

Clues and Cues is a blueprint for conversations to guide people in a process toward surrender to Christ.

Philosophy behind the flow chart

What if we made the goal of evangelism to bless others? Would that change our approach? I believe it would. When our priority becomes that others encounter the living God in a tangible way (the definition of blessing¹), it changes our approach and posture with those who are not yet following Jesus.

The greatest blessing a person can receive is the gift of eternal relationship and forgiveness of sins offered by Jesus. One of our goals in evangelism should be to bless the people we interact with through our conversation. In other words, Jesus wants to make Himself known through us, His ambassadors, in very real, poignant, and tangible ways. We have been “blessed to be a blessing.”

How to use the flowchart

The Clues and Cues chart flows from left to right, top to bottom, but is completely fluid in reality. It's organized as a potential sequence of conversation, but allows for flexibility in engaging in unique spiritual conversations. Therefore get to know the flow, but don't worry about using everything in it each time you interact with someone.

Clues and Cues is not an evangelistic conversation aid that you pull out like a questionnaire or tract, but rather a process that you get to know, make your own, and keep in mind as you go. There are always places to integrate evangelistic tools into your conversation.

Clues Section

When entering into a conversation with a person, it is helpful to look for clues that God is revealing that can be observed; these are Spirit-led. What do you see? What is the person wearing? What are they holding? Where are they coming from or going to? What “clues” can you pick up to enter into their life and ask good questions? I will often make a comment about an observation I have made, and start the conversation.

But if they speak to us first, it's an open door. Ask some questions and see what God is doing. He may have sent them to you for a divine appointment.

Do you remember the story about Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well? Jesus revealed what was most important to her and where she was getting her identity – men. She told others you have to meet this man who told me everything about my life. Jesus had not told her everything, just what was most important, and through this revelation she came to know Him and invited the entire town to come out and meet Him. That's what it looks like to be Spirit-filled and Spirit-led in a conversation. Remember, Jesus didn't model anything He didn't believe we couldn't do also by the Spirit and even “greater things” He said we would do.

Therefore, we should learn to listen to the Spirit of God as a lifestyle. He will sometimes reveal hidden things about a person to me in a given moment². This might be insight into a person's dreams, fears, or past or current pains. Once in a while I see a word or image in my head or sometimes I just “know” something about them. It begs the question, what is my responsibility with the information or insight the Lord gives me?

First of all, I never “drop this knowledge” on them and scare them. I ask probing questions to find out what is going on in their heart and then share appropriately what I believe God is revealing about them. Our goal when we reveal insights the Lord gives us should be to bring glory to Him.

God's revelations about people's hearts generally leads to the greatest breakthroughs in my conversations. I've seen people who did not believe in God experience His love and involvement their lives. The majority of them wept when they realized God was speaking to them. Many of them were unaware of His active work in their lives until He spoke to their heart.³ This has allowed me to see more people come to Christ in the last two years than any other time in my life as a believer. This is a skill that we can all develop. I call it learning to hear, listen to, and discern God's Voice.⁴

The next steps on the chart are much more straightforward. Get to know your audience. Who are you speaking with? Be audience-centric. Put yourself in their shoes. Do your best to care about them. “Consider others better than yourself.”⁵

Really listen to what they are saying. Respond to what they are communicating. Don't just listen to words. Look at body language and listen to tone of voice. It also helps if we are aware of our nonverbal communication. If they are sitting, sit near them. If they are standing, stand with them. Our posture is also an important part of our message. Open up your posture towards them. Give them good, appropriate eye contact. Lean in appropriately. Relax. Smile. Nod. Laugh when appropriate.

Cues Section

Take your cues from the Holy Spirit on what to say and how to say it. He may prompt you to ask a question, share a story of your own, encourage the person, enter into their story at a greater depth, or bless them in some way. Learn to ask heart-provoking questions.

It can also be helpful for you to share relevant stories from your own life. I believe it can be refreshing and encouraging when we are real and share our struggles and places of pain with people. We don't have to have our lives "cleaned up" and figured out. Many unbelievers appreciate our honesty. We can share how God is working in the broken areas of our lives and how He is changing us. The point of sharing our stories is to reveal God's story and how our lives fit into His metanarrative.

We can bless others by saying the words that the Spirit leads us to say to encourage them. You can do this by saying things like, "I believe God may have shown me . . . when you were speaking." Or "This might be from God . . ." I always ask them if what I've said resonates with them, or if it seems completely off base. This allows them to discern what may be from the Lord.

There have been several times when God has asked me to reframe someone's story. In other words, I ask them if I could tell their story back to them and what I heard. This gives me a chance to reflect their story back to them and couch it in God's greater metanarrative.

When you are in these God given conversations seek to bless the listener! You can do this by offering to pray for them or offering to meet a tangible need they have. At times, I've purchased items in stores as an expression of sowing God's favor into their business after a conversation with an owner. Another way you can bless the listener is through connecting them to other believers. Finally, you can bless them by developing a relationship. Make sure to get their information to follow up with them. If God's Spirit is prompting you, share the message of salvation and lead them in a prayer of surrender. Everything has to be done according to His Spirit's leading.

Our goal is to experience Jesus in and through us, to allow another person to experience Jesus, and bless others. Our desired outcomes are to learn to share our faith as a lifestyle, plant the gospel, make disciples, encourage, edify, and console others as we go.

Are you sensing a theme? Everything we say and do is to be Spirit-led, Spirit-prompted, Spirit-driven, and Spirit-filled.

Who knows, we may even find this lifestyle to be really fun!⁶

Endnotes:

1 The definition of blessing, given by Hugh Halter author of *Tangible Kingdom*, is "the tangible touch of God."

2 John 10:27 paraphrased – We, Jesus' sheep, know His Voice, He knows us, and we follow Him. Jeremiah 33:3 – "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and hidden things you have not known."

3 I have many stories I could share, but for sake of space of have reserved those for now. If you wish to hear some, please write me at Demarick.Patton@cru.org.

4 Books on this subject: *Listening to God in Times of Choice: The Art of Discerning God's Will* – Gordon T. Smith, *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit and Surprised by the Voice of God* – Jack Deere

5 Philippians 2:3

6 Treasure Hunt is a fun way to learn this process. Get a group of friends together and pray. Ask God to give you some clues as to who He is going to have you talk to and what you are supposed to say. Write these clues down. Don't take more than five minutes. Like a scavenger hunt, follow the clues, and go engage a person in a spiritual conversation. My friends and I have seen God lead us to people who were ready to surrender their lives to Jesus on numerous occasions. It's amazing how God uses a little game like this even. Why? God's on a treasure hunt for the lost and He invites us to join Him in the adventure!