

# Conversation Starters 3

The following are not meant as dogmatic statements but as thought provokers and conversation starters. Statements not directly attributed to someone belong to SMN.

1. Remorse – deep regret or guilt for a wrong committed.
2. God is One. God is Spirit. As Father, He is all Spirit. As Son, He is both Spirit and Human. Same Spirit; Different Modes; One not Three.
3. A God Who controls every aspect of the future is one you talk about, not one you talk to.
4. “There is no room for death in a sun – or indeed a universe – that contains a point of consciousness.” D. E. Harding (DEH)
5. We miss everything but the consequences.
6. “The fact is that a man who pursues any value far enough is likely to find himself in heavenly company.” (DEH)
7. “Wake up to the idea of there being a choice.” Camus
8. Self-doubt and self-confidence at the same time.
9. Camus: in action as well as in thought, all forms of fatalistic philosophy must be rejected.
10. Don’t totally reject your prior theology – you make it better.
11. People have the capacity to ignore reality for the sake of preserving a formulaic theology.
12. Fire – symbol for trial.
13. Incompatible: God as perfect, unchangeable and Jesus subject to suffering, humiliation, defeat.
14. The most valuable thing to God is His relationship to/with humanity.
15. God is like an iceberg – most of his work goes unseen.
16. “If we do not keep killing our tools, they will make us their tools and finally kill us.” (DEH)
17. “It is tempting to think of God as a perfect being and then smuggle in assumptions of what ‘perfect’ entails. Does a perfect being suffer or not? Is a perfect being timeless or not? We may ascribe to God attributes of greatness as we conceive them and miss what God is actually telling us in His word.” (C. Pinnock)
18. “If we lose the metaphors, we lose the self-disclosures.” (C. Pinnock)
19. Feeling guilty is necessary, but only true remorse can lead to change.
20. “Our inclination is to make God serve our ends.” (Anon.)
21. Dogma = Opinion.
22. If you really believe in a particular system of belief, then you should be willing to follow those beliefs to their logical conclusions.
23. “Unhappily, a myth can be discredited, and still be devoutly believed. (D. B. Hart)
24. “In Hellenistic thinking God is essentially what the world is not.” (C. Pinnock)
25. “Hell Proper is a place of punishment for the wicked.” (Ida Wells)
26. The lower we go, the less predictable/ the higher we go, the more predictable. (DEH)
27. “Cheap grace has appeal.” (C. Pinnock)
28. “...attitudes masquerading as ideas; emotional commitments disguised as intellectual honesty.” (D.B. Hart)
29. A Leap: Christianity out of Judaism  
A Great Leap: Christianity out of Paganism  
Or Vice-Versa?

30. "The past is always to some extent a fiction of the present." (D. B. Hart)
31. "All History, indeed, all Thinking, consists for the rethinking of the Past." (J. Lukacs)
32. "We are raised to the point of the beings whose viewpoint we adopt. Becoming alive to more, we become more alive." (DEH)
33. Spirit is not invisible matter.
34. God becoming man (Jesus); internal as well as external changes.
35. "In the end, horses are only what they are not." (W.J. Ong)
36. "Meaningless disorder is to be challenged, not feared." (J. Gleick)
37. Exceptions to the rule and the rules themselves are 'non-ruling'. God is not rigid in His methods.
38. The term God is both a generalized specific and a specific generalization.
39. "Men are constantly engaged in an, on the whole highly successful, effort to adjust their ideas to circumstances and also in an effort, very much less successful, to adjust circumstances to their ideas." (H.C. Allen)
40. "...the purpose of historical knowledge may be understanding even more than 'certainty'". (J. Lukacs)
41. Mankind had a vision, but it wasn't a vision of God – it was a vision of himself and what he could be.
42. Easier to atone for actions than to change an ingrained nature.
43. Modern Bible readers try to discern understanding from the Bible – People who lived in Bible times were just trying to follow directions.
44. A God who is fully personal, C.S. Lewis discovered, is also more interesting. (Anon.)
45. "...however widely humans may feel the greatness, beauty and wisdom in the natural world, this world gives answers to the question of our being." (R. Steiner)
46. Marx proclaimed the truth rather than discovered it. (Anon.)
47. Have you noticed that the members of the Godhead never speak at the same time?
48. "God's deity is not a prison in which He can exist only in and for Himself. God's deity does not exclude but includes His Humanity." (Barth)
49. "We have no theological right to set any sort of limits to the loving-kindness of God which has appeared in Christ Jesus." (Barth)
50. If God lowered Himself to accomplish one task, why wouldn't He do so to accomplish other tasks?