

# Editorial: Tell your faith story on 10/14/14

October 2, 2014

Do you ever play the “What If ...?” game?

What if nobody abused drugs? What if people quit acting selfishly? What if everybody in your church tithed? What if Americans really set out to eliminate injustice, poverty and hunger? What if every child received a decent education? What if every eligible citizen voted? What if ...?



Editor Marv KnoxIt’s a mind-expanding exercise. Try to imagine the reality of an impossible ideal. Everything changes.

Texas Baptists will get a chance to participate in an epic “What If ...?” experience in a few days. What if all of us shared our faith experiences with unbelievers on the same day?

That’s the goal for Oct. 14, when the Baptist General Convention of Texas participates in [Engage24](#), a national project designed to encourage Christians to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to other people in one 24-hour period.

David Hardage, the BGCT’s executive director, describes Engage 24 succinctly: “Witness to someone, somewhere, somehow on Oct. 14, 2014.”

**A natural way to share your faith**

Some Christians figuratively or literally roll their eyes when others roll out a new evangelism emphasis. Sure, some schemes seem contrived. And some seem impersonal. But Engage24 is as natural as talking about anything and as personal as your own life.

Studies show many Americans—and a majority of young people—would welcome a significant spiritual conversation. That means folks all around us are just waiting for someone to talk to them about Jesus.

Now, you may be thinking, “Don’t guilt me into buttonholing a stranger and beating them over the head with the Bible.”

It rarely works, anyway.

Sure, some Christians evangelize people they don’t know. When I worked in the Baptist Mecca, Nashville, my friends and I heard so many evangelistic testimonies, we guessed every cab driver and waiter in town had been saved at least seven times.

### **Family, neighbors and friends**

But the most effective faith-sharing happens between people who know and care about each other, such as family, friends, co-workers and neighbors. And since life is full of ups and downs, the natural connection points for spiritual conversations—joys and sorrows, victories and disappointments—happen all the time. We simply need to look for them.

So, rather than think about Engage24 as just another scheme, think of it as a prompt, an excuse to do what ought to come naturally: Talk about what is ultimate with someone—maybe even someone you love—who will be blessed by the visit.

Christian witnessing is kind of like exercising. The hard part is thinking about it. The great part is actually doing it.

## **A confession**

True confession: I often use my natural introversion as an excuse not to share my faith. “Oh, I can’t do it well; I’m a shy person.” But then I’ll talk about the latest ballgame, an interesting movie or a new restaurant with a complete stranger. Surely, I can find natural beginning points for talking about faith and life and the difference God makes in my own life. And if the conversation is authentic and conducted with a generous spirit, it’s not forced or shallow or bogus.

If you want to know more about Engage24, you can [read about it](#) on the BGCT website.

What are you doing Oct. 14? How about engaging a friend, a loved one or a neighbor with the Good News of Jesus?