

What are Jesus questions? Jesus BIG purposes

I love questions. I grew up asking them in many situations, of many people, as soon as I could put a sentence together. Questions are very important, and very revealing. It is fascinating to study Jesus and questions, those he asked, those he answered and how, and those he did NOT answer but instead asked another question to get to the heart of what was true, of what was MOST important.

In John 9 the disciples and Jesus see a man blind from birth. You know the question they ask him. %Rabbi, who sinned, this beggar or his parents that he should be born blind? Jesus response refocuses them and reframes the whole situation to GOD, and GOD's BIG, REDEMPTIVE purposes they had *completely* missed. %Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind to reveal the works [or power] of God.+Eugene Peterson's *Message* translation has Jesus saying, %You are asking the wrong question!+

In a recent sermon this winter to the Presbytery of Inland Northwest before they voted on the current amendments to the Constitution, Bill Robinson, professor and President Emeritus of Whitworth University, reflected on this passage, saying,

± find it hard to encounter a problem without looking for a villain. Don't you?+

And the current amendment questions, about which our congregations and Yellowstone Presbytery hold differing convictions on, could be an excuse to do just that.

The last 2 weeks I have been pondering Bill's reflections, including:

%Jesus seems to have a better question than the %Who's the villain?+question. Jesus question for *all* disciples through the ages is,

±What can we do with this situation to reveal the works, the power of God?+

How might we, in the midst of our differences, seek to glorify God? This is about God first, not about us!

I love Bill's penetrating question to himself and their presbytery, %Why is that the last question we ask, if we even ask it at all?+

We are grateful for the ways in which the Holy Spirit has worked in our midst as Yellowstone Presbytery over many years, and particularly in the last 11, to gather to worship and glorify God, and to grow more like Christ individually and in our relationships and life together as a community of disciples, before a watching world. Would you join us humbly in prayer for wisdom and the mind and heart of Christ in our presbytery and congregations,

Jesus, would you purify my heart?

Jesus, would you show me, would you show us, how to be one as you and the Father are on and to reveal your glory in this difficult hour? (John 17)

Eph 3:20, 21 Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory *in the church* and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.