them what is wrong with their church and then tell them that you do not attend church because your church is hopeless.
- 8.** Read your Bible: You do not have to be a theological powerhouse but you should know the basics and more familiar passages.
- 9.** Know what you believe and why: The gospel is 'spiritual' but it is also logical and can be explained in terms of logical and philosophical sense. Can you share the heart of gospel in 2 minutes? Practice and prepare.
- 10.** Have a prepared script: "When someone comes to the door I will say this and do these things." That way you will not have to make it up on the spot as so many seem to feel they should. God can be in your plans as well as in their execution. Know what you want to do in the time you have – do not spend ages on secondary issues and then have no time for what is fundamental.
- 11.** Tell them you are a Christian: No good comes from being "found out," and they will work it out for themselves a lot faster than you think. Can you share your testimony in 2 minutes? Practice and prepare. Your testimony is not your life story – be specific for the occasion. Mormons especially appreciate testimony. If you do this for Jehovah's Witnesses do try to relate what you are saying to specific Scriptures. For example, "and then I knew I was saved, just as Jehovah tells us about certainty in 1 John 5:12,13.'

## Be Prepared

This starts before you open the door.

- ◆ Know your own faith: Make sure you can share your faith.
  - ◆ Know something about the group: What are the top groups for your area? What would it take to find out one or two fundamentals about their faith? Decide what you need to do to 'get ready'. Produce a "plan of action."
  - ◆ Know your position in Christ: No matter how good they are at explaining their faith, they cannot 'un-save' you. No matter how little you understand for now, you are still secure in Jesus.
  - ◆ Practice communicating – 'it ain't what you say it's the way that you say it.'
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Keep in touch with us. Reachout is always ready to come and speak to groups and churches, ready to sit down with cult-members prepared at last to listen, ready to advise those who have finally taken that step away from error and don't know, perhaps, what comes next.



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