

Discussion Questions

June 25, 2023

B.L.E.S.S.

Listen With Curiosity and Care



1. Share a recent example of when you did a poor job of listening.

What makes the difference between poor listening and good listening?

2. Read Luke 18:35-39

Discuss how the blind man would have felt before Jesus listened to him, and after He did.

3. When was the last time you felt truly listened to and loved? What was so special about that experience?

4. Why do you think it is hard for us to refrain from giving advice, interrupting or from having an agenda when we talk with someone?

5. The Psychologist Dr. David Augsberg in his book *Caring Enough to Hear and Be Heard* says, "Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person they are almost indistinguishable." Do you agree with that statement? If it is true, what are the implications?

6. Share your greatest struggles with pursuing and having conversations with neighbors and those who are far from Jesus.

7. Look over the questions in the handout (included on the next page) and identify a few that you feel you might be able to use this week with someone you are praying for.

B.L.E.S.S - Listen with Curiosity

Starter Questions:

- Where did you grow up?
- What do you like to do for fun?
- What is the an interesting thing you are working on right now?
- Tell me about your family.
- What are you enjoying about this season of life?
- Describe the perfect vacation.
- How did you get into your profession?
- (If married) How did you meet your spouse?
- If you could be doing anything in 5 years, what would it be?
- What was life like for you growing up?

For those from different places/cultures:

- What do you miss about your home?
- What have you enjoyed about being here?
- What are the biggest differences you have seen?
- What are some significant holidays you celebrated growing up?
Ask about them.

Deeper Questions:

- Do you have any religious background, and does it mean anything to you?
- What is the story of your faith journey? How have your perspectives changed over time?
- Have you ever had what you would consider to be a spiritual experience? What happened?
- Do you think there is a God? What do you think God is like?
What questions would you like to ask God if you could?
- What do you think happens when we die?
- Have you had any good or bad experiences with Christians or with the church? What were they?
- What are some struggles you are facing at the moment?
- Is there anything going on in your life that I could pray for?

Remember to follow up:

- How did that make you feel?
- What was that like?
- Can you share more about that?

Overall on a scaled of 1-10, how well would you rate yourself as a listener of others?

- I wait for people to finish their full thought without interrupting?
- I avoid getting frustrated or agitated when people say things I deeply disagree with?
- I stay away from my phone and other distractions while listening to others?
- I avoid preparing my response or rebuttal while others talk and give them my full attention?

Dallas Willard - Spirit of the Disciplines

In our culture, listening is often interpreted as love... The first act of love is always the giving of attention.

Dr. David Augsberg - Caring Enough to Hear and Be Heard

Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person they are almost indistinguishable.

Matthew 9:10 (CSB)

While [Jesus] was reclining at the table in the [Matthew's] house, many tax collectors and sinners came to eat with Jesus and his disciples.

Luke 18:35-43 (NLT)

As Jesus approached Jericho, a blind beggar was sitting beside the road. When he heard the noise of a crowd going past, he asked what was happening. They told him that Jesus the Nazarene was going by. So he began shouting, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" "Be quiet!" the people in front yelled at him. But he only shouted louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

When Jesus heard him, he stopped and ordered that the man be brought to him. As the man came near, Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" "Lord," he said, "I want to see!" And Jesus said, "All right, receive your sight! Your faith has healed you." Instantly the man could see, and he followed Jesus, praising God. And all who saw it praised God, too.

Dave Ferguson - B.L.E.S.S.

The opposite of listening is not speaking it's waiting to speak

James 1:19 (CEV)

My dear friends, you should be quick to listen and slow to speak or to get angry.

Proverbs 18:2 (CEV)

Fools have no desire to learn; they would much rather give their own opinion.

Proverbs 18:13 (CEV)

It's stupid and embarrassing to give an answer before you listen.

Proverbs 18:15 (CEV)

Everyone with good sense wants to learn.

Francis Chan interview with Outreach Magazine 2012

Wherever you are, you need to figure out how to get into the lives of the unbelievers. To me, the biggest problem with evangelism . . . is that it's gotten too impersonal. People in the church don't know how to look an unbeliever in the eye and actually love him or her and carry on a conversation with them. . . . It's a lot harder to go out, be in the world, and build relationships with people who don't believe like you and think like you. Most people don't make the effort to do that. . . . I think overall, the church is going to get weaker and weaker in this area, and it's not because they don't love Jesus. It's not because they don't have a heart for the Lord. They just don't know how to engage with people who don't believe like they do.

