

JESUS REVEALED

K WEEKEND SERIES | MAR 12 - APR 2

As we study the life of Jesus, we notice there were many moments where the people following and interacting with Jesus would ask him a question. The questions varied, including questions of clarification, questions revealing wonder, questions trying to bait and trap Jesus, and questions around Jesus' actions. Some questions were filled with judgement and others demonstrated devotion to Jesus, but over and over, Jesus evoked questions about the way He lived.

Have you ever considered what or who motivates you to ask questions? Do you encourage questions in your life and the lives of those around you? Do you allow open-ended questions that allow for personal opinions or preferences, or do you lean towards black-and-white questions? When was the last time you sat in the tension of a question that did not have a clear answer?

The questions we ask can reveal a lot about what is important to us.

And, leaning into some of the questions Jesus was asked might challenge us to live differently. It might inspire us to ask more questions ourselves and urge others to do the same.

Children, teens, and young adults have questions too. Their questions reveal what is important to them. Encouraging them to ask questions creates opportunities to have meaningful conversations about life and faith we might not otherwise have.

Jesus loved questions. He answered most questions by asking a question himself. It was a way he helped people grow. Lean in over the next 4 weeks of this series and give yourself permission to ask the questions it evokes. Invite those around you to do the same. We will provide discussion starters in the form of questions. Use them exactly as they are or use them as a guide.

God encourages our questions, don't hold back!

Week 1: We all long for power and belonging. The way of Jesus is the way of humility and vulnerability.

Week 2: We often judge others with a different set of expectations. Jesus challenges our view on judgement.

Week 3: We all feel unseen and unknown sometimes. God sees us, knows us, and cares for us.

Week 4: We desire certainty and clarity on our journey through life. Jesus offers us one step at a time.

Jesus Revealed

Week 1: "Can I Be First?" – March 12, 2023

Scripture: Matthew 20:20-28

Read This

Jesus Teaches About Serving Others – Matthew 20:20-28 (NLT)

²⁰ Then the mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus with her sons. She knelt respectfully to ask a favor. ²¹ "What is your request?" he asked.

She replied, "In your Kingdom, please let my two sons sit in places of honor next to you, one on your right and the other on your left."

²² But Jesus answered by saying to them, "You don't know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink?"

"Oh yes," they replied, "we are able!"

²³ Jesus told them, "You will indeed drink from my bitter cup. But I have no right to say who will sit on my right or my left. My Father has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen."

²⁴ When the ten other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were indignant. ²⁵ But Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. ²⁶ But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. ²⁸ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Consider This

Even after following Jesus for 3 years, James and John still missed Jesus' heart. This should give us compassion and empathy for people who are pursuing God. This should also challenge us: How often, even as Christians, do we desire a place of prestige within culture and the community? We can allow selfish desires to get in the way of the life God is calling us to live.

Ask This – Adults

While we live in a society that asks, "can I be first?", Jesus challenges us to consider, "how can I serve?" Both paths offer power; One is about *place* and the other is about *people*. Where in your life are you asking to be first right now? How could a shift towards serving others move you closer to God?

Ask This – Students

Where are you strategically placed to serve right now? What environments are you in where you can put others needs before yours? Most of the world is focused on self-empowerment and becoming stronger as an individual, why does Jesus place more emphasis on helping others than helping oneself?

Ask This – Kids

How does it feel when we are last? Why do we want to be first? How do we respond when we feel like somebody else is first and they don't deserve it? How does Jesus want us to respond?

Pray This

Father God, we are thankful that you are a God who gives us permission to ask all types questions. Help us lean into them, because we desire to grow and live the life you have for us. Challenge us to seek you by considering how we long for power and belonging. Show us how Jesus' life of humility and vulnerability shifts us from a desire to be first to a desire to serve. In your precious name, Amen

Jesus Revealed

Week 2: "Can I Throw the First Stone?" – March 19, 2023

Scripture: John 8:1-11

Read This

A Woman Caught in Adultery – John 8:1-11 (NLT)

Jesus returned to the Mount of Olives,² but early the next morning he was back again at the Temple. A crowd soon gathered, and he sat down and taught them.³ As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd.

⁴ "Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the act of adultery.⁵ The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?"

⁶ They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger.⁷ They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, "All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!"⁸ Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust.

⁹ When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman.¹⁰ Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?"

¹¹ "No, Lord," she said.

And Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more."

