



## Pastor Hanke's Blog

### October 20, 2019

#### Spiritual Conversations – Guide Toward Faith

Bible Reference: Acts 8:26-40

The hardest part of the Spiritual Conversation Curve is in this third step...remembering that you have knowledge of theology and religious practices that are foreign to your new friend and person of faith. In this step, your new friend is most likely coming to church with you (or perhaps attending a different church), and may have questions about things that are so common to us that we didn't think to address them. We may even feel guilty for not filling them in on these things sooner.

In a household I call these unspoken rules. In my household some of these rules include: kids go to bed at 7:30pm; you are on your own for breakfast unless you are too little to make it yourself or it is Saturday; electronics are only allowed during quiet time and in the morning; etc. You get the point. You would have no way of knowing these are the rules just by entering my house, but my kids know them because they are with me every day. This also happens in the church. We know the unwritten rules on how to operate that a person just coming to faith, or just starting to attend church, wouldn't know or even understand. Then to add to that basic understandings of Jesus and Scripture that are likely unknown to this new person, and it could be an uneasy experience for that new believer.

Yes, it takes work to teach them why we do what we do, but the goal is to do it in a loving manner that doesn't make them feel stupid or guilty for their lack of knowledge. The two most important things to remember in this section of the Spiritual Conversation Curve are: 1) constantly ask yourself, "What is common to me that might not be to a person who is new to faith?" and 2) be patient and help them understand the teachings of the faith.

I have challenged each of us to personally think about "who is our person," but I also challenge our church body and denomination to take ownership of areas to help individuals teach others. In the past we've been so focused on making sure our education was strong and the answers were right that the pastor was seen as the only one who could teach, whether it be a Bible study, confirmation, or a new member class. We've missed out on the benefits of teaching our members how to teach others. This should be every member's privilege, not just the pastor's. Our Scripture reading shows us this as Phillip

takes time to teach, and help a new person of faith understand the Scriptures, which led to the baptism of this man's whole family!

The past three weeks we have spent time talking about the Spiritual Conversation Curve. The point of this curve is to distinguish the unique parts of sharing Jesus with others. We start with meeting someone new, someone probably not like us at all. The second step is allowing that relationship to grow, and letting conversations about faith naturally happen as the friendship develops. Finally, we end with guiding people to faith. My prayer is that we see the joy in this process and experience amazing opportunities to share the message of Jesus. I cannot express how much I want this for Mt. Calvary, and most of all, for you! Though this weekend we conclude this series, it is really just the beginning of our spiritual conversations. My door is always open for questions, or to share your stories and experiences with spiritual conversations.

*God's Peace,*

*Pastor Will*