

Case Studies for Training

Case Study 1:

You are a female American. Ali, a male student from Saudi Arabia, has been coming to large group off-and-on. He happens to have a class with you this semester and often initiates conversations with you. He has expressed to you his interest in Jesus and in making American friends. "Ali" just texted you: "Would you like to have dinner with me before InterVarsity?" *What will you do?*

Case Study 2:

You've gotten to know a couple of students from Japan who have been coming to InterVarsity. You've earned their trust and started a GIG with them. They seem highly engaged and have asked good questions. On your fifth meeting, you invited them to accept Jesus, and they said "yes"! But, they've been avoiding you ever since. You later heard through another friend that they don't consider themselves Christians. *What will you do?*

Case Study 3:

Ming, a Chinese student who has been in your ISM Small Group, is going back home for good in a couple of months. Although he has been very engaged in the study all year and was even in tears during your last Bible Study, he has not invited Jesus into his life. He has mentioned not knowing any Christians back home and a family who is strongly opposed to him becoming a Christian. *What will you do?*

Leader's Notes

Case Study 1:

Muslims, esp. the most conservative ones (Saudis!), have strong gender boundaries where men and women outside of families almost never interact. For a woman to meet alone with a man will likely imply romantic interest or low moral standards. Based on what they've seen in movies, they often assume American women will say yes to such invitations, implying lower moral standards. If your behavior differs from a typical American, it will raise curiosity and help bring someone closer to Jesus.

Possible Solution: Invite a male friend who is prepared to develop a friendship with Ali so that you can pass the friendship onto him. Tell Ali your friend (his name) will be joining you. If Ali is still initiating with you, you will need to be more direct (i.e. saying "no" and letting him know your male friend is available to hang out). Pray for him to connect with men who can share Jesus with him and for him to have a personal encounter with Jesus.

Case Study 2:

In Japanese culture, a direct "no" is generally considered a personal rejection, shameful for both parties. They may trust you, value your friendship, and be curious about Christianity, but not be ready to commit their lives to Jesus. Although they may appear to be serious seekers, they may only be curious- having almost no exposure to Christ before coming to the U.S., they may be highly curious, but becoming open to Jesus may be a barrier they haven't worked through. They may feel awkwardness and shame for saying "yes" and anticipate more "pressure" to follow Jesus from you.

Possible Solution: Pray for spiritual openness and for God to smooth things over. Give them space as needed. Consider asking a mutual friend as a "go-between", explaining to them that Americans tend to be direct communicators and that you had no intention of pressuring them to answer "yes". When the opportunity arises, reassure them of your unconditional friendship, tell them you are sorry if asking them to accept Jesus made them feel uncomfortable and pressured. Continue spending time with them, creating space to explore Jesus as questions arise, and sharing Christ through your actions.

Case Study 3:

While you don't want to rush someone into making a decision, you need to be aware that it may be easier for them to make a commitment to Jesus before they return home to a challenging environment.

Possible Solution: Meet with Ming one-on-one. Help him interpret his experience with God. Identify and talk through the challenges he will face, esp. family opposition and isolation. Let Ming know you absolutely do not want to pressure him into following Jesus but reassure him that the Holy Spirit will empower him if he does choose to follow Jesus. Connect Ming with believers back home ([fill out the international connections form](#)).