

Windows of the Soul

COJOURNERS № 2.1 | EXPLORER

Is there a window in the room? Stand on the other side of the room and describe what you can see through it. Now move closer to the window. What do you see? There is a principle at work – the closer you get the more you see.

The same principle works within everyday conversations. Casual comments can often be windows to a person's soul. These are conversational clues. On the surface they appear to be casual comments, but if you investigate with questions, you discover there is much more to be seen.

Discuss

- Name examples of common conversational clues you might hear.
- Can you think of a recent example?

- What questions might you ask to explore a conversational clue?
- Read Colossians 4:5. How could exploratory questions help you obey this instruction?

Action Plan

Pray that God will make you alert to comments that could be windows to the soul. Be prepared to ask probing questions to see what is behind the comment. Keep a journal or list of the conversations that result to share in your next small group meeting.

Summary

Investigate revealing comments to get below the surface.



Praying for You

COJOURNERS № 2.2 | EXPLORER

Prayer is perhaps the most common spiritual experience in America. More than 80 percent of Americans claim to pray to God. Prayer can provide a door through which to enter others' spiritual journeys. How? By simply asking others how you can pray for them. The request reflects a generally acceptable act of kindness. The answer often reveals a significant need.

Approach a number of acquaintances this week and say, "I try to pray for others, rather than just praying for myself. I was wondering if there is anything you would like prayed for. It could be school, family, relationships, finances, or whatever." If they share something, ask a few questions to understand more about the issue and its importance. Affirm their concern and assure them of your prayers.

Next week, be sure to ask the acquaintance about the issue. Ask if there has been an answer, or, if there is anything else they would like you to pray for?

Discuss

- How do you think others will respond to the offer for prayer?
- Who would you like to approach about prayer?

Action Plan

Pray that God will use these attempts to open doors into the journeys of others. Journal your encounters and share them at your next meeting. If appropriate, pray together for any who shared prayer requests.

Summary

The offer of prayer can open the door to a person's inner life.



Power Tools

COJOURNERS № 2.3 | EXPLORER

Listening can reveal many insights into a person's spiritual journey. But through questions, you can discover so much more. Questions can guide conversations to deeper levels and into desired topics. Most conversations remain at a surface level. Questions have the power to take a conversation below the surface.

Discuss

- What questions do you like to use to discover where a person is spiritually?
- How do you think most people would respond to each of the following questions?
 1. What was your religious background as a child?
 2. What words would you use to describe your life spiritually?
 3. Do you have a spiritual belief of any kind?
 4. What don't you believe?

5. Have you ever experienced God? If so, how?
 6. Has anything dramatic happened that has convinced you that God is real?
 7. Is there a heaven and a hell?
 8. If you were to die tonight, how sure are you that you would have eternal life? Why?
 9. What barriers keep you from trusting God?
- Brainstorm more good questions.

Action Plan

Choose a question to ask a number of acquaintances this week. Conversationally explore their answers with other questions. Journal your conversations to share and discuss at your next small group meeting.

Summary

Questions are the power tool to explore others' lives.



What's Your Story

COJOURNERS № 2.4 | EXPLORER

Every person's spiritual journey has a past, a present and a future. To understand their journey, you need to explore where they have been, where they are and where they are going. Good questions can help people tell their story.

Explore where they've been

- What was your religious background as a child?
- Was it positive, neutral or negative for you? Why?

Explore where they are

- How would you describe your spiritual belief?
- Who is Jesus to you?

Explore where they are going

- Lately, do you think you have been moving toward God, away from God or staying about the same?

- On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your desire to know God personally?

Discuss

- Whose spiritual journey would you like to explore?

Action Plan

Pray for opportunities to explore the spiritual journey of those who you have discussed. This week ask permission: "I really enjoy hearing about others' spiritual experiences and I've never heard much about yours. Can I ask you some questions?"

Summary

An explorer helps others tell their spiritual story.





You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late.
-Ralph Waldo Emerson



A wise man hears one word and understands two.
-Jewish proverb



The voyage of discovery lies not in finding new landscapes, but in having new eyes.
-Marcel Proust



Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you'd have preferred to talk.
-Doug Larson

