# Follow Up

Tip Sheet to be more effective

**1. Invite people to things they are ready for:** Some will be ready to visit church. Others will feel more at home discipleship series rather than a church service because it is more relational & relaxed. Others may feel nervous of that ‘big-group thing’, but happy with a discussion around the [10DayChallenge.co.nz](http://10daychallenge.co.nz) videos at a home or in a café.

**2. More caught than taught:** A resource is only as good as the person who uses it. Many spiritual lessons are more caught than taught. Far more than the content is important. Our manner, humility & consideration of others will speak more than our content – & especially in the early stages.

**3. Always start by caring for people:** In a discussion group, you might give as much as half of your time each week to sharing about your weeks. This is important, because your friends won’t care how much you know until they know how much you care!

**4. Respect for people (and their views – that does that mean?):** Many who are not yet ready to attend a Church are open to joining a short-term discussion group because it is less threatening, & more relational. So it’s essential people do feel respected, irrespective of their views. This doesn’t mean we have to agree with all views – but the person should not be made to feel threatened, attacked or ‘ganged up on’ in the process of the discussion.

So, what if you disagree? Disagree with ideas, not people. There is a big difference between attacking an idea (‘I disagree with that!’) & attacking a person (‘I disagree with you!’). However it’s not a clear rule, because people can get confused between the two & many of us are emotionally connected to our ideas. We need to be sensitive! How about using a personal statement (‘I’m not convinced about that.’) or turning your thought into a question (‘What do you think about…?’)?

**5. Our stories of God’s faithfulness are important.** They ground any claims we’ve made about God & Jesus, & are memorable.

**6. Don’t be scared of not having the answer:** If you don’t know something state (1) what you do know, (2) affirm them, & (3) commit to find an answer. e.g. You’re talking about suffering & they ask, “Isn’t God responsible, because He is the one to have defined what was good & evil in the first place? …and doesn’t make the Christian definition of morality arbitrary?” Say, “Great question! I know from everything I’ve ever read in the Bible that it is clear this isn’t the case – but I don’t know how to explain why. Can I get back to you?” Then, make sure your write it down & look for an answer! [Good & evil don’t exist as definitions that are separate to God, which He made up. Their definitions come from who God is. They come from His character. God is good & that’s a relief, because if He wasn’t…There would be no final guarantee or hope that good would ever triumph evil!].

**7. Win people – not arguments:** Some of us get heated or frustrated when others beliefs don’t agree with our own. We believe we’re right & want them to see this. The direct approach works in some cultures – but doesn’t work well in NZ at this time. While there is a time for being direct – there is a time for being gentle. We want to win people not arguments. If a person doesn’t see things the same way as you, getting frustrate about it isn’t going to change anything. You don’t have to ‘win’ in a conversation! Just be honest & real & let God deal with their heart.

**8. Go easy on yourself – skills take time to develop:** Our ability to connect relationally & to turn conversations toward meaningful content, is a skill. We’re all still practicing & learning because every conversation is different. So, cut yourself some slack. Skills grow with time & practice. If you make a few mistakes, don’t worry. If you feel a conversation may have left them further from God (more entrenched in their view) as a result – leave that with God, & learn what you can from it. Say sorry when you need to. Pray plenty. Show love. And trust God - because He works through imperfect people like you & me.

**9. Know what your goal is:** This is especially important for those using [10DayChallenge.co.nz](https://10daychallenge.co.nz). When you start your discussion each week clarify the purpose of the group – noting that it has to be something that the non-believers are also happy with. It’s an investigation into the reasons for Christian beliefs & will continue only as long as those involved are interested. So, the group doesn’t have to meet forever & everyone doesn’t have to agree. This will help maintain a certain focus. Clear boundaries will avoid confusion & make it more enjoyable.

**10. Pray, pray & pray:** Pray as you prepare and before you go. Maybe pray out loud during your meeting (eg. a one sentence prayer). Certainly pray to yourself during it. And pray for all involved when on your way home.

We are loving people for Jesus – but only His Spirit can touch the heart, & draw them to Himself.