

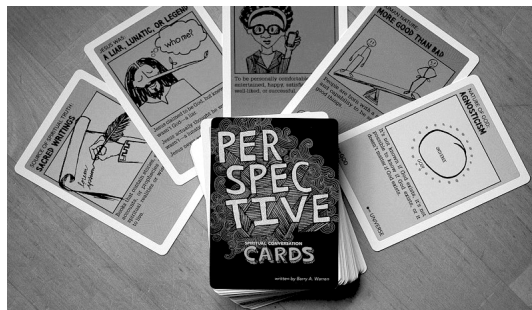
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# PERSPECTIVE CARDS 101

BARRY A. WARREN



Since I began using *Perspective* cards to initiate spiritual conversations and share the gospel, I've become convinced that non-believers want to talk about God, the meaning and purpose of life, and even Jesus, but only in an environment where they feel comfortable and safe. Believers have a reputation of being good at defending our beliefs but bad at listening. *Perspective* is designed to create a comfortable and engaging environment where significant conversation about the gospel can take place.

Whether you've used *Perspective* before or have just read through the instructions and are getting ready to use it for the first time, this article will help you see just how simple it is to use. As you seek to use *Perspective* effectively, you'll need to do four things: ask, listen, learn, and share. Those four steps will guide you through great gospel conversations!

First, **ask** good questions that get people thinking. Many in our culture haven't given much thought to what they believe and why. *Perspective's* category cards will help them identify what they believe and communicate it to you. After they choose the cards which best represent what they believe, you have an open door to ask some great questions that will challenge people to think about their own beliefs.

First say, "Tell me more about that." Then ask, "How did you come to that belief?" That's it! (Note: if you have the new *Perspective* questionnaire, these will be the 'a' and 'b' questions under each category.) These questions help you get a clear picture of their view and seek to understand why they believe what they believe. As you do this, people will likely realize that they haven't thought much about these major issues. They may also recognize that they aren't making much sense or are contradicting themselves. All this is creating space for self-discovery: allowing people to see that they don't fully understand the *whats* and *whys* or their beliefs.

Second, **listen** to what people say without interjecting your opinions. You might think that if you don't immediately refute a falsehood, you're communicating agreement. This isn't the case if you are seeking to learn what someone believes. In the context of the whole conversation, it will become obvious that you hold an opposing viewpoint as you get to share later. So focus on humbly seeking to understand by listening well because this communicates not agreement, but love and respect. As you get through a few categories without arguing or judging, you will see people drop their guard and truly open up to you. Remember, people really do want to talk about spiritual things. Be the kind of person they'll enjoy talking to!

It's from the position of a listener that you share the gospel, as well. With *Perspective*, you dialogue the gospel by asking people what they think about the numbered cards. These cards explain the biblical perspective on God, the meaning of life, human nature, Jesus, and the source of spiritual truth – and suggest the next step they can take in their spiritual journey. So whether they're sharing their perspective or you're sharing the gospel, your focus remains the



same: listening.

Third, **learn** about what they believe and why they believe it. Of course, this will happen as you ask questions about the category cards they've chosen and about the numbered biblical perspective cards. Learning involves seeking to get a full and accurate picture of another's worldview: how they look at themselves, God, and life. Learning also involves understanding the reasons behind belief or unbelief. When we ask a question like, "What's easy and difficult to believe about this view of God?" it will be easy to learn the intellectual agreements and problems people have with that view.

The hardest aspect of learning may be to discover the emotional barriers people have. A woman on a plane once shared with me that trusting God was very difficult because her father had abandoned her when she was an infant. This was a great insight into her life, and revealed a lot about where she stood with God and why. Many people have a hard time believing in a loving God because of the perceived hypocrisy of Christians and many other reasons that may not be purely intellectual in nature. If you sense there's something deeper stirring within the person, ask God to give you wisdom about what you can ask. As you learn what people believe and their barriers to faith, this will help you share what will best help them understand the gospel.

Fourth, **share** the gospel and biblical responses to people's barriers to faith. The numbered cards in *Perspective* give you a short and concise way to share the gospel. These cards serve as a foundation for the conversation you will enjoy with people. As you ask questions, listen well, and learn, this will put you in the best position to share the truths that each person most needs to hear. The woman on the plane most needed to hear that God the Father is nothing like her earthy father. The atheist (who only believes in what he can see) needs to be challenged to consider if something he's seen says that he can only believe what he can see. (Because his source of truth, Hard Evidence, is an invisible concept which can't be seen... so, you can't believe it. Wrap your mind around that!)

As you seek to share truth that helps others move past their barriers to faith, you have a chance to be used by God in your response. If someone has been hurt by a Christian, you can express sorrow for what happened and even ask them to forgive you, as someone who has

hurt others similarly. If someone is stuck on an issue, it's wise to ask questions, listen, and learn more before you share your thoughts. It may also be appropriate to share some of your faith story and personal experience with God -- just don't talk too long!

Regardless of what you share, it's good to follow up with a question. Asking something like, "Does anything I just said make sense?" will help you continue to learn if people are tracking with you. As you share, the process starts over again: ask, listen, learn, share; ask, listen, learn, share; ask, listen... you get the picture. This is what makes for great conversations.

Close your conversation by discussing the practical next steps the person can take in light of your conversation. *The Next Step*, #6 card, and the two prayer cards can help someone process if they are ready to put their faith in Jesus -- or if they aren't ready, but are willing to pray that God would help them see the truth. Someone's next step may go beyond praying one of the prayers. They may be willing to meet for coffee and talk more about God. They may also want to start reading the Bible or read articles on faith found on [everystudent.com](http://everystudent.com). Based on what you have learned about this person, encourage them to take the steps that will be most benefit them on their journey toward authentic faith in Jesus.

If you ask, listen, learn, and share — as you're filled with the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God — you will have a great time sharing your faith. Be patient with yourself and trust God. The more you use *Perspective* and share your faith, the more confident and effective you will be.