

# 5 Thresholds of Conversion & Conversation



Spiritual conversation is an art- not a science. Yet it's a vital skill we need to develop if we want to help others take steps towards Christ. Many evangelism techniques utilize a "conversion" framework and in doing so place the emphasis on our words, our explanation, and our goals. It risks feeling like a sales pitch where we need to "close the deal." But questions help us listen for where the Spirit is already at work so that we can help our friends take steps on that journey.

Of course, our goal is for others to cross the line of placing their trust in Jesus. But if you've never lived apart from Jesus, it is difficult to understand the key steps that help someone recognize the call of Jesus in their life. In their book *I Once Was Lost*, Don Everts and Doug Schaupp use their own example to lay out the key thresholds they walked on their journey from skeptics to sold out followers of Jesus. They show how questions and conversations help us walk with our non-believing friends on their journey.

## THRESHOLD 1: Trusting a Christian

The journey of conversion usually takes place when a skeptic begins to significantly trust a follower of Jesus. This overcomes common barriers of suspicion, misunderstanding, and distrust.

How can we as believers pray rather than become defensive, learn instead of attack, engage instead of avoid, affirm the good rather than judge the bad, and welcome instead of argue?

### Curious Conversation Focus: Questions of Origin

- What is your family like?
- What was it like for you growing up?
- What significant experiences have you had?
- What's your faith background?

## THRESHOLD 2: Becoming Curious

The stage of curiosity tends to blossom over time. It's a subtle shift from being passive to being provoked to think differently. Jesus lived a curious life and asked hundreds of questions in the gospels to provoke curiosity in others.

How can we live strange lives that produce curiosity while engaging with questions instead of preaching?

### Curious Conversation Focus: Questions of Purpose

- Why do you do what you do?
- Who is your all-time favorite leader? Why?
- If money was no object, what philanthropic activity would you give to? • What is the most important thing in your life?
- What type of spiritual experiences have you had?
- What rubs you wrong about the church? About the world?

### **THRESHOLD 3: Open to Change**

This is the hardest threshold to cross and many people get stuck here instead of moving forward. As friends we must remember the Holy Spirit brings conviction and not us. Many become open to God through tragedies or when their poor choices result in consequences they can no longer ignore.

How can we walk with others in patience, praying for the Spirit to move, while challenging like Jesus (nudge, mirror illogic, and connecting dots)?

#### **Curious Conversation Focus: Questions of Improvement**

- What do you wish was better about yourself?
- What would you say is your biggest flaw?
- What is your biggest regret? Fear?
- What would you change about your relationship with God? Why do you do what you do

### **THRESHOLD 4: Seeking After God**

This threshold is about coming to a conclusion. To follow or not follow Jesus. There may not be a lot of questions about behavioral change here because they are just about to make a decision about Jesus.

How can we help them count the cost of following Jesus and show them the incredible family they will join if they do?

#### **Curious Conversation Focus: Questions of Investigation**

- If you could ask Jesus for anything, what would it be?
- What do you wish Jesus could offer you?
- Referring to your need, would you like to investigate what Jesus says?

### **THRESHOLD 5: Entering the Kingdom**

This is the point when the person decides to repent and follow Jesus! They have decided they want to cross a real and eternally significant line. They go from flirting to commitment. They look Jesus in the face and say “I do.”

How can we clearly proclaim the heart, truth and call of the gospel through an invitation to commitment?

#### **Curious Conversation Focus: Questions of Commitment**

- Are you ready to call Jesus your Lord?
- What’s keeping you from following Jesus?
- Share the gospel