

How to Lead Gospel Conversations

Jonathan Dodson

Have you ever sat in a group discussion with and found it incredibly difficult to get a good conversation going? I've found it can be very challenging to move conversations along, especially when you're trying to go deep and get to the gospel. Here are a few principles that might help.

Listen to Their Story

In order to promote good gospel conversations in small group gatherings, it is important that everyone listens to one another's story well. Don't check out, criticize, or think about your own. *Listen* to their story. In order to do this, *everyone* must ask questions of one another, learn one another's stories over and over again. Our lives are continually changed through conflict, challenges, promotions, relationships, and new experiences. Without asking good questions of one another, we can't really share in deep community. Good questions help uncover the truth about how people are really doing and open the opportunity to share life and truth together. Ask questions and genuinely listen to one another's stories.

Ask Good Questions

- Can you elaborate on that?
- How did that happen?
- How does that make you feel?
- Did you feel alone or supported?
- Were you afraid or confident?
- How did you respond?
- How are you feeling now?
- What concerns you the most about this?

Listen in order to Speak Gospel Encouragement

- What grace can you affirm in their life?
 - That's a really *helpful* insight.
 - It's been so *challenging* to hear you talk about your neighbor
- What victory can you celebrate?
 - We've seen God answer your prayer for less people pleasing
 - Isn't it awesome how God provided this job for you?
- What progress have you seen in their faith?
 - You are fighting depression really well
 - I've really seen you grow in this area
- What are some ways you do this?

Move the Conversation Along Deliberately

Develop Discussion Questions: Progress from 1) anyone can answer to 2) a challenge 3) the deeper heart idol or lie 4) what needs to change 5) How the Bible shows us we can change. Lead discussions by trying to guide people roughly through this progression.

Ask Transitional Questions:

- Follow up off-base or incorrect comments with “What do you guys think?”
- Anyone else relate to or struggle with that?
- Tom, we haven’t heard from you, what do you think?
- Nate, can you hold onto that comment so we can hear from someone else who hasn’t shared tonight?
- Allow silence...
- What are some ways you do this?