

DISCUSSION GUIDE

HOW TO TURN CRITICS INTO CONVERTS

1 Peter — WEEK 8

ICEBREAKER: When the “tooth fairy” came, what did you usually get?

OVERVIEW: We all have friends who are probably lost and on their way to hell without Christ. And Christ has called us to be His witnesses to them. The problem is that in America many people are highly turned off to Christianity. So how do we turn our critics into converts? This week we’re going deeper with the principle that **to win the lost, first win their respect.**

1. **Read 1 Peter 2:12.** What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend’s message did you find to be the most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain. (Or what was your key takeaway from Sunday’s message?)
2. Do you have any friends or family who might be lost? If so, who? Do you believe that God wants to use you to try to win them to Christ? Explain.
3. Christians in America don’t exactly have a good reputation? Why do you think that is? Is it the fault of Christians? Explain.
4. Why were Christians hated in the first century, and how does that compare to the way that many people view Christians in our society?

5. If the key to converting our critics is to win their respect, then that also means that if we are not winning our culture to Christ, it could be that we have not won their respect. Do you think Christians have contributed to the increasing lostness of our society? Explain. If so, how do you think Christians need to change in order to once again earn the respect of the lost?
6. Read Galatians 5:22-23. The first way to win the respect of your critics is to cultivate Christlike character. Of the nine virtues in this passage, which is most lacking in your life? Explain. How can you cultivate Christlike character?
7. What about your life is not respectable? Think about your lost friends – maybe your parents, your children, your siblings, your friends, your classmates, your neighbors. Is there anything in your life that they don’t respect — or that they would not respect if they knew about it?
8. How do you need to become more like Christ so that you are more attractive to the lost?
9. In what ways does your behavior not line up with the Bible? (Remember. If your behavior contradicts the Bible, you will be labeled a hypocrite and lose all credibility.)

The Last Word: “The greatest single cause of atheism in the world today is Christians: who acknowledge Jesus with their lips, walk out the door, and deny Him by their lifestyle. That is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable.” — Brennan Manning