

7 Questions for Meaningful Conversation with Believers

Steve Burchett

We've got to move dialogue with believers beyond a superficial level if we are going to really know and encourage one another. But where do we even start?

Here are seven questions you might ask. They might be useful in a variety of settings, such as when you have someone (or a family) over for supper, when spending time at the park, or when you're on a long car ride together.



1. When would you say that you became a follower of Jesus?

This question has a way of bringing a needed sobriety and kingdom focus to the time together that might otherwise have been marked by shallowness. Though all believers listening in will enjoy hearing about God's saving grace, this is especially strategic for any lost people (or those seeking assurance of salvation) in the gathering to hear.

2. What was your family life like growing up?

The answer might be an inspiring story about God-honoring parents and faithfulness to the local church. Or, the person's answer might reveal past darkness and sadness that only God could overcome. You'll probably even learn something about the person's past that helps you to understand some of his or her weaknesses or strengths in the present.

3. How did you meet each other?

This question is obviously geared toward a husband and wife. You might also ask about the day they became engaged. The dialogue that results from this question typically includes some laughter, but I've seen it lead to serious reflections about marriage—even current difficulties the couple is having!

4. What has been your pattern for Bible intake and prayer when it has seemed most meaningful to you?

I experienced a conversation based on this question this past New Year's Eve. A few of us were gathered in a living room, waiting for midnight to come, and we

spent at least an hour talking about this important subject. Current practices were shared, and better days from the past were remembered. It was both convicting and motivating.

5. Is there a sermon (or a Christian leader) that the Lord really used in your life in an especially powerful way?

I agree with Matt Smethurst of the Gospel Coalition who once tweeted, "I don't remember 99% of the meals I've eaten, but they've kept me alive. God uses faithful, forgettable sermons to beautify his bride." Yet there is still the 1% of meals that you look back and say, "Wow, that was an incredible steak!" In a similar way, most people remember a portion of a message that the Lord used for their good.

6. What are your neighbors like?

The aim of this question isn't to talk negatively about that "ridiculous" or "mean" neighbor. Rather, the goal is to eventually talk about reaching lost neighbors with the gospel.

7. What is a great burden in your life right now?

Every believer is burdened about something. For example, they might be troubled about lost relatives, a rebellious child, work problems, or the state of Christianity in the country. This question is an opportunity to really hear the person's heart. Listen carefully, interact further, possibly share a great burden of yours, and then pray together.

Before You're Together

The point isn't to work through all these questions in one get-together. Rather, be ready with at least one or two. Sometimes, all it takes is one good question to start a meaningful, God-honoring conversation.

*"Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."
(Philippians 2:4)*