

Teaching Through Leading Discussion

Week 5 Exercise 3

For many, the hardest part of leading discussion is recognizing the difference between recitation and discussion probes. Although this distinction is not always clear-cut, questions clearly tend toward one or the other. We need to learn to discern recitation-type questions and root them out of our plan.

Think again about the difference between good, open-ended, and interesting discussion questions, or toward questions that call for recitation:

Discussion Probes

- Calls for:
 - Creative thinking
 - Analytical thinking
 - Personal experience
- Accessible to all
- Provocative
- Challenging
- Interesting
- Potentially important

Recitation Questions

- Calls for:
 - Specific, specialized knowledge
 - Recall of memorized material
 - or short, uninteresting answers (how much is 2x2?)
- Only the learned can answer
- Repeats what we all believe already
- Obvious
- Uninteresting to some or most
- Usually seems unimportant

Using these criteria, assess the following discussion probes. For each, do you think it tends toward recitation? or toward good discussion? Be prepared to explain why.

1. Does anyone know the relationship between cohabitation and marriage success?
2. How has the eternal perspective affected your life?
3. So, what's wrong with what Jacob does when he goes in to Isaac for the blessing?
4. Why would Peter say "Gird your minds for action?"
5. Peter calls Jesus the cornerstone. What is a cornerstone for?
6. What are some examples of extremist teachings around today?
7. What are some ways we can avoid extremism?
8. Who can offer a contrast between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of man (1 Cor. 2)?

9. What do you think Paul means when he says "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord?"
10. So what is the eternal perspective?
11. So is it wrong to be rich or not?
12. What differences could you see between a stone in a wall, and a stone in a pile of stones?
13. Why would someone live with their lover and have sex, but refuse to be married?