



Week of November 3, 2019: Embracing Questions, Not Answers

Discussion Questions Set #1

“Be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect ...” (1 Peter 3:15)

In sermon, we discussed the value of using questions in our evangelism lies in the fact that well-posed questions can open up awareness and create transformation in individuals. We were also encouraged to personally consider the following three questions and answer them in regards to our own approach/attitude about evangelism:

- A. Are we more concerned with winning an argument or winning a life for Christ?
- B. Are we more concerned with being proven correct or with being relationally connected?
- C. Is being right more important than remaining relational?
 - 1) Have you ever experienced a time when a question served to “open up awareness and create transformation” in you? Share if comfortable.
 - 2) Why do you think it is the case that questions seem to have greater power to open up awareness and create transformation in us than do answers?
 - 3) If comfortable, share your own personal reflection on these questions. How did you answer these questions as you reflected on them?
 - 4) What happens to evangelism when we become more concerned about winning an argument than winning a life for Christ? Have you ever seen this at work in your experience?
 - 5) Do you think there’s inherent pressure within Christianity to view being right as more important than remaining relational? If you sense this pressure, why do you think it might be there? How have you seen this thinking at work in your experience?
 - 6) Is our job as followers of Jesus to know all things or to point people to the One who knows all things? How does keeping this reality in mind affect our evangelism? What might maintaining such an approach require of us in our evangelism?
 - 7) How do verses like 1 Peter 3:15 shape our approach to evangelism?

Discussion Questions Set #2

In sermon, we discussed a helpful resource - *Questioning Evangelism & Corner Conversations* by author *Randy Newman* - that suggests that the foundation for effective use of questions in evangelism is built upon principles found in the book of Proverbs. In terms of evangelism, Proverbs presents three key understandings that must underlie the effective use of questions in evangelism. These three principles and corresponding Scriptures are:

- A. Our need to avoid arguments – **“A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel.” (Proverbs 15:18)**
- B. Our need to recognize the fool – **“It is to one’s honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.” (Proverbs 20:3)**
- C. Our need to remember the power of the tongue – **“Sin is not ended by multiplying words, but the prudent hold their tongues.” (Proverbs 10:19); “The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit.” (Proverbs 15:4)**
 - 1) How might failing to incorporate these principles into our approach to evangelism affect our ability to reach out to people in the name of Jesus?
 - 2) How might an “argumentative” approach short-circuit a “one-step closer to Jesus” invitation?
 - 3) How might “recognizing a fool” help our approach to evangelism?
 - 4) Why might it be important that we use questions to help us to identify the spiritual temperature in the audience with whom we are dealing?



Discussion Questions Set #3

“One day as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple courts and proclaiming the good news, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders, came up to him. “Tell us by what authority you are doing these things,” they said. “Who gave you this authority?” He replied, “I will also ask you a question. Tell me: John’s baptism—was it from heaven, or of human origin?” They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Why didn’t you believe him?’ But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ all the people will stone us, because they are persuaded that John was a prophet.” So they answered, “We don’t know where it was from.” Jesus said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.” (Luke 20:1-18)

“As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone. You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.’” “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.” Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.” (Mark 10:17-22)

In these passages, we see examples of Christ’s use of questions in evangelistic settings.

- 1) What kinds of things do you note in Jesus’ use of questions? Why do you think He defaults to the use of questions in situations where we might readily respond with answers?
- 2) Think of Jesus’ approach in our Luke 20 passage. How might not answering a question actually serve an evangelistic goal?
- 3) In sermon, we talked about using questions in evangelism that are concrete, that permit you to connect with others, that reveal compassion, that show curiosity, and that are courageous. Discuss how Jesus’ questions in the above examples show these various qualities.
- 4) How might our use of questions reveal God’s power on display in us as we invite others to follow Jesus? Why might this method be preferred over relying on the persuasiveness of our message to convince people to take one step closer to Jesus?