

# PRAYER, CARE, SHARE

**Create relationships with people in your life and tell them about Jesus.**

by Amber Kinneer

The goal of prayer-care-share is to create natural relationships with people in your life and then find a way to tell them how Christ has changed you.

Scuffing along in pink, flannel pajama pants, Carin and her glossy sneakers kicked up pebbles on the sidewalk. Her jet-black, spiky hair with fuchsia stripes complimented her skeleton earrings. Carin's backpack was barely visible under the barrage of political pins, stickers and propaganda patches.

I thought to myself, How will I relate to this girl who is so different from me?

## BEGINNINGS OF GROWTH THROUGH PRAYER

It was my junior year of college. I was a student leader with Cru, and our leadership team was brainstorming ways to connect with non-Christians in a tangible, relational way. A staff member encouraged me to engage in a method called "prayer-care-share."

I made a list of 5 people on my college campus who did not have a personal relationship with God. I began praying specifically for those people and for ways to befriend them.

Carin was someone I chose to pray for, because I wouldn't normally be comfortable pursuing her as a friend. We were in the same classes and saw each other daily, but socialized in different circles. Our opinions clashed on politics and morals.

Making small talk before choir, I learned that Carin was sleeping with her boyfriend and, like many in our major, struggling with music theory. I began praying for guidance in her relationship with her boyfriend and for knowledge as she strived to absorb theory assignments.

The goal of prayer-care-share is to create natural relationships with people in your life and then find a way to tell them how Christ has changed you. The process begins by choosing someone you want to introduce to Christ, then praying for discernment, direction and love toward that person.

"Nobody has ever asked me that before," Carin muttered from behind sparkling teal eye shadow when I asked how I could pray for her.

After a few days, she began pulling me aside or stopping on the sidewalk to ask for prayer with different struggles she was experiencing.

## FIND WAYS TO CARE

The next step is finding tangible ways to care for that person. Ask for prayer requests, take them to lunch, wash their car, mow their lawn or take out their trash.

Asking how I could pray for Carin was a bridge to begin caring for her. I also coordinated a study group for music-theory class and listened to her struggle with thoughts of breaking up with her boyfriend.

She continued asking for prayer. Befriending her no longer seemed impossible and our differences were no stumbling block in conversation over lunches in the dining hall.

In a Cru radio broadcast about evangelism, Christine Caine told how she cared for her neighbor, Belinda.

"She was home with a newborn, had no car and a husband who worked long hours," says Christine. "I was on my way to the store and stopped to ask Belinda if she wanted me to get her anything for the baby or herself. Belinda started crying right there in her doorway."

Belinda was shocked that Christine had come to her door. She couldn't believe anyone would think of her.

"When I'm serving and loving people in tangible ways, it shows them I care," says Cru staff member Michelle Edwards. "But you still have to talk about Christ. You can't leave it out. All 3 components [of prayer-care-share] are important because it's an all-encompassing way to show people who Christ is."

## **TELLING OTHERS ABOUT JESUS**

The final step in the prayer-care-share method is to find a way to engage in spiritual conversation. Ask if you can tell the story of how God changed your life. Give them an evangelistic article, book or DVD and say, "If you'd like to look at this we could meet later this week and discuss it."

Or you could sit with them and explain the Would You Like to Know God Personally? booklet, a tool that explains how to begin a relationship with Christ in 4 simple steps.

Approaching Carin to ask if she wanted to grab coffee intimidated me. I feared creating awkwardness in our interactions. Although my desire was to pursue friendship and establish trust, I wondered if my motivation to meet with her was mixed with manipulation in an effort to tell her about my relationship with Jesus.

Wrestling with this thought, I discovered my intentions toward Carin were rooted in honesty and a hope of showing her Christ's love. Because I lived in her world and interacted with her daily, I had the opportunity to tell her about the love Christ has for her.

Michael Brown, a Cru staff member says, "Being real and being intentional about evangelism is a hard road to travel. But it's either that or stay where we are and quietly pass from this life to the next, without ever really living."

I don't know if Carin ever made a decision to follow Christ. She didn't with me. That day in Starbucks, Carin heard my story and asked me questions about my faith, but stated she did not feel a need for God or a change in lifestyle.

## **LIVE A LIFE THAT SHOWS THE LOVE OF CHRIST**

The process of praying, caring, and finally sharing with Carin changed me. It gave me hope and empowerment to continue seeking out people in my world whom I might not normally pursue.

Constructing a viable lifestyle using prayer-care-share will help people around us experience the love of Christ in a tangible way. Whether you're a student, a stay-at-home mom, work in corporate America or are retired, you can make a difference in someone's life.

It may take years, or decades to see a person you've invested in begin a personal relationship with Jesus. Don't stop trying. Ask questions, listen and learn from that person.

"You may not be an evangelism expert, and you may not have gone to seminary," says Steve Douglass, president of Cru, "but you may well be the most qualified person to share Christ with the people in your world."