

## CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Week #3 - "Big Faith Questions"



### GETTING STARTED

Spend some time checking in with each other. Any highs and lows since the last time you met?

This week's message was all about questions and curiosity. In general, do you ask questions or do you wait for others to ask them? Would you consider yourself to be a person who questions everything, who trusts everything, or who is somewhere in between?

### THIS WEEK'S THEME

Pastor Angie listed these *big faith questions*. What would you add to the list?

- Does God exist?
- Who am I?
- Why am I here?
- What is my purpose in life?
- What happens after I die?

In the age of instant answers (via Google, Siri, Alexa), how does it affect our willingness to ask questions that don't have easy or quick answers?

Angie suggests that we are a *meaning-making* species, wired to be curious. Yet, in the age of instant answers (via Google, Siri, Alexa), we've lost much of our ability to be curious for two primary reasons: Technology and Busyness. How do you cultivate a habit of curiosity when society encourages otherwise? Do you think people today are uncomfortable with big questions? Why or why not?

In the Gospels, Jesus asked people 307 questions. He was asked 185 questions, and of those, he only answered three. How does Jesus' example of asking big questions invite us to expand our curiosity rather than to seek certainty?

What does it look like (practically) to choose curiosity over comfort? What are the challenges that come with favoring curiosity over certainty?

Reflecting on Pastor Angie's metaphor of squeezing through the cave's narrow path to discover a beautiful cavern, how does this parallel our journey of exploring big questions of faith? In what ways does stepping out of our comfort zones (emotionally, mentally, spiritually) help us grow?

# DIGGING DEEPER

## John 1:35-42

The Gospel of John is set apart from among the Gospels, in part because of its style. It begins with a very poetic introduction that helps set the story of Jesus within an almost cosmic story of the Word of God: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it” John 1:1-5.

This is different from the book of Matthew, which begins with the genealogy of Jesus, listing names and lineage for 16 verses; Mark, which begins with the connection between the prophesy of Isaiah to John the Baptist preaching about Jesus; and Luke, which goes even further back and gives us the story of John the Baptist’s birth.

According to scholars, “John’s Gospel was composed in a context where the identity of Jesus was disputed. Some considered claims that Jesus was the Messiah and Son of God to be incompatible with Jewish tradition... A central issue in the debate was whether Jesus was really from God or whether his claim to be one with God was blasphemy (10:30-33)... At the same time, the community of believers in Jesus had become more ethnically diverse by the time this Gospel was written, including now people of Jewish, Samaritan, and Greek background (1:35-51; 4:39-42; 12:20-21)... In order to communicate Jesus’ identity to a widening readership, the Gospel uses language that would have been broadly accessible.

Read more here: <https://enterthebible.org/courses/john/lessons/background-of-john>

How does Jesus’ question, “What are you looking for?” resonate with you, in lieu of a faith that leaves room for curiosity? What else do you notice in this encounter with Jesus?

## PRAY

Ask how you can pray for each other this week. What prayer requests do you have?

Wonderful God, you didn’t make faith to be still. Guide us to ask questions, to put our faith into action, and to grow together. Amen.

## TAKING IT HOME

What are some practical ways you can choose curiosity over comfort in your everyday life? (e.g., slowing down, asking deeper questions during prayer, reading or discussing faith-related books)