

Asking Questions

Luke 2:46-47

DAY 1: Ways we make witnessing more difficult than it need be.

How we make witnessing more difficult, unnecessarily:

1. Here are three reasons why witnessing can seem more difficult than need be:

a. Our faulty assumptions. We may assume:

- We have to be in the “tell” mode,
- We are “selling” something.

b. Our proud attitude:

- People naturally resist being sold something, told something or lectured.
- People resist when they sense a moral superiority coming from us.

c. We have not thought through our testimony clearly enough to share it.

Colossians 4:4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should...

How some non-Christians make witnessing more difficult.

3. Some people do not want to hear the gospel.

Matthew 7:6 “Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

a. Jesus is not calling people dogs or pigs. He is simply using two illustrations from daily life that people back then would have recognized.

b. Dogs do not have an appetite for things sacred. Some people don’t have that appetite, either.

c. Pigs will not recognize the value of pearls. They may be angry that you did not feed them what they wanted to eat. Some people will not recognize the pearls you offer them in the gospel, and instead, criticize you or call you names.

d. What is Jesus’ instruction to you?

e. (Sometimes, we hang our head in shame as if we have done something wrong. This is your guilt-free card when it comes to witnessing!)

Luke 9:5 If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them.”

4. Jesus sent the disciples out on a mission trip. His assumption is that some of the people would not be open to the disciples. When some aren’t open what should the disciples do?

5. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 2: Creating friendship, creating interest in spiritual things

1. People naturally gravitate to you when they sense your humility, your interest in them, and wanting to get to know them, personally.

Prayer, engaging, and friendship are the beginning steps of witnessing.

Matthew 11:19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is proved right by her deeds."

2. Jesus faced false accusations from the cynics and critics.

3. One of these accusations meant to slander Him was that He was "*a friend of tax collectors and sinners.*" They thought He was doing a bad thing. Instead, He was doing God's work!

4. Jesus established relationships with the "nobodies" and people that the world scorned. Don't miss this: He was their *friend!*

5. There is a difference between someone who is friendly and someone who is a friend. What differences do you see?

Luke 15:1 Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. ² But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them."

6. Notice v. 2. The Jewish leaders heaped a scornful smear at Jesus. What was it?

7. Now notice v. 1. What was the result of Jesus "*welcoming sinners and eating with them*"?

8. Jesus' manner, care, and engagement with them opened them up to want to hear what He had to say!

9. This is a remarkable example that any Christian can emulate with his or her non-Christian *friends*, co-workers, neighbors, and extended family.

10. What is your biggest take away from today's devotional?

DAY 3: Caring initiative

Witnessing most often happens *relationally*.

1. Whether it be with an established friend or someone you meet at the airport waiting to board a plane, some type of *relational trust* needs to be established by you toward the friend.

2. Relational trust is largely established by:

- Asking questions,
- Listening, and
- Caring.

3. These are applications of several biblical principles in Colossians 4, in witnessing.

*Colossians 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴ Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵ **Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.** ⁶ **Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.***

- “Outsiders” means non-Christians.

4. Paul gave us five important relational principles in witnessing. They all center around building a genuine friendship of care and respect. Under each principle jot down what strikes you.

a. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders...

b. Make the most of every opportunity.

c. Let your conversation always be full of grace

d. Let your conversation be tasty (seasoned with salt)

e. This kind of relating helps you understand people’s real questions, not just their objections.

5. Think about two or three lost people in your life. How do these principles of caring initiative strike you? Do you express care in your manner? Are you gracious with people?

6. What would you like to change in you as you relate to lost people?

DAY 4: Asking questions, building care and friendships “WONDERING QUESTIONS”

Doug Pollock wrote the book God Space, a great tool in helping us build relationships with lost people, and with anybody!

He uses a simple, very helpful tool: “Wondering questions.”

As you listen to people, you begin to wonder what the Holy Spirit is stirring in you as you talk with your friend. The following questions are examples of taking conversations deeper. As they go deeper inevitably they lead to spiritual conversations.

The rest of our devotions are from Pollock’s book, God Space.

Questions About LIFE LESSONS

I’ve made it my lifelong goal to learn from others; what’s the greatest lesson you feel you’ve learned so far in your life’s journey?

Tell me about your greatest success and your greatest failure along the way.

Would you mind sharing with me the greatest piece of wisdom ever passed on to you?

Questions About CAREERS

What prompted you to pursue your career in _____?

What do you like most about what you do? least?

Do you see this as a lifetime career, or a steppingstone to something else?

Questions About TALKING ABOUT GOD

If someone wanted to talk to you about God, how would you like to be approached?

Have you ever had anyone approach you and try to talk to you about God?

What kinds of feelings were you left with after the encounter?

Questions About EVANGELISM

What images or words come to your mind when you hear the word evangelism?

The word evangelism means “to proclaim good news.” If that’s true, why do you think this word carries so much baggage with it?

If you were asked to describe the good news that evangelists are supposed to be sharing with people, how would you describe it?

Questions About VOCATIONAL DREAMS

What is your dream job?

Are you working toward it already? If not, what is standing in your way?

What advice would you give to a young person about finding vocational happiness?

Questions About RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES

What kind of exposure did you have to religion when you were growing up?

Why do you think there are so many different religions?

