

April 1, 2015

Brian & Malisa Ellis – Serving with Cru in Boston

Change Boston



Making the Gospel Clear

Jordan looked at me intently as I finished sharing the gospel with him a couple weeks ago. “As I hear you explain this, it just brings up more questions. The main one: **‘Why would I want to give up control of my life and trust it to someone else? I like being in control.’**”

Responses like this from guys as I share the gospel leave me with mixed emotions. On the one hand, I’m sad that Jordan is not yet ready to start following Jesus. And I wish he were. On the other hand, I love that in just a few minutes, we’ve been able to make the basics of the gospel message really clear. I love that Jordan is not rejecting a caricature of the gospel. Right now, he’s rejecting the gospel itself. But it

leaves me with hope that, one day, when Jordan gets to a point where he realizes that being in control isn’t working, he will know how to start following Jesus.

I love helping make the gospel clear to people who don’t yet know Jesus. And I love training others to do the same.

One thing we have realized is that right now at some of our campuses in Boston we have some students who are doing an incredible job joining their friends on their spiritual journeys – exploring where they’re at, asking great questions, being interested in their lives, and demonstrating the gospel at work in community. But while these students might even explain some of the gospel message, they stop short of asking their friends to decide to follow Jesus.

So last month, my friend Patty and I led a training time for some of our student leaders focused on this key thing: How do you explain the gospel so that it’s clear that our friends have a decision to make – either to run life their way, without God, or to submit to Jesus as their ruler?

We had a really fun group of students come to the training including a couple that do not yet know Jesus themselves. It’s still a bit of a mystery/miracle that we have non-Christians come to events where we’re training students how to share the gospel, but there you go. After Patty and I demonstrated a hypothetical gospel conversation and the night ended, I got to have a real gospel

conversation with “Ivan,” one of the non-believers that came that night. It was so fun to do what I had just trained others to do.

Turn over to continue the story...



Malisa (bottom right with Sydney) and I (top left with Eliza) took a group of 40 to Panama City Beach over spring break.



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← the snow has finally melted here!

The thought I left Ivan with:

Following Jesus doesn't mean you need to know everything about Jesus or the Bible because what separates us from God isn't a lack of information. What separates us from God is the fact that we're rebels and like being in control of our lives. So what it takes to start following Jesus is pretty simple. You take whatever tiny bit you know about God and put your tiny bit of trust there. Put your weight on it. And the way to do that is to talk to God. To say something like, "God, if you're there, which is still a big 'if' in my mind, but if you're there, I know that I am not worthy to be accepted by you. I don't deserve your gift of eternal life. I am guilty of rebelling against you and ignoring you and I need forgiveness. Thank you for sending your son to die for me that I may be forgiven. Thank you that he rose from the dead to give me new life. Please forgive me and change me, that I may live with Jesus as my ruler. Amen."



Above: Sharing the gospel with "Ivan" at our training night

Table in Boston. Please keep praying that new faces would be invited to the table every week and that our little group of women would display the grace and truth of Christ over and over again to each other and to those that are just joining us.

Loving our Adventurous Lord,



Brian & Malisa

Malisa takes snuggle attacks with grace while flying. Here, our girls Sydney (4) and Eliza (1.5) are playful with Malisa next to me as we fly to Florida for Spring Break.



Kay with Sydney and Eliza on Eliza's first day

Please pray for Brian's Mom

Malisa and I wanted to let you know some hard news about my family so that you can be praying.

At the end of February, my mom was diagnosed with stage 4 ovarian cancer. The cancer started in the ovaries and has since spread to the liver and other organs. My parents flew home from their winter in Idaho and my mom is now receiving chemotherapy at Dana Farber in Boston.

We've set up a caring bridge site for my mom at www.caringbridge.com/visit/kayellis if you'd like to get updates so you can pray for her.

Much of this Malisa and I learned about just before and during Big Break, so it made for quite a different week for our family. I cried more than I normally do on the beach for spring break.

We would covet prayers for my mom, Kay, and for our family.

Prayer Requests

- For Jordan to get to a point where he wants to give control to Jesus - the only one who can control him without destroying him.
- For Ivan to pray and put his weight on the trustworthiness of God.
- For our students who have seen 5 more students trust Christ this spring - that many more would know Jesus.
- For Brian's mom, Kay as she is treated for cancer.