

“Selling Jesus in a Consumer Society”

By Jason Vanderlaan

Have you ever thought about how the way Christians do evangelism sometimes resembles a TV commercial trying to sell some obscure product that nobody really wants but somehow you’re convinced that you absolutely need it? It goes something like this:

“The Jesus Product is just what you’ve been looking for! It will fill that hole in your soul, get out all those tough stains in your heart, and it doesn’t even require batteries! Call now and we’ll even throw in this nifty little Jesus Box, a convenient way to carry your Jesus Product with you when you’re on the go. But wait! That’s not all – for a limited time only, you’ll also get a set of *The Great Controversy* by Ellen White, absolutely free! Don’t let this offer slip away! Supplies are limited. Call now at 1-800-GOD4YOU.”



It’s no wonder Christians are brushed off so often when they try to share the gospel. We live in a consumer society and people are sick and tired of being sold one product after another. From telemarketers and used car salesmen to billboards and TV commercials, we’re bombarded with sales pitches. And to be honest, the products usually aren’t all their cracked up to be.

So how are we supposed to “sell” Jesus in a consumer society? Well, maybe we should start by *not* selling Him at all! How about, instead of giving endless sales pitches about Christ and Christianity, we try introducing Jesus as both friend and God. We’re not scamming them or twisting their arms, but rather introducing them to a personal friend of ours.

But this is hard. Actually knowing Jesus and not just a list of information about Him requires effort on our part. Or, more accurately, it requires a relationship. It requires our hearts. I mean, sure, you can list all the facts about God you want – omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, and whatever other omni- words you can think of, but that isn’t enough. Knowing *about* God is not the same as knowing Him.

So do you know God? Do you know Him like Abraham and Moses, who recognized His voice even when He asked them to do the unthinkable? That kind of relationship is available to you if you want it.

Now at this point I feel almost compelled to come up with some formula on how to know God. Maybe you’re expecting me to give the “3 Perfect Steps to Knowing God” or something like that. But I can’t, because it can’t be done. There is no formula for knowing God. It’s called a relationship for a reason, and you can’t approach it like a math problem or science equation. It just doesn’t work that way.

The way you get to know God is the same way you get to know anyone: you spend time with them. You listen to what they have to say to you. You talk to them. You do things together. Trust and intimacy grows. Bonds are formed. A relationship is built. It’s a beautiful process, really.

And only then, when you know Jesus, not just about Him, will you be able to introduce Him on a personal level to people you meet. Then they, too, will be able to get to know this Jesus as a person, not a product, and will, in turn, tell others about Him as well.