

## 10 Tips for Asking Questions that Make a Difference



Think about the questions Jesus asked, “who do people say I am?”; “do you want to get well?”; “what does the law say?”. Did He not know the answer before He asked the question? Jesus, as the Master Teacher, knew how to ask precise questions to drive hearers to a greater understanding. We know people learn and retain more when they discover something for themselves rather than just being told. Questions engage learners in the process of discovering the truth of the Scripture.

Jesus also asked questions to cause hearers to examine their own hearts. Our goals as teachers is to not only help our class learn what the Bible says, but to become more like Jesus. Questions can provoke learners to think about their own lives and give the Holy Spirit room to convict and change the heart.

1. Use discovery questions to help learners to investigate what the scripture says. *Do you see words that mean the same thing? What is the main idea of this passage?*
2. Use open ended questions to help students connect ideas and apply the truth to their own life. *What do you think? How do you respond to what we just read?*
3. Plan questions ahead of time to lead students from basic knowledge to analyzing and evaluating.
4. Avoid leading questions – where the answer is obvious or when you have a specific answer that forces the students to guess what you are thinking.
5. Keep your question clear, direct and simple. Think about your audience and use language they understand.
6. Create a warm and safe environment where there is no right or wrong answer. The more we affirm and voice our value of each individual, the more people will risk participating.
7. Ask one question at a time. Be ready to follow up with a question that will draw out more information or draw the class to examine the topic from another perspective.
8. Encourage discussion between individuals in the group, but maintain your role as facilitator.
9. Find ways to draw in all learners. Do not allow an individual to dominate the discussion or draw the class onto a “rabbit trail”. As the teacher, preparation is key in guiding students through the lesson.
10. Allow time to think. The Holy Spirit works in the pauses.

**Check out this resource for more!**

**“How to Ask Great Questions” — Karen Lee Thorp**