

# GETTING BENEATH THE SURFACE

**AG**

Series I Session 9

## Asking Good Questions

When using surveys in evangelism it's important to be clear that it isn't the survey itself that is evangelising. We're interested in the **quality** of our conversations, not the **quantity** of surveys we can get done.

**Why do we use surveys as a tool in evangelism?**



**What do you think most people base their beliefs on?**



*How can we really know what people believe? By asking good questions!*

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***“Good questions should not only enable us to find out more about a person, but also allow the person to think in ways they may not have considered before.”***

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Most of the questions in surveys merely scratch the surface. Much of effective survey evangelism is centred around asking good questions that go beyond those already on the paper. Take a look at some biblical principles on this subject:

Luke 10: 25-27 ~ Rather than always answering questions directly, Jesus sometimes asked further questions, causing his listeners to think deeper and for themselves.

Proverbs 20:5 ~ It's important to ask questions outside of those on the survey to draw people out.

### **Advantages of asking good questions:**

- ~ Good questions make people think. When people think, they learn.
- ~ Many students don't have a clear answer for what they believe. Good questions help them examine the basis for their beliefs.
- ~ People love to talk about themselves. Good questions encourage this and help to build a good rapport.
- ~ When people feel that they have been understood, they will often be more receptive to hearing the gospel.



| <b>Type</b>  | <b>Example</b>                                  | <b>Use</b>  |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Closed</b><br>Questions that are obvious and imply an expected answer.  | <i>"Jazz is the best kind of music, right?"</i> | Questions like this are not valuable for discussion, and actually stifle interaction.   |
| <b>Limiting</b><br>Questions that limit the number of "correct" answers to a particular question.                                    | <i>"Is jazz your favourite kind of music?"</i>  | These questions aren't very valuable for open discussion, but are useful to summarise a point, direct the conversation.                                       |
| <b>Open</b><br>Questions which allow a person to share any answer or relevant thoughts they may have on the subject being discussed. | <i>"What's your favourite kind of music?"</i>   | Very valuable for discussion. This kind of question stimulates thought and discussion, because there are no right or wrong answers to what a person believes. |

Both limiting and open questions are useful in the right context. Limiting questions are useful when you want to bring the conversation back to a certain point, or if you want to point the conversation in a certain direction.

Open questions, however, are particularly useful in spiritual conversations, as they allow a person to open up and think deeper about what they believe.

**Take about 10 minutes to practice going through the survey in pairs.**

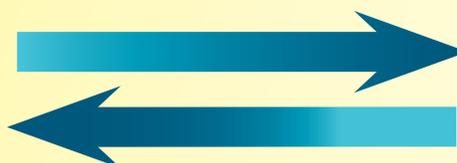
**Think of open questions you could use to continue the discussion.**

Ex: *What happens after death?*

*Nothing, you just end.*

*What made you come to this conclusion?*

*(or) Have you always thought this?*




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**“Asking good questions facilitates good conversation and makes it easier for people to explore their beliefs.”**

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### **Tips for Using a Survey**

- Be yourself. Relax and smile!
- Look for points of common interest (home town, hobbies, courses, etc.) and ask questions about them, so you can build rapport.
- Be interested in the person.
- Be familiar with the survey.
- Take your time.

As you practice this skill, you will develop your own style. You will get better at gauging what to ask and what type of questions to use. As a life skill, the ability to ask good questions is **vital**, not just in surveys but also when we talk to our friends about spiritual matters.