Consider This

Jesus reframes the expectations and desires of the religious teachers and Pharisees judgement by compelling them to shift away from the casting of stones towards compassionate hearts. Jesus offers compassion by elevating mercy and grace in the face of judgement. Jesus reveals that MERCY is more powerful than JUDGEMENT. God always desires mercy, but the type of mercy Jesus reveals is far greater because it isn't mercy for mercy sake...it is a mercy for restoration and reconciliation.

Ask This – Adults

We often judge others with a different set of expectations. How many situations do we find ourselves in a judgement-first mindset? What is the goal of our judgement? Why is it so hard to see the mistakes of others, but not our own?

Ask This – Students

Imagine a scenerio in which you messed up. How would you react if someone broadcast your mistake to others? Why do people often choose to judge others first? How could we offer compassion instead?

Ask This – Kids

If we all make mistakes and need forgiveness, how should we react when we see someone else make a mistake? What should we do if we hear someone else speaking badly about someone who made a mistake? Should we speak up, stay silent, or join in?

Pray This

Father God, please renew our vision of mercy. We desire to reimagine what forgiveness of our self and others can look like. Please help us to restore they way we talk to one another. We know you have the power to reconcile our lives individually and communally. God, we desire to seek you and to reimagine the future together. In your mighty name, Amen

Jesus Revealed

Week 3: “Do You See Me?” – March 26, 2023

Scripture: John 4:1-42

Read This

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman – John 4:1-42

Today’s scripture is longer, so take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

Consider This

The complex relationship between Jews and Samaritans is important to understand. Jews in that day would take the long route back to Galilee from Judea, which would add several days of travel all so that they could avoid the Samaritan people. Jesus however, not only chose to take the long route, but also asked a Samaritan woman for water. Jesus showed he did not view Samaritan people as unclean by asking the woman to drink from her water jug. He breaks down the dividing walls between people groups. He demonstrates that he sees, knows, and cares for this Samaritan woman, just as he does for us.

Ask This – Adults

When Jesus references the woman’s marital history, he showed her that he sees and knows all things, and her response to being seen by the Living God is to question him. Jesus lovingly engaged her questions. When we go through difficulty, what do we question? Do we ask God who and where he is? Why or why not? How does being seen by God help us begin to unbury our pain, our grief, and our anger?

Ask This – Students

Think about the last time you felt hurt or experienced a painful situation. What questions did you ask while you processed the situation? Did you question God at all? Do you feel safe with God and believe he cares about what you go through? Why or why not?

Ask This – Kids

When you are having a tough day do you want Jesus to see you? Do you ever ask Jesus where he is or why you had a tough day? How can you find Jesus when you are having a tough day?

Pray This

Father God, you see us, you know us, and you care for us deeply in our pain. You invite us to see you and know you in return. We are grateful for the safety and redemption you provide. We desire to reach out to you, through questions and cries, because only you offer lasting hope and salvation. Please help us to unbury the parts of us that feel hidden and unseen, and to make a way for others to be seen and experience you like we do. In your precious name, Amen

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Week 4: “How Do We Know The Way?” – April 2, 2023

Scripture: John 14:1-9

Read This

Jesus, the Way to the Father – John 14:1-9

Today’s scripture is longer, so take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

Consider This

From a place of uncertainty in their lives, the disciples asked Jesus, “how will we know the way?”. They have followed Jesus for 3 years, and now find themselves wondering about their place in this world and the next. They are living in doubts, and Jesus responds that he is the way, the truth, and the life. He tells them to cling to his words and his presence over all the other doubts. In the middle of the doubts, Jesus’ way was less about certainty and more about a discipline of direction that focuses on Jesus’ words and works.

Ask This – Adults

Jesus is shifting his ministry from “Follow me” to “Follow my way”. In your own words what is the *way* of Jesus? (i.e. Jesus’ way is one of mercy, grace, hope, seeing people, stepping into difficult moments, etc.) What do the *words* of Jesus in John 14:1-9 reveal about him? When we lean into the *works* of Jesus, what could he be inviting us into?

Ask This – Students

Consider the different words and works of Jesus. Do you wrestle with either? We all have a desire for certainty and clarity. Do you think Jesus words and/or works lack clarity? How could you find clarity?

Ask This – Kids

Do you like looking at the GPS or maps on your parents phone? Maps help us create routes to new places; they also help us navigate around town, sometimes around complicated cities. Do you think God helps us in our lives similar to a road map? How?

Pray This

Father God, we can be just like the disciples coming to you with the question “how do we know the way?”. We ask you to meet us in our doubts and give us peace in knowing that you are with us. Father, we desire to pursue your words and your works, and to know your ways. Help us to choose your way and to see what you are inviting us into. Amen