

## The Five Thresholds of Postmodern Conversion



### THRESHOLD 1: Trusting a Christian

The postmodern journey of conversion usually takes place when a skeptic begins to significantly trust a Christian. Today, Christianity and religion are suspect and distrust has become the norm. This hurts and is unpleasant for believers. Below are five “knee-jerk” reactions and corresponding “better” responses:

#### Knee Jerk Response:

Defend yourself

Verbally bruise the other person

Avoid contact

Judge the other person

Argue and debate

#### Better Response:

Pray for the person

Ask questions to learn

Build relationships and bond

Affirm the other person

Welcome and invite

#### Pitfalls to Avoid:

Relativism—be honest about the uniqueness of Christ

Be with them, but don't sin—it's okay to be on their turf, but don't compromise

Don't walk unwisely into temptation—know your weaknesses, act in wisdom

### THRESHOLD 2: Becoming Curious

The stage of curiosity tends to blossom over time and usually has three levels of intensity. It's a subtle shift from being passive to being provoked to think differently.

#### Levels of Curiosity:

Awareness—the person is aware of possibilities they have never considered

Engagement—the person begins to seek answers to their questions

Exchange—the person begins to invite others into their curiosity and reasoning

#### How to Provoke Curiosity:

Ask Questions—Learn some good questions to provoke spiritual conversation

Use Parables—Learn how to tell good stories that convey spiritual truth

Live Curiously—Live a life that invites people to ask you questions

### **THRESHOLD 3: Opening to Change**

This is the hardest threshold to cross and where a lot of people turn back or stay where they are without moving forward. However, this is the stage where the Holy Spirit is especially at work, and when a person can finally become willing to make changes in their lifestyle.

#### **Encourage openness to change by:**

Being patient—making a commitment to Jesus is a really big deal. Praying—your prayers for your friend will make a huge difference for him/her Challenge gently, but firmly like Jesus did—follow Jesus’s example in Scripture.

### **THRESHOLD 4: Seeking After God**

This threshold is about coming to a conclusion. There may not be a lot of behavioral change here because they are just about to make a decision about Jesus. There is urgency and purpose to their seeking, and they have decided it's time to make up their minds.

#### **Characteristics of Seekers:**

Seeking Jesus specifically—they seek Jesus and not just God

Counting the cost—they understand what it means to follow Jesus

Spending time in community—they want to be around Christian people

### **THRESHOLD 5: Entering the Kingdom**

This is the point when the person decides to repent and follow Jesus! They have decided they want to cross a real and eternally significant line. They go from flirting to commitment. They look Jesus in the face and say “I do.”

- Invite them to say “yes” to Jesus using a gospel illustration (ie. The Big Story)
- Celebrate their conversion in some tangible way
- Disciple them—help them to begin to follow Jesus