

Questions God Asks Us

Chapter 6: What are you looking for?



Welcome

- What question or insight from the last gathering have you continued to think about or wonder about (if any)? Have the readings or discussion changed how you connect with God or with others in any way?

Opening Question

- Tell about a time when you misplaced or lost something. Were you able to find it or replace it? What emotions did you feel?
- Share about a time when you had to use a map or follow directions to find a location. How did you feel along the way... curious, watchful, anxious, hopeful, eager, confused...?

Responsive Reading – Psalm 139

One: O LORD, you have searched me and known me.

All: *You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.*

One: You search out my path and my lying down

All: *You are acquainted with all my ways.*

One: Where can I go from your spirit?

Or where can I flee from your presence?

All: *If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.*

One: If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,

All: *Even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast. Amen.*

Bible Text

Read John 1: 35-42

The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶ and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" ³⁷ The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the

afternoon. ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated Anointed). ⁴² He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

Questions

1. What did you notice in the Bible reading or in the chapter? What spoke to you or surprised you? What resonated with you? What was a new idea?

Allow for a few minutes of silence as you gather your thoughts.

2. If you had been one of the disciples that started following Jesus, how do you think you might have responded to the question "what are you looking for?"
3. Tell about a time when you felt either "deeply restless" or "utterly content". As you reflect on that time, what were some of the ingredients or factors that brought you to feeling restless or content? Is there anything to learn from that time? Thinking back, how might God have been present to you?
4. What are some of the external influences that compete for the desires of your heart (i.e. advertisements, social media, social pressure, expectations of others, expectations of yourself...). Name a distraction that you wish you could minimize or eliminate.
5. What do you think about the idea that God is interested in our desires? Does that shape your relationship with God in any way? How do you sort out which desires bring you closer to God and which desires move you away from God?
6. How would you answer the question from Jesus, "what are you looking for" today? What do you think Jesus desires for you today?
7. There are several questions in the reflection section (page 82). Do any of these questions spark your curiosity or do you have another question to add to the list? Select a question that you might continue to reflect on.

What's Next?

- At the end of the small group or between gatherings, spend some time in silent reflection using one of the questions from "Answering God's Question" found on page 82 (at the end of the chapter).
- Set aside some time for reflection this week. What *do* you want in your life (imagine all the possible answers!)? What makes your life meaningful? What are you doing right now that makes your life have meaning? What could you add or change to make your life more meaningful?

- Take time to journal. Write about when you have felt happiest, most fulfilled or a time of meaning and significance. What brought this about? How can you incorporate more of this into your life?
- Talk with a trusted friend about the desires and needs in your life that are going unfulfilled. What ideas can they offer? Talk to God about your unfulfilled desires and needs. What is God's perspective? Remember that God created you and wants the best for you.
- Complete the exercise on page 78-79 on considering your own eulogy and what it tells you about how you want to live.
- If this, or any session, has brought up difficult concerns for you, take a next step and talk with a listening professional (pastor, spiritual director, counselor, therapist...).

Closing Prayer - *Share the date, location and reading for the next gathering.*

Gracious and loving God, you invite us to seek you with all of our heart, to bring our whole selves to you. Yet, sometimes we wander, seeking after other things. Forgive us, God, when we are distracted and chase after things that take us away from your hopes for our lives and the world around us. Help us to seek after your heart and will. Amen.

One: God is with you no matter what. Go, now, in God's presence and love. Amen.

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This outline is to be used alongside Questions God Asks Us by Trevor Hudson. Some of the questions and reflection prompts questions listed here also come from Questions God Asks Us.

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