

## Tools to Use

As you journey towards Jesus together with your friends, there are many helpful tools you can use to help support your friend. The suggestions in the sections below are just the beginning; who knows where God will take you as you listen to the Holy Spirit and walk with your friend with the attitude of a learner.

### Storytelling

This is a natural way of sharing about Jesus, and sometimes more appropriate, especially for friends who come from oral cultures. These friends will favor learning by what is told, sung or acted out over what is written. Some examples of cultures with a strong value on orality: West African cultures, Middle East/North Africa, First Nations, Southeast/South Asian.

#### How to Implement:

##### Assess

- Use your skills in navigating difference to observe what worldview differences might block your friend from deciding to follow Jesus (e.g., “God is not personal - he doesn’t care about us humans.”)
- Read through stories in the Bible that address these blocks and notice the feelings and details of the story.

##### Learn a story or two.

- Don’t memorize, but read it over and over so that you can remember the important details, feelings and emotions of the story and tell them in your own words.
- Prayerfully consider what details to focus on that would help your friend understand the story. For the story of Jesus’ birth, for example, would they know what an angel is and why they are important?

##### Share

- Ask your friend if you can share a story with them and then see what about the story interests or puzzles them.
- Be sure to pray to invite in the Holy Spirit to direct you as you pick out stories to share with your friend and as you share the story.
- Always ask questions to see what they heard in the story; it may not always be what you think you communicated. A sample follow up question – “Have you ever heard a story like that before?”

## Bible Study

Great for friends who come from cultures that value written, more than oral, forms of communication. Bible studies allow friends to analytically explore the claims of the Bible in a group.

### How to Implement:

- **Relationship is essential** – The best Bible studies start from a community that is already forming (e.g., a group of friends who eat together or have movie nights in their home).
- **Group Dynamics** – observe in navigating cultural differences; sometimes what is not said is just as important as what is said. Does someone look puzzled? It might be a clue that there is a misunderstanding in the text or vocabulary that needs to be addressed
- **Invite everyone to share** – sometimes friends wait to share their thoughts out of respect for the Bible study leader or to make space for other participants.
- **Bible Version** – Use a version of the Bible that is appropriate for their English level. Some good versions include the Contemporary English Version, or the New International Reader's Version.
- **Old Testament** – Don't be afraid to study the whole Bible. Often times student's aren't familiar with the backdrop of creation and history of Israel that is so essential to the story of Jesus' life.
- **Preparation** – Do the Bible study ahead of time yourself, and pray about what next steps Jesus might be inviting your friends into through the passage. Inviting your friends to obey what they read is intrinsic to their growth towards Jesus.

Check out more great resources available through your InterVarsity staff worker or InterVarsity Staff Store, such as the I-GIG, I-DIG, or *Beginning with Jesus*, which are geared specifically to studying the Bible with Internationals.

## Worship and Prayer

### Praying in the name of Jesus

- Observe how your friend's culture does prayer. Is it a very private, personal experience? Is it done in a temple? Is it a common part of life? Whatever the case, make sure to ask questions of your friend or a person who has worked in their home culture to help you understand the meaning behind the religious forms and traditions you see being used.
- Allow this to inform how you pray with them. For some friends, you might set up a personal time of prayer in your home to echo the intimacy of their normal prayer times. Other friends might just be willing to let you pray for them on the spot. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.

### Worshipping Jesus

- How does worship happen in our friends' culture? Do they sing songs? Do they light incense or bow? Do they make poems or paintings as part of worship?
- Find a mentor who has worked with your friends' culture or a book to help you see what kind of religious symbols might be appropriate to incorporate in leading them to worship Jesus. Are there songs in their home language that you can learn?
- Always be sure to explain what you are doing in worship. For example, if you light a candle in worship with a Hindu friend, you might use it as a symbol of Jesus' presence. This would be an opportunity to explain Jesus' promise of always being with two or more people who gather in his name. Again, the Holy Spirit is essential to helping you to discern how and when to include different elements of worship into your friendship.