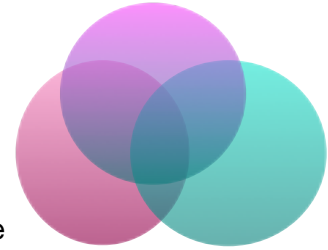


## Three Stories

Three stories is a “tool” for helping believers to make natural connections between their nonChristian friend’s life and the gospel. This step is often the hardest to make when sharing our faith.



The first story involves learning about your new friend’s life. They will probably not just tell you that story unless you take the initiative and show genuine interest by asking lots of questions. Of course these questions will more naturally be asked over a period of time often while doing other things together. As with all natural relationships those questions will grow deeper over time.

“Everyone is interesting, but it’s not up to them to show you—it’s up to you to discover it. — “  
Georgie Nightingall, conversation expert

Six categories of conversation Holleman, Heather. The Six Conversations Moody Publishers  
When beginning a new relationship think about asking questions related to these 6 categories.

1. Social: the full range of all our social interactions
2. Emotional: how we feel about ourselves and our experiences
3. Physical: our bodies and the physical space around us
4. Cognitive: what we think about and what we are learning
5. Volitional: our choices that give us a sense of control and authority
6. Spiritual: our soul and the unseen spiritual world around us

Cultivating the four mindsets of a loving conversation. In simple terms, if I were to tell you the four most critical things to do to foster a warm and connected conversation, I’d say this:

- Be curious be genuinely interested in people. Be curious!
- Believe the best
- Express concern
- Share your life

## Conversation Levels

### Level 1 Surface/facts

- What brought you to this city, uni etc
- How long have you been here? How has your experience been? What has made it hard? What is the best part of being here?
- What are your hobbies/interests outside of school?
- Where were living before you came here? Where were you born? What is your hometown famous for? What do most people do there for a living?
- Tell me about your family, your parents, siblings, grandparents. What did your father/mother do for a living while you were growing up? What was your family life like?
- What do you want to do when you graduate? What would be your perfect job?

### Level 2 Relationships

- What do you miss about your hometown/country/family? What do you miss the most?
- Which of your family members do you miss the most? Why?
- Were you closer to your mom or dad or someone else while growing up?
- Who was one of the most influential people in your life while you were a child, in elementary school, middle, high school, college? How did they influence you?
- What did you most like to study when you were younger? Are you still doing that now? Why or why not?
- Who was your best friend? Why did you like them? What did you do together?

- Did you have any romantic relationships in the past? How did that turn out? Was that a generally good experience? What would you do differently the next time?

### Level 3 Life Questions

- What would you like your life to look like in 5/10 years? Where would you like to live? Why?
- Do you want to be married? How will you know the right person to marry?
- How much money do you want to make per year? How much do you think you will need to make your life comfortable/happy?
- What do you think will give your life the most meaning?
- What is your happiest memory growing up? Tell me about it.
- What is the worst thing that happened to you? How did you respond?
- Do you have any fears? What do you worry about the most? How do you stop worrying?
- Did you grow up with any sort of religion or faith? Was anyone in your family religious? Which religion? Have you ever met someone who claimed to be a Christian? What did you think about them?
- Do you believe in God, or a Supreme being who rules over the world? Why or why not?
- What do you think happens after death? Does the thought of death concern you in any way? Why or why not?

There are many more questions that could be asked. See “Questions to Uncover Thirst” or Heather Holleman’s favorite 100 questions to ask.

The **second story** is your story. In all likelihood, as you begin to ask them many questions, they will also want to know how you answer some of the same questions. The key here is to tell your life story, that includes many of the questions above, in a way that they can understand without using any religious language that would be foreign to them. You would also want to share what the process was that God used to bring you to the point of faith.

How did the felt needs in your life intersect with the gospel story? Was it a fear of death, a need for forgiveness, a purpose in life, relational pain, shame, or what? Describe for them when and how God brought you to the point that you trusted in Jesus for life now and in the future.

The **third story** is God’s story or the Gospel message. It is that which delivers us from our past, our sins, wounds, fears and shame. It also gives us a hope for the future because of an ongoing relationship with God for all eternity through faith in Jesus the King.

At this point of having shared your story and being aware of many things in their story, we pray and ask God to show us where their story, your story and God’s story intersect.

In places where all three stories intersect, your testimony is the perfect place to begin to connect their story to the gospel. This intersection may not initially be what we would more narrowly define as the Gospel but it is a starting point.

From here we can introduce them to the Scriptures and God’s thoughts regarding the most pressing felt needs in their life. In so doing, we pray that God’s Word bears fruit, speaks to their heart and that the Spirit draws them into wanting to know more about God and His desire for them to become His child.

## The Intersection

### Felt Needs

Guilt, shame, need for forgiveness  
Fear of death  
Need to be truly loved unconditionally  
To be significant, jobs, career  
Purpose in life/How to live  
Community/Relationship/marriage  
Anxiety/worry  
Love of Money  
Decisions, future, luck  
What is true?  
Trials, suffering in life

### God's Story or the Gospel

There is forgiveness  
Promise of eternal life  
Grace, adoption  
A child of the King  
a Servant of the King Jn 10:10  
Perfect love, Bride of Christ  
Peace  
Money cannot satisfy your soul  
God rules over our lives  
God tells us what is true  
God has a purpose

As felt needs come to light in your friends story, prayerfully share a thought or two regarding what God says about that issue. Consider inviting your friend to look further at what the Bible says regarding that topic. Then invite them to continue reading the Bible with you in an investigative study that more fully explains what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

If they decline your offer to look at the Bible together, continue to share your story of how God is making a difference in your life today and ask more questions about their story. Continue the process of asking God to bring into the light some connection between their life and the gospel.

Comparing Their Story (worldview) to the truths of the Good News. By first understanding their worldview, their story, you can then draw contrast to the Biblical view of life and share stories from your own experiences.

### Discussion Questions for now or in the future!

- What other felt needs could be added to the list? How does the Gospel meet that need?
- Thinking back over your story, was there a felt need to that you were aware of that initially led you to investigate or accept the claims of the gospel?
- What was that need? What were the circumstances that God used in your life to bring your story and God's story together? Can you share that in just a couple of minutes in a way that anybody could understand? Try it with your small group. Group members ask questions.
- Have you had any experiences in sharing your faith where God used something like the 3 stories as an entry point for sharing the gospel with a friend? Tell us briefly how that worked.