

# GOD HAS QUESTIONS FOR YOU

## St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church

We often have questions for God, such as:

- *Where are you?*
- *Why did You allow this?*
- *What kind of good can come out of this?*

God also has questions for us, not because He doesn't know the answers, because he truly knows all things. The questions God asked throughout Scripture, in both the Old and New Testaments, were aimed at getting His people to **REFLECT**, to **REPENT**, and to **RETURN**.



Let's look at this a bit closer. God's questions are often aimed at getting His people to reflect (*or to think*) about something. Then, to repent – which in Greek is "Metanoia" meaning "to change your mind." And finally, to return to Him, and the word 'return' in Greek is "Tshuva."

So, God's questions to mankind have often been focused on having people: (1) think about what they've done or what they're doing; (2) confess and be genuinely sorry to God; and, (3) run back to God and away from anything that would keep us from God.

According to those who have counted, Jesus was asked 183 questions in the Gospels (*Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*). Jesus himself asked hundreds of questions. Hundreds! Why does a teacher ask questions rather than just spouting answers? To make students think! And we, as Jesus' students today, continue to think about these questions from our master teacher.

God's first question was to Adam in **Genesis 3:9**:

*"Where are you?"*

Adam was hiding. Maybe God has been asking that question of you lately – at times of Mass, on Sunday evening when youth group is meeting, or when you choose not to pray or read God's Word. If you listen closely, do you hear Him asking "*Where are you?*" All of the other questions He asked of mankind were similar, as if to say:

- *What is going on in your heart?*
- *Who are you listening to?*
- *What are you believing about Me that is not true?*

Here are 10 questions asked by Jesus in the Bible and how the questions still apply to us today:

***My teen and I have had a discussion about these 6 pages: (Teen: bring signed to next session!)***

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?

There were people who were confused about Jesus' identity. Some were saying He was John the Baptist or Elijah. Others said He was Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Jesus asked this question of His followers in **Matthew 16:15** – *Who do you say that I am?* He asked this because who they believed He was would make all the difference in their lives. He wanted them to be able to answer the question accurately.

Who do you say that Jesus is? A good man? A great teacher? Or, do you say: He is the way, the truth, and the life (**John 14:6**), as Jesus described Himself? Another appropriate answer would be like Peter's as recorded in **Matthew 16:16**: *"You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."* Or, perhaps a more personal answer, like Thomas' declaration in **John 20:28** – *"My Lord and My God!"* If someone were to stop you on the street, a complete stranger, and ask you who God is... what would you say? We should always be prepared to tell others who Jesus is, who God is, and why we believe what we do. The Saints were always prepared! **1 Peter 3:15** tells us that we should *"Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope."* Are you ready?

**DIG DEEPER:** Complete this sentence from John 14:6,

*"Jesus said to him [Thomas], 'I am the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"*

## 2. DO YOU BELIEVE?

Many people came to Jesus asking for something: a miracle, a healing, a free lunch. Jesus challenged them with the question *"Do you believe?"* to expose their motives. Did they want a hand-out or did they truly believe who He was and what He could do? Do you truly believe who He is and what He can do?

When we come to God with our list of requests, the question that remains on Jesus' heart is *"Do you believe?"* Jesus said in **Matthew 21:22**: *"Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive."* Of course, His response to our prayer requests are always answered in accordance with God's will for our lives and His plan. Let's not be like the double-minded one in **James 1:6-8** who doubts and is *"like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed about by the wind."* May our response to Him be like that of the demon-possessed boy's father who replied honestly in **Mark 9:24**: *"I do believe; help my unbelief!"*

**DIG DEEPER:** Paul and Silas said the following words to the jailer in Acts 16:31:

*"\_\_\_\_\_ in the Lord Jesus and you and your \_\_\_\_\_ will be saved."*

### 3. DO YOU WANT TO BE WELL?

This seemed like an odd question for Jesus to ask a man who had been ill for 38 years. The man had been lying by the pool of Bethesda waiting to be cured by a Spirit that would occasionally stir up the waters. In **John 5:6**, Jesus wanted to know if the man knew what he wanted, so he asked him *"Do you want to be well?"*

When we complain to God about our circumstances or give Him excuses as to why we are still in the same place, spiritually or emotionally, year after year, perhaps the question He still aims at our hearts is *"Do you want to be well?"* Maybe right now you're in a situation where you need to ask yourself some tough questions, like:

- Do I want to move forward spiritually?
- Do I want to make progress emotionally?
- Do I want to go to a new place where God can be my all-in-all?

