

16. ALL PEOPLE

—Spiritual Conversations

Jesus was gifted in the art of spiritual conversation. In beautiful, disarming ways, he spoke with others about God. We see his precociousness at age 12 when he engaged with the rabbis at the Temple. In Luke 2:46-47 we observe a simple 5-step progression:

Jesus was **sitting** in the midst of the teachers
Both **listening** to them
And **asking** them questions
And all who heard were amazed at his **understanding**
And his **answers**.

Imagine if we could follow this example of *sitting, listening, asking, and understanding* before we ever attempted to offer spiritual answers. Too often, we feel compelled that we have to get the ENTIRE MESSAGE OF SALVATION OUT to our listener, without taking the patient path of listening, asking and understanding that Jesus embodied.

Reflect on Jesus's conversations in the following situations - what do you notice about his conversational skill? What kind of changes do we notice in the people who spoke with Jesus? What are the wider ripple effects?

Luke 19:1-10

Luke 24:13-35

John 3:1-21

John 4:1-42

John 5:1-15

What other observations can we make about the importance of conversing well?

Proverbs 18:2

Proverbs 20:5

Colossians 4:2-6

James 1:19-20

I Peter 3:15

APPLICATION: 1. What have been some positive conversations you've had with non-believers about Jesus? What have been negative ones? Why do you think the conversations went the way they did? 2. How comfortable are you to initiate conversations with others about faith, God or Jesus? Why or why not? 3. Can you recall when someone was sincerely curious about your life? How did it make you feel? What was your response? 4. As you think of the people you listed in your journal that you would like to reach, what could be some approaches to a spiritual conversation? What are the ways you could sit, listen, ask and understand?