



Listening well and determining spiritual thresholds

Goal

To gain active listening skills to better understand how to engage others with the gospel in a way that they can actually hear

Introduction

Some people are curious about faith in Jesus, while others seem to have no interest. How does active listening and dependence on the Holy Spirit help us determine where a person is at and how to respond? Share a story from your personal experience.

Bible Passage & Questions

Acts 8:26-38

Retell this story in your own words.

- What role did the Holy Spirit play in this story for both Philip and the eunuch?
- Philip began the conversation with a question. Why?
- What can we learn from Philip's conversation style?

Consider & Discuss

Break up into pairs. Choose one person to share for three minutes about their favorite vacation. While that person is sharing, the listener should raise their hand every time their partner shares something that evokes their "inner voice," that is, the listener raises their hand when they have an urge to interrupt, add something, ask a question, or when their mind wanders to something else, gets distracted, etc. After the three minutes are over, the person speaking should share how they felt to see their partner's hand raised throughout the conversation.

In [/Once was Lost](#) Don Everts and Doug Schaupp describe the mysterious and organic process God uses to draw people to Himself through discernible phases or thresholds from:

1. From distrust to trust
2. From complacent to curious
3. From being closed to change to being open to change in their life
4. From meandering to seeking
5. From darkness into the kingdom of light

As a group, [watch Doug Schaupp](#) give an overview of these five thresholds. Then discuss:

- Where do you see the five thresholds in your own personal spiritual journey?
- What steps might you consider taking to encourage a person to trust a Christian where distrust or skepticism may exist?
- What are one or two intriguing questions you could ask that may pique their interest in Christianity? Make a list of these questions as a group.

Next Steps (Individually & Collectively)

Think of the five people on your “Top Five List”, those you are praying will come to Christ. Before which threshold do they stand? How might you create an environment where you can actively listen to them? What questions will you ask to help them move further on their faith journey?

Additional Resources

Don Everts and Doug Schuapp, *I Once Was Lost: What Postmodern Skeptics Taught Us About Their Path to Jesus* (IVP Books, 2008)

Intervarsity's [“The Five Thresholds Cheatsheet”](#)

[Soularium](#)

[ConversationArtCards.com](#)