Do you think it's possible for all religions to be equally right? Why or why not?

Questions About ETERNITY

What conclusions have you come to concerning life after death?

Do you think it's possible to be certain about where you'll spend eternity?

Have you ever explored what the Bible has to say about eternal life?

Questions About A GOOD LIFE

Have you ever been able to get a handle on what you think your purpose in life is?

Everyone seems to agree that money by itself can't buy happiness. What, in your opinion, does guarantee a happy life?

In what ways do you feel you're really winning or losing at life?

Questions About BECOMING A CHRISTIAN

Do you consider yourself to be a Christian?

Based on your understanding, how does someone become a Christian?

Have you ever explored what the Bible has to say about how someone becomes a Christian?

Questions About WORLD EVENTS

How did 9/11 affect your view of God and the world?

As you've watched or read the news, what conclusions have you drawn about the nature of humanity?

Do you believe there is a solution to social problems such as rape, murder, famine, war, racism, and divorce?

Questions About GOOD VS. EVIL

Have you ever had an experience in which you felt the presence of evil?

Have you ever had an experience in which you felt the presence of God?

In what ways have you seen good and evil played out in your life?

About BARRIERS TO BELIEF

What causes you to struggle the most with the idea of God's existence?

Up to this point in your life's journey, have you met anyone or experienced anything that made the reality of God seem plausible to you?

To what do you attribute your disbelief in God?

Questions About RELATIVE TRUTH

It sounds as if you value open-mindedness. Do you ever find yourself closing your mind to certain things, ideas, or people?

What criteria do you use to determine whether something is true?

Does your worldview allow for any absolutes?

Questions About MARRIAGE

How did you meet your husband/wife?

What have you learned about yourself through marriage?

What do you enjoy most about marriage? least?

Questions About LOVE

Has your understanding of the word love changed over the years?

Why do you think so many couples end up falling out of love?

If you could pass along one word of advice about how to keep a relationship going and growing, what would it be?

Questions About FINDING GOD

Why do you think so many people prefer to live as if God does not exist?

What would you want God to do to validate his existence and bring you to belief?

It's been said that many people never find God for the same reason a robber can't find the policeman standing on the corner; what does this saying mean to you?

Questions About RIGHT AND WRONG

Some people believe that we are the product of a random evolutionary process. Do you think discussions about right and wrong have a place in that kind of worldview?

How do/will you teach your kids right from wrong?

What authority do you appeal to?

Questions About DREAMS

Did you have any dreams or set any life goals when you were younger?

What dreams have you let go of?

What dreams are you still hanging on to?

Questions About THE FUTURE

Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of our world?

Do you think it's easier or harder to raise kids in today's world than it was when you were growing up?

What concerns you most when you think about your future?

Questions About MAJOR INFLUENCES

What experiences have shaped your worldview the most?

Has there been one book or movie that's left its mark on you in a significant way? How so?
Besides your parents, is there any one person who stands out as having had a major role in shaping your life? Tell me about him or her.

Questions About GOD'S POWER TO CHANGE US

God has changed my life; have you ever considered letting him change yours?
If God had his way with you, what do you think he would change first?
What scares you the most about letting God change your life?

Questions About TAKING STOCK

What three principles of life have benefited you the most so far in your life's journey?
What, if anything, causes you to be hopeful about your future?
If you had only six months to live, what would be on your list of things to do before you died?
Why?

Questions About GETTING TO KNOW YOU

As people get to know you, what about you do they enjoy most?
As people get to know you, what about you do they enjoy least?
As people get to know you, in what area do you feel most misunderstood?

Questions About DIRECTION

How would you describe your leadership style?
What leadership style do you respond best to?
Jesus was described as a servant leader. When have you, if ever, experienced that kind of leadership?

Questions About DIRECTION

Why do you do what you do?
What life experiences have molded you and motivated you to pursue the path you've chosen for life?
If you were to choose your path over again, would you choose the same one? Why or why not?

Questions About FOR GOD

If you could ask God three questions, what would you ask?
If God were to ask this one question, "Are you for me or against me?" what would you say?
What evidence would you present to defend your response?

Questions About GENDER

Which gender do you think has the tougher path in life?
What do you enjoy most about the opposite sex?
What do you enjoy most about being male/female?

Questions About HATE

Have you ever hated anyone?

Has anyone ever hated you?

Have you ever been able to overcome hatred? If so, how did you pull it off?

Questions About DEATH

If you could choose the manner of your death, how would you like to go?

How would you like to be remembered at your funeral?

Does the thought of death scare you?

Questions About CONTROL

It's been said that life is largely out of our control. If that's true, why do so many people try to control the uncontrollable?

Do you struggle with trying to control things?

What kinds of things do you think can be controlled in life?

Questions About HABITS

What kinds of habits do you struggle with most?

Do you ever find yourself doing the very things you don't want to do, or not doing the things you really want to do? If so, what do you attribute this to?

Have you ever found anything to set you free from this cycle?

Questions About CHILDHOOD

How would you change the way you were raised?

What things are you doing/going to do to raise your kids differently?

What values from your childhood do you want to pass on to your kids?

Questions FOR JESUS

If Jesus were here right now, what would you ask him?

How do you think he would answer?

How would you feel if that happened?