

SO MANY QUESTIONS

Introduction 2: The art of listening

When you are asked a question (and particularly when you know the answer), it is tempting to jump in straight away with your reply. But this is rarely the best approach. This morning we will explore how listening involves much more than just hearing the question being asked.

Think about it

Someone asks, "Why does God allow suffering?"

1. What are some of the reasons a person might ask this question?

2. How might these reasons affect the way you respond to this question?

What do the following verses have to say about the importance of listening and understanding the reasons behind the questions that people ask?

Proverbs 18:2

Proverbs 17:27-28

Proverbs 20:5

The art of answering

So you've been asked a question. You've listened carefully and have asked a question back to clarify what's really being asked, and you have listened to the person's response to see if you can discern if there is a question behind the question. But how do you go about answering?

Read **Acts 17:16-31**.

1. What question is Paul asked?
2. How does Paul begin his answer (**vv. 22-23**)?
3. What does Paul say in the middle of his answer (**vv. 24-29**)?
4. What does Paul say at the end of his answer (**vv. 30-31**)?

Think about it

What helpful principles for answering questions can be drawn from Paul's speech to the men of Athens?

The art of follow-up

At the start of this course, we said that the goal is to win people, not arguments. Therefore, the end of a conversation is not necessarily the end of your work. You ought to be looking for opportunities to follow up the discussion.

1. After you have answered a person's question, what things can you do to make the most of that opportunity?
2. What can you do if you weren't able to answer their question very well?