

The Art of Meaningful Conversation



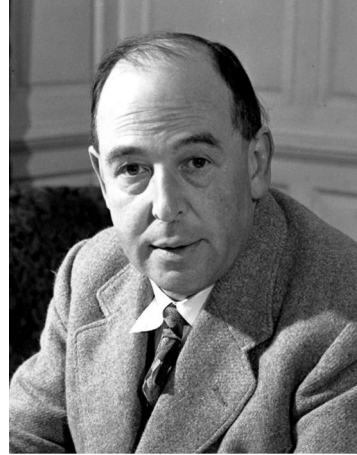
Problems

- Assumptions
- Robotics
- Skipping
- Mechanical

What is the worth of a soul?



The worth of a soul: Seeing People as God sees Them



“It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship... There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations - these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry... and exploit - immortal horrors or everlasting splendors.” - C.S. Lewis

Our New Standard

1. Seek first to understand (Extended profiling)
 2. Then, seek to be understood
- 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
 - PMG Chapter 9, “Find People Where They Are”

1. Seek first to Understand (Needs and Desires)

“Finding people where they are begins with trying to see them as God does... Seek to understand people’s spiritual **needs** and **desires**.”

1. Seek first to Understand (Needs and Desires)

- Ask Big Questions
- Storify
- Encourage through Active Listening
- Don't be a topper
- The Gift of Silence

Ask Big Questions

- Ask people questions that require big responses.
- These questions deal with understanding, rather than facts.
- These questions often begin with “why” or “how.”
- The wording of these questions is very important.

PMG Chapter 10, “Ask Questions” p. 190-192



Storify



- This is how we ask a big question
- Rather than just asking for facts, we ask for stories and experiences.
- As people share stories and experiences, they are much more likely to share detail.
- These are big questions that often begin with the word “how...” or “tell me about...”

PMG Chapter 10, “Ask Inspired Questions” p. 190

Examples of Big Questions

1. How has Jesus Christ helped you in your life?
2. What brings you the most joy in life?
3. What does God do to show His love for you?

Storifying our Big Questions

1. How has Jesus Christ helped you in your life?
2. What brings you the most joy in life?
3. What does God do to show His love for you?

1. Tell me about a time when Jesus Christ helped you.
 2. Can you share the experience you had when you have felt the most joy?
 3. Tell me about your experience when you felt God's love the most?
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Category	Barriers	Needs and Desires
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you stay here with your family? If so, how many are in your family? (Boys / Girls and their ages)? Where does your family come from? When did your family move to this town? Do you and your family want to stay here for a while? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do you think God sent you here to earth? What do you think God expects of you? Why do you believe in God? Describe the happiest moment in your life. How have you felt God’s love the most in your life? What have you done in your life that has required the most faith? Why / How did you do it? Can you share a time that you felt closest to God? When was the first time you felt that God really loved you? What is the hardest thing you have ever overcome? What brings you the most joy in your life?
Work / School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you do for work? How many years have you been working there? What time are you usually at work? Do you work 6 or 7 days a week? What kind of education do you need for the work you do? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you enjoy your work? Why? What do you think is your strongest work talent or skill? When have you felt the most peace in your life? If you died today, what would you be pleased about? What would worry you? What is your favorite family memory? How do you want to be remembered 20 years from now?
God / Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What church do you attend? What do you do in your church? How many years have you been going there? What caused you to switch churches? Why don't you attend church anymore? 	<p>Asking big questions: Ask questions that encourage the person to tell you a story about their life. Ask questions that you perceive are relevant to the individual. Focus on “why” and “how” and less on “what”, “when”, “Where”.</p> <p>Testing for <u>spiritual sensitivity</u> is discerning whether a person has been prepared by the Spirit to receive the message of the Restoration. This usually happens while a missionary is seeking to understand the person’s needs and desires.</p>

