

THE BIG 5

Questions of Jesus

You are about to sit at the feet of Jesus! How awesome to know that He is present by His Holy Spirit and wants to spend time with you! I encourage you to use the five questions of Jesus I am preaching about in our Big Five series as you spend time with the Lord. To begin, I would encourage you to *find your chair* - a comfortable place with minimal distractions. It may look different for different people. Many times I spend time with Jesus by myself, but I also love to answer the five questions of Jesus with others in a group. So, I would encourage you to not only spend time with Jesus alone, but find someone or be a part of a group of people who can help you practice being in His presence.

I have had people ask me, "How can I hear Jesus? I certainly have never heard an audible voice." Jesus speaks to us through *His Word* (which is the focus of the third question of Jesus), through *His Body* (other believers...which is why it is so helpful to not only meet with Jesus by yourself, but to also be able to get the discernment of others), and through *His Holy Spirit*. The Holy Spirit communicates to us through our thoughts.

Our challenge in this is to discern whether a thought we have is Jesus or not. Of course it is always possible to be wrong, but we can have confidence that Jesus is speaking if we ask questions like "Does this thought align with scripture?" "Is it good?" "Helpful?" "Loving?" "Based on everything you know about Jesus, does it make sense that He would be saying this to me?" The most important thing to know is that *He really does speak!* He promised that He wouldn't leave us as orphans, but would send the Holy Spirit. He loves you deeply and wants to help you. So, with that in mind, let's listen to Jesus as He asks us the first question.

1. WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?

- I love to start my time with Jesus by hearing Him ask that question and allowing my mind to go to Him. There are many names of God in Scripture, so sometimes I focus on one of the names of Jesus/God. (Can follow the alphabet for 26 of the days in a month: Day 1, Jesus You are **A**lpha. Day 2, Jesus You the **B**read of Life. Day 3, Jesus You are **C**ounselor. Etc.
- As my mind thinks about Jesus and I dwell on Him, there is an automatic response: PRAISE! I want to say thank you, Jesus for being_____. This part of my time with Jesus may only last a couple of minutes or it could last much longer.
 - In your journal, write a prayer of praise to Him. He inhabits the praises of His People.

2. DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I HAVE DONE?

- Jesus's second question for me causes me to reflect on what I have seen Jesus do for me, in me and through me. Jesus is working all the time, but we do not always recognize it. So, answering this question daily keeps my eyes open to see His activity or His lack of activity through me. As I reflect on my last day, I look for the good things that have happened and consider what was God's part in it.

- In your journal, write down the things you saw Him do...ways He provided for you, times He helped you obey Him, anything good that you do, which comes from Him...thank Him!
- There are times when the Holy Spirit lovingly convicts me because I failed to obey Him and be aligned with His will for me. When the Holy Spirit convicts me it is a good thing. It is good because it shows me He is doing what He promised He would do (John 16:8). And, it saves me from continuing down that path if I confess it to Him and receive forgiveness.
- Finally, it is good because it is another reminder that I am saved by grace, not by my own works. (Eph. 2:8). If you sense the conviction of the Holy Spirit, write down (or tell Him) what you sense He is saying.
 - Write (or say) a prayer of confession to Him, taking responsibility for what you did (or didn't do). Celebrate His conviction, forgiveness and His grace for you.

3. ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?

- The most clear, objective way Jesus speaks to us is through His Word, the Bible. The Bible is a great treasure. It is Jesus' love letter to me. It is my guide for living, my road map. Therefore, I will commit to spending time allowing Jesus to speak to me through His Word.
- You can ask three basic questions in studying a passage of scripture (maybe only take a paragraph at a time).
 - The first question is, "What does it say (generally speaking) or what does it mean? Consider the context of the scripture.
 - Next ask the question, "Jesus, what are you saying to me today through the passage?" It is so critical to remember that Jesus, who lives in me wants to say something to me today through this passage.
 - And, finally, since the Word is meant not just to be understood but to be obeyed, I ask the question, "Jesus how do You want me to apply this truth to my life?"
 - In your journal, write down what Jesus is saying to you and write down your commitment to apply this truth. If not, think through these questions and respond to Jesus in your thoughts.

4. DO YOU TRULY LOVE ME? THEN, CARE FOR AND FEED MY SHEEP.

- Jesus said it clearly. "I did not come to be served, but to serve and give my life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). If I am a follower of Jesus, I will seek to be like Jesus and serve. I am called to be His ambassador, to minister for Him. (II Cor. 5:20). My life is not my own. I have been bought with a price (I Cor. 6:20). So, when I listen to Jesus' question, I am committed to answering it by saying, "Yes, Jesus, I do love you." And then, I want to listen to His voice as He shows me what He wants me to do in showing Him I love Him.
- He asks me to care for my needs. It is difficult to help others if my own soul is struggling. He definitely has called me to love and serve my family, my church family (believers) and lost people. It is critical that I take the time to listen to Him, so He can tell me what He wants me to do in these areas. Sometimes He calls me to do what others might see as mundane, but if it is Jesus

who is asking me to do it, it is important. My daily calendar is affected by what He asks me to do (sending texts, making phone calls, meeting with the lost). Four types of sheep to feed:

- Myself
 - Family
 - Other believers
 - Lost sheep
- In your journal, write down your ministry assignments from Jesus for the day.

5. DO YOU BELIEVE ME?

- This final question of Jesus is important to put my focus and faith on Jesus to accomplish everything He has called me to do. I want to answer Jesus' question by saying, "Yes, Jesus, I do believe you. I trust You!" One of the things Jesus calls me to do is to intercede for others. So, I want to take the time to think about God's will for those for whom I am praying and put my faith in Him to work in them.
 - In your journal, keep a list of people for whom you are praying. Write down what you sense is God's will for them and trust Him to accomplish it.
- The second part of answering this question is putting my faith in Jesus to help me accomplish everything He has called me to do for that day. The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, is available to empower me to do His will. At the end of my time with Jesus, I want to reaffirm once again that I absolutely trust Jesus to be at work through me as I serve Him.
 - In your journal, write a prayer of faith in Him to be at work through you for this day.

I hope these instructions will help you have many wonderful experiences with Jesus. As you meet with Him on your own and as you meet with others to practice listening and responding to Him together, Jesus promises to help you become more like Him and become the person you were created to be (Rom. 8:29, Phil. 2:6). My calling from Jesus is to be His authentic disciple, to make disciples of Jesus and to coach disciple makers of Jesus. If there is anything I can do to help you walk more closely with Jesus, please don't hesitate to ask.

For the Kingdom,



Pastor Dale

