**Going Deeper in Conversation**

**Evangelism training with Karen Moore**

I recently attended the Hope25 online training by Karen Moore which taught a practical model for deepening conversations so that they lead into conversations about God. It was a simple yet useful model which I will outline for you here.

Basically, as a conversation progresses you can ask questions that will steer the conversation in the direction of God. Start with asking general questions, those that are about facts and whatever is external to a person, then along the way ask more specific questions that are more personal, and feelings based which connect with the inner person then move onto a God related question with the aim of leading to a conversation about God. These questions relate to values, ethics and things reflecting to the eternal.

I will endeavour to shed more light on this process by demonstrating these types of questions with respect to some everyday types of conversations: -

**A conversation about the weather:**

*General question:* Do you think the weather is getting crazy?

*Specific question:* How is this crazy weather impacting you?

*God question:* Who would you turn to if you were caught up in a scary weather event?

**A conversation about the cricket:**

*General question:* What did you think of the Aussie’s performance in the game against….?

*Specific question:* What do you love about cricket?

*God question:* Do you think they play cricket in heaven?

**A conversation about parenting:**

*General question:* Would you agree parenting is a struggle?

*Specific question:* What are you aiming for as a parent?

*God question:* What would you say if I said God could help you achieve that aim?

Everyday we engage in conversations with others. Think about the topics of conversation you find yourself in and take some time to think about what general, specific and God questions you could ask, then ask God to help you boldly put this approach into practice. Maybe you could practice at church first with your brother’s and sisters over morning tea to build up confidence and fluency with this approach. Just think of the many opportunities you’ll have to share your faith as this type of questioning becomes second nature.

**Let’s all give it a go.**

**Six Types of Friends**

**Evangelism training with Julie-Anne Baird**

*But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.* ***1 Peter 3:15-16***

Julie-Anne has identified six types of people in relation to hearing the good news of Jesus Christ and she gives us helpful strategies to enable us to respond as Peter says with gentleness and respect. Friends matter so we must remember to undergird all our interactions with prayer and allow the Holy Spirit’s fruit to flow through us.

Here is a summary of the six types of friends and how to respond:

1. Apathetic – these friends have not given much thought to anything little lone things of a spiritual nature. The main way to work with apathetic people is through connection. Connect them with others, God and the hope of Jesus to challenge them to think about things. Especially introduce them to other Christians so that they can see that other people believe other than yourself.
2. Thoughtful – These types of friends are constantly thinking based on a strong worldview. Be curious with them and go deep asking questions like ‘What do you mean by that?’, ‘Why do you think that?’ ‘Do you always think that way?’ Ask general questions that lead to conversations about values, desires, longings and then aim to connect their answers to God.
3. Interested – these friends show interest in your faith. Share Jesus with them at every opportunity. Have a few bible stories up your sleeve to share eg stories about money, stories about Jesus, what He did, what He said.
4. Hostile – these kinds of friends react badly or aggressively to your expressions of faith. Pray for wisdom in knowing how to approach them. Love them, listen, ask questions. Ask God to reveal the source of their hostility, there is usually a good reason for their big emotional responses. Allow them to have big emotions and ask God to help you learn to sit with it and not get caught up in fear. Sometimes it is wise to do nothing. Take a gentle approach but also hold your ground ie agree to disagree. Take the front foot by predicting where things might go in a conversation and prepare in advance, maybe offer a reality check. Know your history, why you have faith and how you came to it to share if the opportunity arises.
5. Religious – those who come from a different faith perspective. Be passionate as a person of faith. These people enjoy discussions about spirituality. Be sure about what you believe if you are going to engage with them.
6. Dechurched – those who use to go to church but no longer do. Stay close with these friends and follow them up. Usually, they have left the church because they have felt hurt by other Christians and still have faith in God. Others have chosen a lifestyle that they realise doesn’t sit with Christianity. Remember it is not our role to judge, leave this role to God and believe in faith that He is continuing to work in their lives. Remember pray, love and point to Jesus. If you are good with humour, use it and use the gifts God has given you.