

DEEPENING CONVERSATIONS

The following boxes show the different kind of conversations we have with people. Write the names of people you have conversations with in the boxes. What kind of conversations have you had with them?

<p>Superficial non spiritual</p>	<p>Deep non spiritual</p>
<p>Superficial spiritual</p>	<p>Deep spiritual</p>

Action Point: Think of one or two people you would like to deepen a conversation with this week. Are there questions that might be appropriate to ask them?

Digging Deeper: Read Questioning Evangelism by Randy Newman

ASKING GOOD QUESTIONS

Jesus himself often used questions in his conversations (eg Rich young Ruler - Mark 10, Pharisees - Matt 22 v17-20). His questions often brought to the surface heart level attitudes. Questions can help to initiate, open up a conversation and dialogue rather than just closing it down. The combination of questions and listening can deepen spiritual conversations. We will look at four ways that questions can help us share our faith.

a) Questions can express interest and a desire to understand

Sometimes, when people say things that we don't agree with or are aggressive its tempting to launch straight into a defence of our faith. However asking a good question can be more effective and communicate more love.

e.g. What has led you to believe that? Why is this important to you?

Discussion: "I really dislike the way Christians try to convert everyone". What questions could you ask to understand more where the person is coming from?

b) Questions can awaken people:

Good questions can help them examine what they think and believe.

" I believe all religions are the same" Really? How have you come to believe that?

"I think its terrible that you think everyone goes to hell if they are not a Christian." Do you think Hell exists? How do you think God would decide?

Other examples: Isn't it possible that there is a God? Isn't it possible that Jesus did rise from the dead?

Remember that we are asking questions to *help them*. Guard against being defensive or using this to validate ourselves. Ask the questions in a gentle and humble way and avoid arrogant or condescending tone.

Discussion: How could you respond to the following statements to help them examine what they believe?

"I think God is everywhere, in nature, people"

"I don't think there is enough evidence to believe in God"

c) Questions can start and deepen conversations

'I was wondering.....!.....do you believe that there is a God? How would you describe God?

.....what is the main thing that puts you off believing in God?

.....what would be needed for you to think that there is a God?

.....has there ever been anything in life that would make you think God existed?

.....have you ever sensed that there is a greater power or being?

.....if you could ask God a question, what would it be?

.....what would you say is our purpose as human beings?

.....what have been the most important moments in your life?

.....have you ever found yourself praying?

.....what was your impression of Jesus? what questions did you have about him?

.....what was your experience of religion when you were growing up? What were some of the positive/negative aspects?

Discussion: What things do you wonder about and how could you ask your friends/acquaintances about it?

* Remember to be genuine. What are you really interested in?

d) Questions can clarify the gospel and help them see where they are at in making a commitment to Jesus.

Once you have shared the gospel with someone, it can be helpful to ask questions that reveal *their* understanding of the gospel

How would you define sin? Can you see this attitude in your own life?

Why do think Jesus died on the cross?

What would you say is the main difference between the 2 circles (in the KGP)?

What is the main thing that the prayer is saying?

What would you want to say to God?

What do you think it means to be a Christian?

What difference do you think it would make in your life to become a Christian?

What do you think the hardest thing would be in becoming a Christian?

HEART CHECK

Our own attitude is important as we ask questions

Titus 3 v 1 – 8 1Peter 3 v15-16

Humility/Gentlesnes

Listening to answers

Grace and patience

Discussion: What attitudes have you seen God help you in? Are there areas you need to confess to God and ask him to give you the power to change?