

The Conversational Pre-Evangelism Method

The Holy Spirit.....Key to Evangelism

Key to evangelism

The vital role of the Holy Spirit in evangelism. (John 6:65, 1 Corinthians 2:4-14)

- To empower us to speak in a way that makes a difference. (Acts 14:1)
- To empower us to live godly lives. (Philippians 1:14)

Hearing: Learning The Role Of The Musician

Listen Carefully (James 1:19-20)

"My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires." (James 1:19-20)

- Helpful suggestions for increasing your listening skills

Reflect back what they are saying to you.

Learn their Story! (Rom.1:18-19; Rom. 2:14-15; ECL. 3:11)

- *Tell me about your spiritual journey?*

Steps to uncovering their story!

1. Ask questions about what is important to them.
2. Ask questions about _____ and meaning.
3. Take note of other experiences that have shaped their beliefs and ask them about those experiences.

- *Tell me about your spiritual journey?*

Case Study 1:

Mary is 45 years old. She grew up in a Catholic family but would say that she has no religious preference. She does not believe that she has a divinely appointed purpose in life. Rather, she has developed a personal sense of purpose and has specific ideas on things that she would like to accomplish in life. She feels that her specific purpose for her life is to be as helpful as she can to everyone she encounters. She feels very lucky to have found a wonderful husband and that she stumbled upon a great career.

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She does not feel it matters what someone believes as long as they are kind and empathetic. She is not sure what to believe about the afterlife and doesn't think much about it. She's just trying to get through this life and hopes to end her life with no regrets and some dignity. She hopes that something comes next and plans on dealing with whatever it is when she gets there. The idea that there is a heaven and hell either way doesn't ring true to her. However, she does admit that there have been a few times in her life where she felt the presence of a "higher power", like once when she hiked up a mountain where the outlook at the end of the trail was unbelievably beautiful. At that moment she thought, "There seems to be powers at work way beyond our comprehension, to have created this." She believes that perhaps this wonderful system that was set up to run the universe was created and the rest flowed from it, over time. She doesn't believe however in the biblical story of creation literally. She believes that it's a good story, and like all civilizations do, it is an attempt to make sense of our existence. She doesn't believe that God needs humans to explain him or her. She believes that he's bigger than that. She believes that he is what binds us as human beings and that he is within all of us.

What does this story tell you about where Mary is at in her spiritual journey?

Hear the sour notes people are singing to us!

Our Purpose in Hearing the Sour Notes:

By listening to the sour notes we may be able to "detect" some of the uncertainty in their beliefs which may give us an opportunity to help them to think more clearly about what they believe and why. It also helps to create a greater interest in knowing about Jesus.

What "sour notes" do you hear in Mary's story?

Jesus understood this principle of identifying "sour notes" in someone's belief system. (Matthew 19:16-22)

The Apostle Paul understood how to identify the "sour note" in someone's belief and use this to motivate them to take a step to the Cross! (See Acts 17:28-29)

Points to Note:

A. Don't forget to really listen to them.

- The fact is that some people hold to beliefs that are somewhat different than what their particular religion teaches!
- By listening to them carefully you also communicate that you really care about them and want to understand what they believe.

- B. Point out the most stand-out inconsistencies rather than pointing out all inconsistencies.

Belief vs. Heart Longing

"He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end." (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

The inconsistency can be between what they say they believe and their heart longing (SOUL CRY).

- A. Many hold to views which are inconsistent with the longings of people's hearts.

- **Atheism:** An atheist believes that God does not exist. Yet many long for a sense of meaning and purpose to their life.
- **Postmodernist:** In a postmodern culture there is a desperate need today for young people to feel a sense of belonging and to be a part of something bigger than themselves.
- **Islam:** The teachings of Islam betray the heart cry to have an intimacy with God.
- **Hinduism:** Some Hindus believe only in an impersonal god. Yet a Hindu desires to know God in a deeper and personal way.
- **Buddhism:** But not only is losing myself not fulfilling, but the way to get to Nirvana can only be accomplished through a heavy burden of living according to rules and regulations that can never be completely attainable.
- **Chinese:** I believe in scientific materialism. Yet I want to be remembered after I died or at least die with a good reputation.

- B. Show others that Jesus meets the longings of our hearts!

