

## UNBELIEVERS AND DISENGAGED CHRISTIANS ARE SEARCHING: Practical Help for Starting Spiritual Conversations

By Bob Young

Cultural observers and statisticians have observed an increase in the number of unbelievers who are wanting to learn about God. Here is a summary of information from Rick Warren's organization.

- 21.5% of unbelievers polled in March are seeking God because of the pandemic, some for the first time.
- People realize they are up against something big, completely outside their control.
- People are asking questions about life and its purpose.
- More people are willing to hear and receive the Gospel message.

This is good news for churches that are serious about sharing faith. Knowing that many *are searching for God* should give Christians more confidence in telling others about Jesus.

To help you break the ice and initiate spiritually-oriented conversations with others, I share an updated list of 20 spiritual conversations starters, specifically designed for the current pandemic crisis. These twenty general questions are placed in four categories to make them easier to remember. In some cases, related or follow up questions are provided.

For your reference, here is the link to a similar list I posted a few years ago:

<http://www.bobyongresources.com/ministry/spiritual-conversation-starters-HO.pdf>

### Life During the Pandemic

\*I struggle with how to live proactively, and I do not like myself as well when I am reactive. Do you prefer proactive or reactive living? Why?

*[Note: Many of these conversation starters require that we ourselves be transparent and willing to take the first step and give the first responses. The rest of the questions do not include a personal statement to introduce the subject. The disciple should be ready to establish points of contact and to identify with the other person.]*

\*Solomon said all is meaningless. Do you agree? Has life lost some of its meaning during the pandemic?

What parts of your life give your life meaning?

What are you doing that makes your life meaningful to you?

\*How do you get through difficult times? What are your sources of support?

Where do you find strength for day-to-day living?

In the midst of problems or crises, what helps you get through them?

\*Has the pandemic made a difference in your thinking or feeling about God or your religious faith?

\*How do you feel about suffering? Do you think God is using the pandemic to get our attention or as punishment?

### Relationships, family, friendships, social-distancing

\*How has the pandemic affected your life?

\*How do you feel about the lack of personal contact during the social-distancing?

\*Some report stronger relationships, others report more distanced relationships? Why might that be?

What is your experience?

\*Are you involved in a church? What do you expect out of being involved in a church?

Are there specific aspects or teachings of your church that resonate the most with you?

Do you personally know anyone who is the pastor of a church?

\*Are you a member of an accountability or nurturing group in your church?

### Devotional Life, Bible, Prayer

\*How has the pandemic affected your devotional life?

Are you growing spiritually (more or less) during the pandemic?

Many are less likely to attend church. Does the pandemic lessen or strengthen spiritual growth?

\*What kinds of religious books material do you like to read?

What are your favorite religious authors, books, writings? Why do you like them?

Do you like religious music? What kinds? Favorite songs or hymns?

\*Some statistics say people are reading the Bible less during the pandemic.

How much of the Bible have you read?

How much are you reading the Bible? Do you read more or less than before?

Do you understand the Bible when you read it? Why or why not?

\*Do you find reading the Bible helpful in living? What reading plan do you use (have you used)?

*[Note: be ready to offer something – resources, small group, study group, reading and praying together]*

\*Is prayer a meaningful part of your life?

## **God**

\*During the pandemic, have you felt closer to or further away from God?

\*Do you feel there are barriers of some type separating you from God?

\*Have you ever been mad or upset with God?

\*Have you ever done something for which you feel God could not forgive you?

How do you understand God's forgiveness and what it means?

\*What do you think is God's plan for your life?

What would it take for you to live up to what God expects of you?