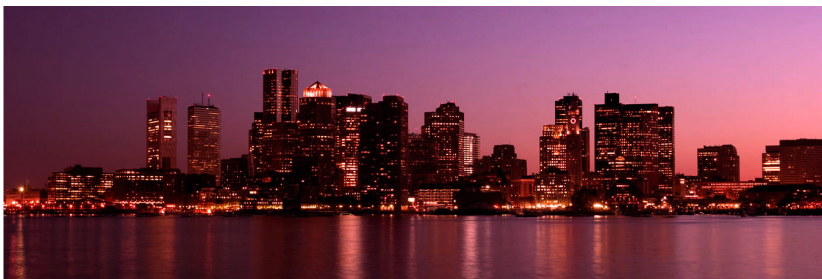


# Change Boston



## One Hundred Percent

### Nick and the BU boys wrestle with assurance

*Malisa & Brian Ellis - Evesting God for 250,000 students in Boston.*

I had to shake Nick's left hand when I met him because his right hand was all bandaged up. "What'd you do to your hand?" "I punched a sign." I wasn't sure I wanted to know the answer, but I still asked: "Why?" "Well, I was out at a bar Saturday night and a guy made me really mad. Rather than hit him, I left. And so I hit a sign. And broke a couple bones in my hand." Better the hospital than prison, I guess.

So that was my introduction to Nick, a senior at BU with me in the picture below, when he came to our first men's group a couple weeks ago. He grew up going to church, but it hasn't been an important part of his life for the last few years. He came to our small group bible study hoping to connect with God and other guys.

One thing many Christians often struggle with is assurance of salvation. How can we know that when we die we'll have eternal life? Can we screw it up? This is one of the first things new Christians wrestle with, but it's also a struggle for many who've had a relationship with Christ for a long time.

I asked "On a scale of 1-100, how sure are you that you'd have eternal life when you die?" Nick said he was about 95%. "What's that last 5%?" "Well, I just wonder if I've lived good enough. I mean, Jesus dying for me and all that is great, but what if I die when I haven't been very good? So I'm not sure about that last 5%."

Nick's concern is so normal. Last night I had a similar conversation with Kevin. His view is that you need to live a pretty good life and then you can have eternal life. And in the next couple weeks, I'm sure I'll have it with lots of other guys.

One of the clearest passages in the bible on this issue is 1 John 5. John is writing to people who believe in Jesus but who are unsure of their salvation. He's writing to help them "know that you have eternal life." His argument in 5:12: "Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life."

As we read that passage, Nick said, "It's funny that something can be so black and white and so gray at the same time." "What do you mean?" I asked. Basically, the text was easy to understand, but hard to believe. Nick thought there must be something he had to do to have eternal life. But as we worked our way through the passage in 1 John, he came to see that if eternal life is based on us, we never live good enough. But because it's totally based on Jesus, we can be totally sure we have eternal life. The Bible study ended and I wasn't sure where Nick was at in his thinking. But a couple days later, I got a text: "Thanks for everything man... left the last bible study at 100% really helped me to see things in a new way."

There's a huge difference between living life with 95% and 100% assurance. That 5% is critical, and allows us to live with great freedom. Thanks for praying for us and for guys like Nick. Your prayers allow us to share the gospel here in this great city. **Loving our Adventurous Lord,**

*Brian & Malisa*



Malisa & Brian Ellis  
20 Fairmont St #1, Arlington, MA 02474  
malisa.ellis@uscm.org  
brian.ellis@uscm.org  
(509) 432-4583 (978) 828-8024  
www.brianandmalisa.com

Make checks payable to:  
Campus Crusade for Christ,  
PO Box 628222, Orlando, FL 32862,  
Put account #0549821 in the memo line,  
or give online at:  
www.brianandmalisa.com

### Would you Pray

- For Nick and the 234 students from Boston (from 20 colleges and universities) who just got back from our Fall Retreat - that the encounter they had with Jesus would continue back on campus.
- For Kevin to give control of every area of his life to Jesus