"What oxygen is to the brain, Jesus is to our hearts. He satisfies our deepest longings unlike anything else....If we were to list all of our hungers, we might be surprised at how many legitimate hungers we have. We hunger for truth, love, knowledge, belonging, self-expression, justice, imagination, learning, and significance to name a few." - Ravi Zacharias, Jesus Among Other Gods, p. 71-72

Belief vs. Behavior

"When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, 'You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs? We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.'" (Galatians 2:14-16)

The inconsistency can be between what they say they believe and how they live or behave.

Examples:

- **Talking to an Atheist**
 1. I don't think God exists. (I am a scientific materialist)
 2. I am looking for a loving and committed relationship.
- **Islam:**
 1. I believe that my good deeds must outweigh my bad deeds in order to get to heaven.
 2. I don't pray at least five times a day.

How then can you have any assurance that you are going to heaven when you die?

Belief vs. Belief

The inconsistency can be between two contradictory beliefs.

"So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶ And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷ that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸ for

"In him we live and move and have our being";¹ as even some of your own poets have said,

"For we are indeed his offspring." ²⁹ Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. ³⁰ The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent," (Acts 17:22-30 E.S.V.)

Examples:

Both of these statements cannot be true.

- A. The woman is pregnant
- B. The woman is not pregnant

What is wrong in these statements?

- A. Jesus is my Savior
- B. I can measure up

What is wrong in these statements?

- A. The Bible is reliable
- B. I must do good works to be saved

What is wrong in these statements?

- A. There is no absolute right or wrong
- B. The terrorist were wrong to kill so many people on 9/11

Illogical Belief

"But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No." (2 Corinthians 1:18)

The inconsistency or contradiction can be in the statement itself.

Examples:

Just because a statement is sayable does not mean that it is meaningful.

"I cannot utter a word in English!"

Exercise:

Identify which of the following four "sour notes" or inconsistencies occurs in the examples of people's beliefs listed below.

1. Belief vs. Heart longing
2. Belief vs. Behavior
3. Belief vs. Belief
4. Illogical belief

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S.No.	Examples	Sour Note
1	<p>A. I believe there isn't anything that's absolutely right or wrong.</p> <p>B. I believe it is important to treat others with respect and civility.</p>	
2	<p>A. I believe that as long as my material needs are met, that is all that really matters.</p> <p>B. All of us hunger for truth knowledge, justice and significance.</p>	
3	<p>A. God is so far from us that we cannot know anything about Him.</p>	
4	<p>A. I believe my good deeds must outweigh my bad deeds to get to heaven.</p> <p>B. I don't really pray five times a day.</p>	
5	<p>A. I believe that reality is just something that man constructed and does not exist nor is it real.</p> <p>B. All of us desire to live a life that is real and that has meaning and purpose.</p>	
6	<p>A. I am a Christian.</p> <p>B. I am not sure why Jesus had to die on the cross.</p>	
7	<p>A. I believe that the Bible is reliable.</p> <p>B. I believe that Jesus is just the one of the many ways to God.</p>	
8	<p>A. I cannot speak a word of English.</p>	
9	<p>A. I don't believe in an afterlife, whether it is heaven or hell.</p> <p>B. I believe all the terrorists will be punished for WTC killings on 9/11.</p>	
10	<p>A. I believe the Bible is reliable.</p> <p>B. I believe I must do good works to be saved.</p>	

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11	<p>A. I don't think that religion is really necessary.</p> <p>B. Sometimes I pray, but I don't feel I'm getting any response.</p>	
12	A. Always avoid making absolute statements.	
13	A. I am absolutely sure that you should not come to any conclusions about what is right and what is wrong.	
14	A. You should always be tolerant of people of different religious beliefs, except those who are not tolerant.	
15	<p>A. Muslims believe that Allah is so far removed from us that even the spiritual leaders (Imams) who try to get close to him are not able.</p> <p>B. A Muslim desiring to get close to him is not able.</p>	
16	<p>A. I believe that Jesus is just a great prophet.</p> <p>B. I believe that Muhammad supersedes previous prophets, including Jesus, being the last and greatest prophet, summing up God's final revelation to mankind. Yet the Qur'an teaches that Jesus was born of a virgin and lived a life without sin, but Muhammad was born of natural birth and did sin.</p>	
17	<p>A. I don't believe there is such a thing as right or wrong.</p> <p>B. I try to live a good life.</p>	
18	A. You should be skeptical about everything.	