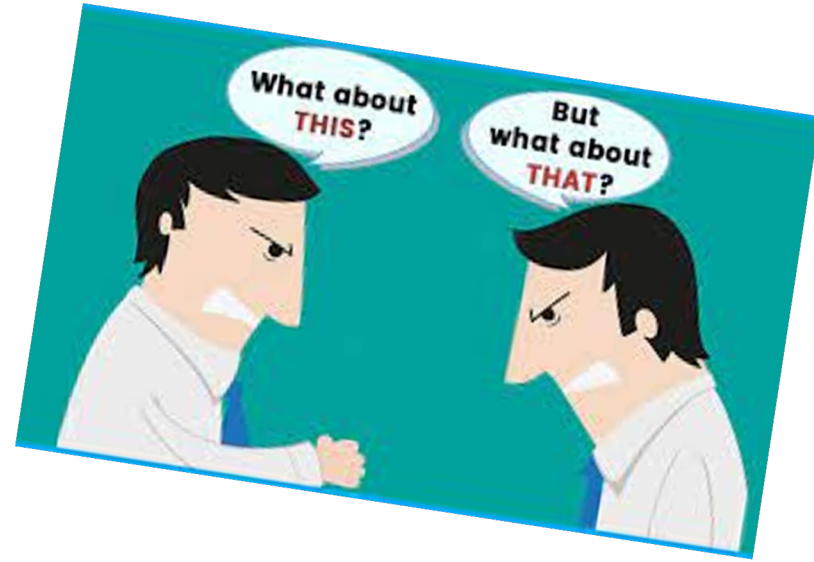
Encouraging through Active Listening



- We should be asking clarifying questions: “So is this what you mean...?”
- We should be seeking to understand, not just waiting for the conversation to end.
- We need to be actively encouraging those we meet to continue talking to get more detail.
- We can do that by saying things like “aha!” or “yes” or “okay” or “saa” or “hwe” or “asem oo”

Don't be a topper

- We can share our own experiences, but we should not try to “top” others
- “Oh yeah, well how about this...?”
- “When I went to SHS I played football”.
“Really? I played basketball, football, and ran track”



The Gift of Silence

- Sometimes, the best approach is to say nothing.
- Missionaries are scared of silence because it can be awkward.
- However, silence is necessary to give everyone some time to think, reflect, and listen to the whisperings of the Spirit.

PMG Chapter 10, “Allow People Time to Think and Respond” p. 193



2. Then, Seek to be Understood

- Plan and Adjust Your Teaching to Meet Needs
- Teach for Understanding
- Ask inspired Questions
- Avoid Ineffective or Excessive Questions
- Use the Scriptures, Especially the Book of Mormon, to Help Answer Questions
- Invite People to Act in Faith

PMG Chapter 10, “Teach to Build Faith in Jesus Christ”

Truth and More

The word truth is used 435 times in the scriptures. In 374 of those instances, truth is coupled in the same verse with some form of a strengthening term:

“Truth-and More” Elder Russell M. Nelson, January 1986

Truth and More

Spirit (59 times)

Mercy(-iful) (47 times)

Right(-eousness) (42 times)

Holy(-iness) (36 times)

Judgment (23 times)

Light (23 times)

Grace (22 times)

Good(-ly, -liness) (21 times)

Love (18 times)

Peace (16 times)

Just(ice) (13 times)

Faith (-fullness) (12 times)

Loving kindness (11 times)

Wisdom (10 times)

Soberness (5 times)

Sanctified (4 times)

Kindness (3 times)

Sincerity (3 times)

Free (2 times)

Godliness (2 times)

Long-suffering (once)

Valiant (once)

Truth and Judgment

“Judgment (23 times)”

And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and **equity** cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he *that* departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw *it*, and it displeased him that *there was* no judgment.

Isaiah 59:14-15



Truth and Judgment

Combining truth and judgement means communicating “**that portion that shall be meted unto every man**”.

“I **perceive** that ye are weak, that ye cannot understand all my words which I am commanded of the Father to speak unto you at this time. Therefore, go ye unto your homes, and ponder upon the things which I have said, and ask of the Father, in my name, that ye may understand, and prepare your minds for the morrow, and I come unto you again.” 3 Nephi 17:2-3

Truth and Mercy

“Mercy(-iful) (47 times)”

Mercy and truth are met together;
righteousness and peace have
kissed *each other*.

