

„George, I am preparing a tiny booklet that should summarize the essence of relationship with Jesus. I need your help.“ “How could I help you with a booklet about Jesus?“ my unbelieving friend looked surprised. „Sure, I need you to have a look at it with your eyes and do the proofreading for me, if it is easy to understand.“ You may be surprised, but dear George took the role of a consultant very seriously!

He studied the whole „evangelistic“ booklet thoroughly and discussed it with two other unbelieving friends! Then I had a two-hour meeting with him, and he came up with two pages of notes. He summed up his own observations and what he had heard from the other two. He told me in detail what our tool evoked in him, but also: „If you want to say this, you should express it like this.“ I was taking notes in a hurry because it was really helpful! At times, of course, he poked into some theological things he didn't like; for example, why is it again about Jesus on the cross – after all, God must be pleased with a good life. It was a great opportunity for me to explain how God's forgiveness really works. Although my George did not accept the explanation for himself, he understood what I meant and helped me to express it in a better way, so that it would be acceptable for him and his unbelieving friends.

I am convinced that if various „evangelistic“ events, tools and booklets were consulted directly with the unbelievers for whom they were intended, the vocabulary and wording would look very different, perhaps the graphics would vary, too, and especially their effectiveness would be incomparable! I guarantee you that good pride of the believers who spread these things further, would also be very different.

Are you thinking about „how to do it“ in the field of ministry to people who don't know Jesus yet? I have a clear and proven answer for you: Ask THEM! That is, directly your unbelieving friends! Talk to them and openly ask them for advice! Tell your George what you are working on and that you would like to know what it evokes in him. If they know you as a good listener, many Georges will be happy to tell you honestly which materials or plans of a certain event are interesting for them and also respectfully they will tell you what bothers them, what they dislike, what they find awkward or embarrassing. And they will advise you on how to do it the best way, giving you practical suggestions. All this is extremely important to you! What they praise, what they evaluate as unpleasant and the advice they



give you. If they said anything negative, don't go defending or explaining yourself! On the contrary, thank them. You may add additional questions what really bothers them, and ask for alternatives on how to express it better, and at the same time to keep the content. If it is a person with whom you have built a friendly relationship by listening to them, then their possible negation of some elements is not a rejection, but a favor to help you!

Abundant experience teaches me that if I have built a healthy relationship based on mutual respect with my unbelieving George, or with a whole group of unbelieving friends, and if I ask questions about spiritual things in a sensitive way, for example with a genuine interest in their opinion, my friends don't find it weird or unpleasant at all.

In fact, it's the other way around! They find my questions and suggestions very interesting: „I have never heard of it from such an angle...“ If I have listened enough to George, I can speak „his language“ and I awake growing curiosity and genuine interest in the life I live. Are you planning a Christian event or tool? Maybe your Discovery? Do you want to be sure that it will be interesting and useful for your target group? I have an advice for you, proven several times: Ask the unbelievers! Will you try?

*Lord Jesus, please teach us - the contemporary evangelical Christians - to live normally among unbelievers and to talk with them normally. Please open the hearts of your people towards those who perish and need You.*