When we hear God's voice asking *"Do you want to be well?"* our response should be: *"Lord Jesus, I want You. Open my eyes to see You for Who You are. Open my ears to hear Your voice. Heal my legs so I can follow You. Heal my heart so I can love You more."*

**DIG DEEPER:** John begins his 3<sup>rd</sup> letter by describing a hope he has for faithful Christians:

*"Beloved, I hope you are \_\_\_\_\_ in every respect and are in good \_\_\_\_\_, just as your \_\_\_\_\_ is prospering."*

### 4. WHY ARE YOU SO AFRAID?

In **Matthew 8:26**, Jesus asked His followers why they were so afraid that their boat would overturn on account of some wind and waves, especially since He was right there in the boat with them. Certainly, if the Son of God was in their midst, they would safely get to the other side of the lake.

You and I have Jesus with us in every circumstance we encounter. Furthermore, He has promised to never leave us or desert us. (**Hebrews 13:5**) So, what are you so afraid of? When it comes to the question, *"Why are you so afraid?"* your answer should be *"Forgive me, Lord, for fearing that anything is stronger than You or outside of Your control."*

**DIG DEEPER:** Philippians 4:6-7 tells us that we should...

*"Have no \_\_\_\_\_ at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then, the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ that surpasses all understanding will \_\_\_\_\_ your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."*

## 5. WHY DID YOU DOUBT?

It's easy to believe in God when we're asking for our daily bread, for God to bless our efforts at school, and to keep our families safe, but what about when God asks you to do something that seems impossible?

When Jesus' disciples saw Jesus walking on the water in the midst of a storm, they were terrified and thought he was a ghost. Then, Peter said, *"Lord, if it's you, command me to come to you on the water."* (Matthew 14:26-28)

Jesus told Peter to *"Come."* Scripture tells us *"Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water to Jesus. But when he saw how strong the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, 'Lord, save me!'"* Immediately, Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. Jesus said to Peter, *"O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"* (Matthew 14:29-31)

Are you still doubting Jesus after what You've seen Him accomplish in the Scriptures and in your life? If Jesus can walk on the water, turn water into wine, and give you living water, surely He can keep you from the waters that threaten to rock your boat.

**DIG DEEPER:** Proverbs 3:5-8 provides us with words to keep in mind when we're doubting...

*"Trust in the Lord with all your \_\_\_\_\_, on your own \_\_\_\_\_ rely not; in all your ways be \_\_\_\_\_ of him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not \_\_\_\_\_ in your own eyes, fear the Lord and turn away from \_\_\_\_\_."*

## 6. DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND OR COMPREHEND?

In **Mark 8:17**, Jesus likely asked this question with a bit of frustration. No matter what they saw Him do, His disciples still didn't get it. Jesus had just fed four thousand people with seven loaves of bread and a few fish. Prior to that, he had fed another 5,000 with just five loaves of bread and two fish, healed a deaf and mute man, cast a demon out of a young girl just by saying the words, and walked on water in front of them while they watched from a storm-tossed boat! What more did they need to see to understand that He was the Son of God?

What have you seen Jesus do? How many coincidences do you have to experience to know His hand is working in your life and circumstances? How many times does He have to come through for you at school, in a sport or activity, or through an illness to make you trust His provision?

May your answer to His question be: *"Open my eyes to see You for who You really are and to never again doubt Your presence, Your power, or Your provision."*

**DIG DEEPER:** Jesus said these words in John 8:42-43...

*"If God were your \_\_\_\_\_, you would love me, for I came from \_\_\_\_\_ and am here; I did not come on my own, but he sent me. Why do you not \_\_\_\_\_ what I am saying? Because you cannot bear to hear my word."*

## 7. DO YOU ALSO WANT TO LEAVE?

Jesus said some things that were pretty hard for people of His day to swallow. He said things like: *"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day."* (John 6:54) Scripture tells us, *"As a result of this, many of his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him. Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?"* (John 6:66-67)

