

Winsome:

ASK

GETTING STARTED

In our sermon series "Winsome," we are pressing into what it looks like to partner with the Holy Spirit to be Jesus' heart and hands in our lives. How can we be present to God, ourselves and others...where we live, where we work, where we play...in every corner of our lives.

In the Gospels, Jesus asked 307 questions, was asked 183 questions and only answered 3 of them. If we are going to share the Good News as Jesus modeled, we have to learn to ask good questions, answer fewer questions, and cultivate curiosity about God.

OPENING PRAYER

King Jesus, we welcome your presence into the space we find ourselves now. We make room for you and ask that you fill us with your Spirit. Increase our capacity to listen and ask questions in a way that orients others to you. In Jesus name, Amen.

STARTER QUESTIONS

- 1.If you could ask anyone (living or deceased) a question, who and what would you ask?
- 2.Think of a time when you felt heard by someone else? What did they ask or do that made you feel understood?

READ ALOUD

Philippians 2:1-18

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. 5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

14 Do everything without grumbling or arguing, 15 so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky 16 as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. 17 But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. 18 So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

James 1:19

19 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

John 4:1-26

Now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John— 2 although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. 3 So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. 4 Now he had to go through Samaria. 5 So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon. 7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" 8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) 9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) 10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." 11 "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? 12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?" 13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." 15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." 16 He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." 17 "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. 18 The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true." 19 "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. 20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." 21 "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth." 25 The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." 26 Then Jesus declared, "I, the one speaking to you—I am he."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How would you define humility in light of Philippians 2:1-18? What would humility look like in a winsome conversation with a coworker, family member, or someone who challenges you?
2. James 1:19 invites us into a new way of being: quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger. These disciplines are challenging, so where is the Lord inviting you to grow? What sort of impact would these disciplines have on conversations & relationships that feel stuck?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS CONTINUED

3. Notice that Jesus began his conversation with the Samaritan women at the well with a question in John 4. Do you think the woman was surprised by Jesus' question and why? What do you think she was really thirsty for? What are those around you thirsty for?

4. Take note of the Samaritan woman's initial assumption in verse 9. Her posture changed by verse 11. Why do you think she showed curiosity? What are the questions and conversations needed in a world desperate for hope?

PRAYER MINISTRY TIME

Encourage people to settle into a comfortable position and pray, "Come, Holy Spirit." Wait. Breathe. Have people share if they heard the Lord speak, give space for the Holy Spirit to move. People can divide into smaller groups to pray together or stay in a large group. Also make space to pray for needs & requests. Ask the Lord to open your heart and mind to be curious about others.

FURTHER REFLECTION & ACTION

Asking questions and showing curiosity in others takes practice. Make room this week for the Lord to meet you in seeking the interests of others. Try to put the steps below into practice with 1-3 people this week.

- Take time to get curious about someone in your world (a neighbor, coworker, acquaintance, or perhaps your hairdresser or the person who scans your groceries). Listen, ask questions, repeat!
- Practice active listening in a conversation
- Attend: set aside distractions and give full attention with body and eyes.
- Repeat and ask: repeat back what you hear said and ask questions to demonstrate curiosity.
- Share: share feedback after you have listened and asked questions.