Psalms 85:10

By Mercy and truth iniquity is
purged: and by the fear of the LORD
men depart from evil

Proverbs 16:6



Truth and Mercy

“May I give you an illustration? Imagine a surgeon who has just operated upon a patient and found cancer invading vital organs of the body. It is widespread and beyond cure. With this knowledge, the surgeon approaches the family and the patient and coldly announces that the patient has advanced cancer, that he is beyond hope and is doomed to die. While discharging his duty to share that information, the surgeon has told the truth, but with utter abandon has then walked away from the turmoil that ‘truth’ has left in its wake.”

“Another surgeon, with that same information and with compassion, approaches the family, speaks the truth, and then mercifully indicates that, even though the road ahead will be difficult and challenging, the patient and the family will not be forsaken. They will be supported with all the resources available to him as their caring physician.” - President Russell M. Nelson

Truth and Light

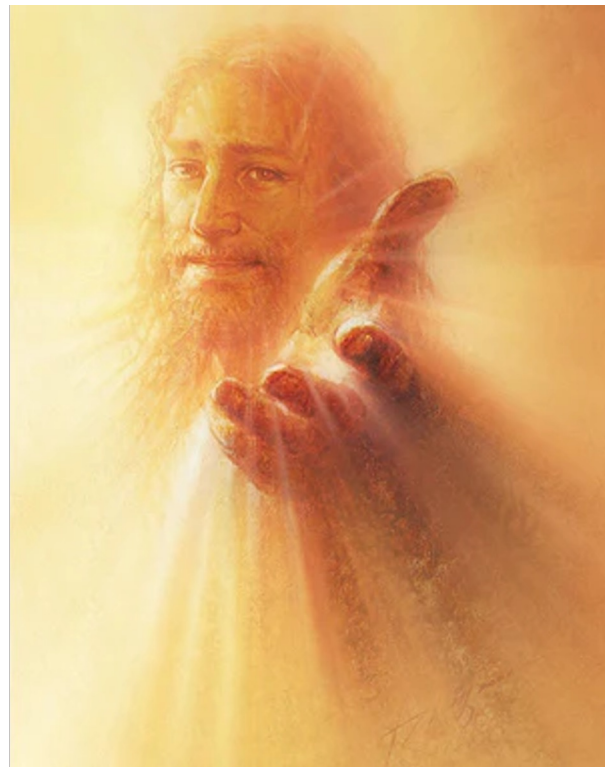
Light (23 times)

The glory of God is intelligence, or in other words, light and truth. Light and truth forsake that evil one

Doctrine and Covenants 93:36-37

In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John 1:4-5



Truth and Light

Yes, truth must be served with light. Or it won't be understood.

See John 1:5.

Understanding this, prepares us to invite our investigators to do away with contention or other forms of darkness before we can teach them.

Truth and Righteousness

“Right(-eousness) (42 times)”

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Romans 1:17-18



Truth and Righteousness

“What is my motivation for teaching this truth?” Are we motivated by a desire to "win" the conversation? Are we motivated by a desire to trap a man in his words? Do we desire to embarrass or just to prove to someone that they are wrong?

“And Satan... sought also to beguile Eve... For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” - Moses 4:6,11

Role Play

Scenario: You meet Br. Kwame at his house. He is a busy, working man with a wife and 4 children. He is active in church, but he doesn't have a position.

Engage with Br. Kwame and practice these elements:

- 1) Ask him Big Questions,
- 2) Storify (your questions as much as possible),
- 3) Encouraging through Active Listening ,
- 4) The Gift of Attention,
- 5) Don't be a topper,
- 6) The Gift of Silence

Invitations

- Consciously practice using the truth to uplift, inspire, and edify
- Ask more Big Questions
- Use the elements of Encouraging through Active Listening, Don't Be A Topper, Storify, the Gift of Silence, and more when teaching
- Consider the worth of each soul you come across by seeing them as God sees them. See them in baptismal clothing, see them in the temple. See them as Bishops, Relief Society Presidents, Young Men and Young Women advisors, Elders Quorum Presidents