Many would rather have a God that they can conform to their own image, a God who goes along with everything they believe is right. Do you feel that way sometimes? Do you have moments when you want to leave God? May our response be as pure as Simon Peter's in John 6:68-69 – *"Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."*

**DIG DEEPER:** Colossians 3:2 tells us where our thoughts should be.

*"Think of what is \_\_\_\_\_, not of what is on \_\_\_\_\_."*

## 8. WHAT DOES SCRIPTURE SAY?

In Luke 10:23-28, a Jewish legal expert stood up to test Jesus and asked Him what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus answered the question by asking the religious leader a question, *"What is written in the Law? How do you read it?"* In reply, the man quoted the Greatest Commandment (*"You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."*) Jesus replied, *"Do this and you will live."*

The Greatest Commandment that Jesus gives us does not replace the 10 Commandments that God gave us. You'll see that truly loving God with ALL your heart, soul and mind fulfills the first three of the 10 Commandments, and loving your neighbor (as yourself) properly fulfills Commandments #4-10. You can look in Exodus 20 to see this. Jesus is really efficient in His teaching, encapsulating the 10 into these two.

As Christians, the Bible is our authority, and as Catholics we are blessed to have the Catechism, which conveys the essential and fundamental content of Catholic faith and morals in a complete and summary way. The Bible is referred to as the living Word of God and 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us *"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work."*

When you're in a tough situation, when you have to choose between offending someone else or offending God, when you have to draw a line in the sand, instead of asking, *"What would Jesus do?"* and taking your best guess, ask instead, *"What does Scripture say?"* After all, that is what Jesus would say if you asked Him what He would do.

**DIG DEEPER:** God's Word, as described in Hebrews 4:12, is alive!

*"Indeed, the word of God is living and \_\_\_\_\_, sharper than any \_\_\_\_\_ sword, penetrating even between soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and able to discern reflections and \_\_\_\_\_ of the heart."*

## 9. WHO TOUCHED ME?

In **Mark 5:24-34**, Jesus was in a crowded place, where people were brushing up on all sides of Him. It was then that Jesus asked the question *“Who touched me?”* – not because He didn’t know who touched him, but because He wanted everyone else to know. Jesus was well aware of the woman who had been hemorrhaging for 12 long years and had spent every last cent she owned trying to get well, but only got worse.

He knew she was desperate to be healed. He knew what she risked by going out in public and touching a Rabbi, which would, under Jewish law, make Him ceremoniously unclean. Jesus asked the question because He wanted her to speak up. He wanted her story to be told.

In **Mark 5:33**, we read, *“The woman, realizing what had happened to her, approached in fear and trembling. She fell down before Jesus and told him the whole truth.”* She told her story — publicly. Everyone there suddenly knew who she was, what her condition had been, and how she had been healed by simply touching Jesus’ garment. In **Mark 5:34** Jesus said, *“...your faith has saved you. Go in peace and be cured of your affliction.”*

Have you experienced Jesus’ healing touch? Has He forgiven you and given you an opportunity to be better than you were before? Then, you should let others know so God will be glorified.

**DIG DEEPER:** In Isaiah 41:10 God tells us to “fear not” because he is with us...

*“I will \_\_\_\_\_ you, and help you, and uphold you with my right hand of \_\_\_\_\_.”*

## 10. DO YOU LOVE ME?

Jesus asked this of Peter, not once, but three times, after his disciple – who claimed to be the most loyal of the bunch – had three times publicly denied knowing Jesus on the night of his arrest and crucifixion. Jesus asked this question three times as a gift to Peter. Three times he gave him the chance to reaffirm his love for his Lord, after having blown it a few days earlier. (**John 21:15-17**)

Have you blown it with Christ, too? It’s never too late to reaffirm your love for Him. Jesus said in **Matthew 22:37** that the greatest commandment is *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”* His question to Peter penetrates our hearts daily as we are faced with a choice:

-- Will we follow Him or the world?

-- Will we follow Him or money?

-- Will we follow Him or fame?

-- Will we follow Him or another love?

When it comes to God’s question, *“Do you love Me?”* your answer should be, *“Yes, Lord, more than anything.”*

**DIG DEEPER:** Who loves God? God Himself tells us in John 14:21...

*“Whoever has my \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ them is the one who loves me. And whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and \_\_\_\_\_ myself to him.”*