

7 Biblical Tips to Help for Deeper Conversations at Family, Friends, and Group Gatherings

1. Be Prayerful - Before

Before your gathering, lay the groundwork for meaningful conversations by praying in advance. Prayerfully acknowledge your dependence upon the Lord for conversations that will honor him and bless others. Ask the Lord to help you to be aware of the deeper needs of your family members. Pray that your words will be gracious and self-controlled, displaying the love of Christ and honoring his name. Bring each loved one before the Lord and intercede for them. Ask the Lord for special moments to sincerely connect with each person. Pray for wisdom to make the best use of your time—and conversations—with others ([Eph. 5:16](#)). *“Make the most of the time because the days are evil.”*

2. Be Prepared - Before

The Bible commends those who prepare: *“Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity.”* ([Prov. 21:5a](#)). To have profitable conversations at your next gathering, prepare yourself with various conversation topics ahead of time. What topics would be of positive, general interest? What topics might be a blessing to everyone? Consider things you could discuss as a group, such as what is appreciated about others at the table, an unexpected blessing of the past year, or a hope for the year to come. Also think in advance of specific questions for individual members, as you may have a few opportunities for one-on-one conversations. Be mindful of their personal interests and special concerns ([Phil. 2:4](#)). *“Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interests of the others”*

3. Be Gracious - During

Your time during gathering should be filled with grace toward one another, and that will largely be evidenced by the type of conversations that take place. In [Ephesians 4:29-32](#), we learn how to speak with grace: *“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”* Because of the lovingkindness we have received in Christ, we are exhorted to avoid destructive speech and to instead have conversations that are appropriately timed and a blessing to all those involved. Seek to gently guide conversations toward mutual edification and encouragement.

4. Be Considerate - During

To achieve deeper conversations during gathering, consider the unique circumstances represented among your loved ones. *“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer”* ([Rom. 12:15](#)) or in other words *“Rejoice with the joyful, but also help bear the burdens of the discouraged or sorrowing”*. With genuine excitement, share in the joy of an engagement, new baby, or job promotion. Likewise, be discerning of the comfort or privacy needed by the one who may be recently separated, or struggling financially. Be sensitive to the emotions around the table. Out of concern for all, you might seek to guide certain conversations toward more private sharing. You will bless others when

you humbly consider the various needs of other members in these conversations ([Phil. 2:3](#)). *“Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves”*.

5. Be Attentive - During

As you engage, remember that the most fruitful conversations require good listening skills ([James 1:19](#)) *“My dear friends, you should be quick to listen and slow to speak or to get angry”*. Listen for the purpose of understanding others. First, allow them space to talk. Like yielding to traffic on a busy highway, give others the right-of-way in conversations. Don’t interrupt another one’s sentences in your own discussions, and let good exchanges you hear between other members linger. When you do interject something, be careful that it will help the discussion to continue and deepen. Second, ask good questions to draw out the desires and joys of each guest: *“The purpose in a man’s heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out”* ([Prov. 20:5](#)). Ask questions that will enable you to understand the how and why of someone else’s experiences, not just the what and when. Be especially sensitive to the quiet or shy family member; seek to draw that person into a discussion with an appropriate question and a focused, attentive ear.

6. Be Thankful - After

After your gathering, reflect on the conversations that you had, and give thanks to the Lord for the discussions he provided and the ways he answered your prayers ([Ps. 66:19-20](#)) *“But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God who has not turned away my prayer, Nor His mercy and loving-kindness from me!”*. Even if some of the conversations were not as smooth or significant as you had hoped, be grateful for the steps taken toward deeper dialogue and the opportunities God gave your family and friends to connect once again. Give thanks for each unique loved one and the exchanges you had with them. Prayerfully recognize God’s presence and help as you sought to have purposeful conversations. Praise the Lord for his kind providence throughout your time together with family and friends.

7. Be Proactive - After

As you reflect on the conversations you had during your gathering, begin to look forward to the possibilities of future meaningful discussions. Spend some time considering the individual needs and interests you discovered, or were reminded of, during your gathering. You may realize that a member is suffering or burdened with a concern and might appreciate a follow-up conversation, text, call, or note. Offer a listening ear, share an encouraging Bible verse, and let her/him know you’re praying for her/his situation. A loved one might be lonely and would appreciate another invitation for a meal. Maybe another member would welcome continuing a conversation that began when you were together. Be open to what the Lord may accomplish as you love these dear ones as Christ has loved you ([Eph. 5:2a](#)) *“Live life filled with love, following the example of Christ”*. Be willing to love sacrificially by laying aside your time, comfort, and interests to pursue meaningful interactions with your family and friends. You never know how the Lord may use you—and your words.

