

RESOURCE FOR TEACHING THROUGH QUESTIONS

BY CAROL BROWN

Questions! Questions! Let me ask you a question—why do you think God gave us His Word to study? Instead of waiting for me to give you a list of answers, I challenge you to jot down at least 3 good reasons right now.

Did you notice what happened to your level of involvement, when you had to think about good answers? Do you think more about why God gave us His Word if you have to come up with answers, or if someone else merely listed them for you?

If you got more involved when you did the thinking and responding, then you can immediately see one of the many benefits of asking questions during your teaching time—it helps engage the class in the lesson, which can lead to their growth in the Lord, which is exactly what we all want.

So, let's get practical—maybe you would like to ask more questions, but you don't know what to ask. Let me make some suggestions to get you started.

If one of our goals in Bible study is to help our class get to know God better, then simply ask after main points of the lesson, "What do we learn about God in this passage?" You might follow up with, "Why is it important that we know this about God?" Then, "How should knowing that impact the way that I live?" (Now you have easily added application to the lesson.) You could even go further with, "If I know what to do, why is it so hard for me to do it?" Then, "What would make it easier for me?" Before you know it, you are back to a core lesson of abiding in the Lord in order to know Him and to obey Him.

After asking each question, encourage answers and make everyone feel safe that their answers are accepted and respected. Do NOT call on anyone unless he/she volunteers to respond. We never want to make our class nervous or worried that we might call on them. Be prepared to wait for people to think and then respond. If nobody responds, then you can give a tentative response and ask them if they agree. Gradually, people will feel comfortable to respond.

Just think of all the rich discussion that could follow a passage that shows God's faithfulness (or His compassion, or His love, or His forgiveness, etc.) As people discuss why that Godly trait is important to them, they will begin to give testimonies of God's faithfulness (or compassion, love—whatever the trait is that we are discussing) in their

own lives—if you ask them-- and others will be strengthened and encouraged. (We are back to application again.)

If you are worried about running out of time to cover all of your material, just remember that God has an objective for this lesson—and I can't imagine a more important one than helping your class really understand who He is. What a joy it is to help others in their journey to be more Christ-like and asking them questions can be an effective method in their growth.