

THE FOUR QUESTIONS

*Adapted from the book "Gospel Fluency" by Jeff Vanderstelt
& "Reading the Bible: Missing the Gospel" by Ben Connolly*

As believers, the good news of what Christ has done for us has application for every area of our lives. The gospel doesn't just have implications for our past sin and future glory but also our present sanctification. How can we take the good news of what Christ has done for us and apply it to our everyday lives? By allowing the truth of His Word to go beneath the surface of our lives and address our hearts. Too often we focus our attention on changing our external behavior rather than addressing the internal motives of our hearts. Jesus said that what defiles us proceeds from inside our hearts – our beliefs and our motives. In other words, our actions reveal what we are placing our trust and hope in. This is why the gospel is good news, because it tells us what to do with our hearts; let them be transformed by the truth of His grace.

Our first two questions of every passage we read — "Who is God?" and "What does God do?" — remind us that the Bible is God's story: we look for His character and being; His words, works, and promises. These questions reorient us to see God as the main character of His story. The next two questions — "Who are we?" and "What do we do?" — help us know our place in God's story. These questions show us what is true of humanity in each passage, and also throughout the whole Bible. As we see the character and being of various humans in the Bible, and their words and works, we can compare/contrast them with God's, and we can ask if things that are true of them are also true of us.

Our hope is that these four questions would help you and those in your group turn from unbelief in God's Word to believing the beautiful truths of the gospel.

Read the scripture passage from the week and answer the four questions together. Answer each question in one or two sentences. Be simple, the answers to these questions aren't meant to be long or extensive. Remember there is a progression as you go through the questions; they build on each other. You may find multiple characters of God in the verses, but as you go from question 1 to 2, choose one and answer the rest of the questions based on that one characteristic.

The Four Questions

1. Who is God?

You are asking: what do these verses tell me is true of God's character and being?

2. What does God do?

You are asking: what do these verses tell me is true of God's activity, work, and promises?

Where do you see Jesus fulfilling this activity, work, or promise? (Which scripture showcases this?)

3. Who are we?

You are asking: what do these verses tell me is true of our identity in Christ?

4. What do we do?

Based on the other three questions, what might God be leading/showing you/us to do, by the power of His Spirit, through these verses?

Example:

1. Who is God?

"God is love."

2. What does God do?

"He sent His Son to die for me while I was still a sinner."

3. Who are we?

"I am dearly loved by God – I am God's son/daughter."

4. What do we do?

"I should love others as God loved me."

Example: Applying these questions to scripture

Matthew 9:35-38

1. Who is God?

He's a compassionate, loving shepherd.

2. What does God do? (how do I know He is compassionate and a loving shepherd)?

When I was lost He had compassion on me and came and rescued me from myself. He became the good shepherd that lays down His life for His sheep. He continues to lead and guide my life into fullness and life, not death and emptiness!

3. Who are we? (Him coming to my rescue)

I am loved and cared for deeply by my shepherd. I am protected from the penalty of my sin through His sacrifice on the cross. I no longer have to be led by my own desires and dreams but by His design for my life that He is guiding and directing.

4. What do we do?

I should love others as I am loved! I should show the same compassion that has been shown to me. I should surrender areas of stress, fear and anxiety to my good shepherd who leads me with love.