

# Leading With People in Mind

*James 1:19*

*February 5th, 2026*

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*"Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person  
be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger."  
James 1:19 (ESV)*

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## To Lead With People In Mind, We Must ...

### 1. LEAD BY LISTENING WELL (Quick to Hear)

*"The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out." Proverbs 20:5 (ESV)*

- ❖ Every person you shepherd carries deep waters within them. Those waters do not rise to the surface quickly. They must be drawn out with care, patience, and wisdom.
- ❖ Learn The Art of Asking Good Questions

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## Four Types of Questions to Draw Out The Heart

### 1. Questions for CLARIFICATION

Asking Clarifying Questions keeps me from assuming I know what they mean or where they are coming from. These types of questions help me understand what they actually mean, not what I assume they mean.

"Help me understand ...."

"When you say .... What does that mean?"

"What do you mean by ..."

When we seek clarification, we choose understanding over assumption. We communicate, "Your words matter. Your story matters. You matter." This simple act of humble inquiry strengthens connection and prepares the way for meaningful, gospel-shaped counsel.

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## Four Types of Questions to Draw Out The Heart

### 2. Questions for REFLECTION

Asking Reflective Questions shines a light on what they feel, think, and even believe.

“When you did/saw/experienced ... How did that make you feel?”

“What do you think caused that response?”

“What do you believe your response reveals about your heart?”

Reflection questions illuminate the heart beneath the habit, the belief beneath the behavior, and the story beneath the struggle. They move the conversation from symptoms to the soul.

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## Four Types of Questions to Draw Out The Heart

### 3. Questions for APPLICATION

Asking Application questions helps me see how they might be processing this challenge or situation, so I can offer Biblical help/hope.

“What do you think you’ve learned most from ... ?”

When we begin to look at their situation through the lens of Scripture, I need to ask myself two questions:

“What does God want them to KNOW?”

“What does God want them to SHOW?”

Application questions move the conversation from insight to obedience. They help people see their situation through the lens of God’s Word and invite them to respond in ways that honor Christ. This is where counsel becomes discipleship and truth becomes transformation.

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## Four Types of Questions to Draw Out The Heart

### 4. Questions for ACCOUNTABILITY

Asking Accountability Questions allows me to see how they are progressing. It helps me see how serious they are about taking next steps.

“Were you able to ...?”

“Where did you see God at work when you ...?”

Accountability questions turn good intentions into faithful action. They help people evaluate their obedience, celebrate God’s grace, and identify where the Spirit is still shaping their steps. This is how real growth takes root.

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## Four Types of Questions to Draw Out The Heart

**BOTTOM LINE:** Good questions don’t interrogate people; they illuminate the heart. They open doors for truth, invite honest reflection, and guide people toward obedience and transformation. Jesus Himself asked questions that drew people out. As faithful shepherds, we need to follow His example.

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## To Lead With People In Mind, We Must ...

### 2. LEAD BY CONNECTING AUTHENTICALLY (Slow to Speak)

#### ❖ Authentic Connection Requires Presence, Not Performance

*"Whoever restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding." Proverbs 17:27 (ESV)*

*"Everyone enjoys a fitting reply; it is wonderful to say the right thing at the right time!" Proverbs 15:23 (NLT)*

#### ❖ When we slow down our speech:

- We see a person to hear, not a problem to solve.
- We start to truly shepherd.
- We give space for the Holy Spirit to work.

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## To Lead With People In Mind, We Must ...

### 3. LEAD BY RESPONDING WITH WISDOM (Slow to Anger)

#### ❖ Why This Matters

- Hurt people sometimes say hurtful things.
- Confused people often express themselves poorly.
- Sinful people occasionally respond sinfully.

#### ❖ Wisdom requires:

- A patient spirit.
- A calm presence.
- A Gospel-Centered perspective.
- A willingness to absorb tension rather than escalate it.

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## To Lead With People In Mind, We Must ...

### 3. LEAD BY RESPONDING WITH WISDOM (Slow to Anger)

*"The Lord is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love." Psalm 103:8 (NLT)*

#### ❖ Practical Ways to Respond With Wisdom

- Pause before reacting. (Proverbs 17:27)
- Pray before speaking. (Philippians 4:6)
- Let Scripture guide your tone, not your emotions. (Colossians 4:6)
- Aim for restoration, not victory. (Galatians 6:1)
- Pursue unity, not self-justification. (Philippians 2:3-4)

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