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Ask These Questions When Talking About God

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For years I shared the gospel with people in the same way—of course I adapted the illustrations to fit their background. But that "same way" approach ended when I identified three common barriers to spiritual truth. Without an understanding of these barriers, it's possible to talk about Christ and actually push someone away from God.

When it comes to communicating spiritual truth, one size doesn't fit all.

With that in mind—here are the three barriers and how you overcome them.

Barrier One: The emotional barrier.

This barrier is built by a person who's been wounded by a Christian or other religious person in the past. Someone with this barrier tends to be argumentative. They're more interested in proving you wrong than learning the truth. How do you identify this barrier? If you're talking with someone and they're argumentative and defensive about spiritual truth they may have been wounded in the past. I may say, "You seem to have strong feelings about this. What's your spiritual story?" I ask this because I'm trying to discover if they've had a painful experience with a Christian, or Christian leader, in the past? If they have had, and they've got an emotional barrier, they'll describe how they were wounded.

Barrier Two: Intellectual

This person is a serious seeker and wants more information so they can make an intelligent decision about Jesus Christ. While they may ask tough questions, they're non defensive and sincere in their approach.

Barrier Three: Lifestyle.

This is a person living in a way they believe would have to change for them to get serious about God.

Okay, so those are the barriers. Here's how to overcome them.

People with an emotional barrier must be loved into the kingdom of God.

An information dump will reinforce their negative feelings. Instead, demonstrate a genuine concern for them and when the time is right, share the hope you have in Christ. But remember—it may take years of love to win their trust.

If someone has an intellectual barrier, answer their questions.

Suggest they read a good book like Lee Strobel's, *The Case for Christ*, C.S. Lewis' book, *Mere Christianity*, or Francis Schaffer's book, *The God Who is There.* Read the book yourself and then discuss it with them. Don't feel you have to know everything. The answers are there, and you'll both learn if you search for them together.

Gently share the truth with those with a lifestyle barrier.

While they aren't ready for the truth, gently share it with them and then pray for them. They may not show much interest until they reach a point of despair. But if you're there as a friend, when they need you the most, you may have the privilege of leading them to Christ.

Remember, people don't care how much you know

until they know how much you care.