

Questions to Spur Deeper Conversations by John Hopper

It's not always easy to start up meaningful conversations. Having a few questions to ask about people's past, present, and future can help get you there. Furthermore, if you listen well to the answers people give, you often will uncover the hopes, joys, fears, motivations, hardships, and beliefs that shape a person's life. This in turn can build friendships and provide open avenues to ask questions about God, the Bible, Christianity, and the gospel.

Some of the questions listed below are probably original, but undoubtedly I picked up many from others. When you hear a good question, add it to the list. A good question can be gold when it comes to having deeper conversations with others about life and God.

Past

1. Where are you from? What were the best and worst parts of growing up where you did?
2. What is important about where you've come from?
3. Would you say you have a close family? Who would you say you are closest to?
4. What good gifts/traits/lessons did you receive from your parents?
5. What is one of your best childhood memories?
6. What made you choose your college/job/profession?
7. What two or three individuals most significantly influenced who you are today? How did they influence you?
8. Lots of people have some kind of religious exposure in their background—is that true for you?
9. If there is one thing you could change about your past, what would it be?
10. What was the highlight/lowlight of this past year for you?
11. What was the most difficult season of your life?
12. What is the story behind how you started your business/your move here/how you met your spouse/your love of _____?
13. What was important to you when choosing that car/school district/gym/job/retirement community?

Present

14. On a scale of 1 to 10, how is your day going? What makes it a _____? What would make it a 10?
15. What are the best five minutes of your day?
16. If you had a free day or afternoon, how would you spend it?
17. What is a perfect day for you?
18. What is the best thing going on in your life right now? What is the hardest thing?
19. What is the biggest question/task in front of you right now?
20. If you could resolve one issue in your life, what would it be? What do you see as your next step in addressing that situation?
21. What creates energy and excitement for you? When do you feel most alive?
22. What is keeping you awake at night these days?
23. What is your greatest fear?
24. What are you passionate about?
25. If you had a few bumper stickers on your car that described your view on life, what would they say?

26. Is there a religion that best fits your view on life?
27. People often talk about faith being important to their life. Is it important to you?
28. So many people are in search of the good life. How would you describe "the good life"?
29. What are you reading or listening to these days?
30. If you were to list three things that are most important for you to focus on right now, what would they be?
31. If you had to exert yourself physically for a couple of hours, how would you want to do that?
32. Do you feel you are headed in a good direction right now?
33. What is the best lesson you've learned lately?
34. What do you think are the best qualities in a friend?
35. If you were to write a song about your life right now, what would it be about?
36. What type of compliments do you value most? From whom?
37. What does it take for someone to win a gold star from you?
38. What do others ask you to do? Where do you ask for help most often?
39. Where do you turn to find inspiration and motivation?
40. I can tell you have a lot of expertise in this area. Can I ask your opinion about something?
41. What is the favorite part of your job? What is your least favorite?
42. When and where do you do your best work?
43. What would people be most surprised to find out about you?
44. What personal disciplines/habits have you found helpful? How did you develop them?
45. What did you believe when you were younger that you no longer believe? What made you change what you believe?
46. How are things going with your parents/children/co-workers/roommate?
47. What trait do you most value in your partner/children/co-workers/roommate?
48. I can tell you are good at _____. Could you help me think through something?

Future

49. What do you want to be like in 1/5/10 years?
50. If you could shape your future, what would it look like?
51. What is your dream job?
52. What goal(s) do you have for yourself this year?
53. What do you think is the biggest hindrance to your dreams coming true (or your goal being accomplished)?
54. If you could live anywhere, where would you live? Why?
55. How would you spend your time if you didn't have to earn a living?
56. What is one change you would like to make in your life in the next twelve months and why?
57. How would you define the lifestyle you would like to have? If you achieved that lifestyle, do you think you would be happy?
58. What do you fear most about the future?
59. If you could simplify something in your life, what would it be?
60. What do you want retirement to look like?
61. Are you on schedule to finish college/your current assignment/life well?
62. What is one word that you wished described you? Why?
63. What change would you make if you could live your life over?
64. When you get done with life, what do you want to be said of you?
65. What do you think happens when we die?

God

66. Do you ever think about God?
67. If there is a God, what do you think God is like? Loving, vengeful, stingy, generous, overbearing, or disinterested?
68. If you had to place a bet, would you bet that God exists? Why?
69. Do you ever step back and wonder what life is all about?
70. Have you ever asked a question about God or religion but never received a good answer? What question did you ask?
71. What one question would you like to ask God? Of all the questions you could have picked, why did you pick that one?
72. Do you think it is possible to have a personal relationship with God? Would you like to have a relationship with God?
73. Sometimes when people are going through what you are going through it brings up spiritual questions. Have any spiritual questions surfaced for you?
74. When you go through difficult things like that, do you think God cares?
75. I'm always surprised to hear how many people say they had a "God experience." Have you ever had an experience when you felt God showed up?
76. You mentioned you frequently went to church as a kid. What keeps you from going now?
77. Do you believe in heaven and hell? If so, who do you think goes to heaven and who goes to hell?
78. If there is a heaven and God asked you "Why should I let you in?" what would your answer be?
79. Jesus once asked his followers, "Who do you say that I am?" How would you answer that question?
80. Has anyone explained to you who Jesus is and why he is so important to so many?
81. Do you think we are here by accident or by some divine plan?
82. If good people go to heaven, how good do you think you have to be?
83. I see you wear a cross. What does that mean to you?
84. Some people worship Jesus as God. Do you think Jesus was God?
85. I consider the Bible to be God's written message to us. What is your opinion of the Bible?
86. Would you say God is important in your life?
87. If you had to define what Christians believe, what would you say?
88. If you were to pray, what would you pray about?
89. Is there anything going on in your life I can pray for?
90. Do you want to ask God for forgiveness and begin following him today?

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