

**Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of Nov 17, 2019**  
**I've Got Questions (and So Does God): Your Turn!**  
All Pastors (8 & 9:15), Pastor Temple, Hall and Conway (10:30 Selah),  
Pastor Temple, Hall & Johnson (10:30 Traditional)

**Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)**

- Anything to share about personal events since you last met or about applying last week's message on I've Got Questions (and So Does God): Are You The One? (Matthew 11:1-6)
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

- Opener Question: How do you respond to questions you are not completely sure how to answer?
  - (A) I welcome the challenge to learn and grow through researching answers,
  - (B) I would rather address questions I already know the answers for
  - (C) it depends on the question, I'm not sure all questions are worth pursuing
  - (D) the questions in which there are not clear cut answers are my favorite ones to discuss with others!
  - (E) Other ...

**Review the Sermon (15 min)**

Please read aloud the sermon scripture, James 1:2-6. Know that it is ok to skip some questions below in order to manage the time for discussions in each section.

**<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. <sup>4</sup> Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.**

**<sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. <sup>6</sup> But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.**

- In verses 2-4, what is the relationship between trials and mature faith?
- Verse 5 says that those who lack wisdom may ask God for it and it will be given. What do you believe is the normal process by which the wisdom of God is conveyed to his people?
- Last week we learned that even great prophets like John the Baptists sometimes had doubts and pushed through them. In verse 6, doubt is presented as a barrier to receiving wisdom from God which is asked for by Christ followers. How do you think the waves of the sea is an apt metaphor for those without strong beliefs or godly wisdom?
- How does moving toward belief involve our choice?

- The sermon message this week was a series of responses by a panel of Christ Church clergy to questions submitted by Christ Church attenders over the last two weeks. See the additional page for the list of questions that were clustered by topic and addressed in the 4 worship services.
- As you look over the list of questions, is there 1 or 2 questions that you would like to discuss as a small group? Which ones?
- Remember, the sermon messages are available at [www.christchurchsl.org/sermons](http://www.christchurchsl.org/sermons) in case you would like to hear them again.

### **Other Related Readings (10 min)**

- Are there other related scriptures you would like to read in light of the 1 or 2 questions the panel addressed that you chose to discuss? (see [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com) for viewing a particular scripture references or doing a keyword search)
- If not, would a volunteer read aloud 2 Timothy 3:14-17. How would you describe the advice of the Apostle Paul to Timothy here?
- According to these verses what are the purposes of scripture in the life of a believer?
- Are there other places of wisdom that believers should use as well to answer life's questions? If so, which ones and for what questions?

### **Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)**

- As you reflect upon the sermon and the additional readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
- What new insights did you gain from the panel discussion in worship?
- What new insights did you gain from the small group discussion today?
- What question struck you as the most practical in terms of relevancy for life application?
- What questions are still somewhat unresolved in your mind that will require further prayer, reflection and/or study?
- How do you find peace about questions you can't seem to find clear answers for?
- Which answers to the questions are you the most confident about?

### **Witness & Closing Prayer (5-10 min)**

- How do you respond to question #15? *Sharing Your Faith-- What is the best way to start a conversation about faith with an unbeliever?*
- The group leader or another volunteer who took notes on the prayer requests shared earlier in the meeting, may now lead the group in closing prayer

Questions from Christ Church attenders to the clergy panel addressed on Nov 17:

1. Being Good Enough for God--

*If I am trying and believe in the Lord, why do I feel so alone and unworthy all the time?*

*Will I ever feel loved by God, or will I always feel unworthy, unable to be good enough?*

*I am still going to try because I want to even if I don't feel it.*

2. Theodicy Questions --

*I'm an elderly lady with insomnia. I lay in bed and ask God to help me but for years I still can't sleep. What am I doing wrong?*

*If God is all powerful, why is there so much pain and suffering in the world? Why did my wife die? Please do not tell me this was God's will.*

*Why does God let bad things happen to good people? / Why do seemingly bad things happen to good people?*

*Why do suffering people die when I pray for them for physical healing?*

*What is the reason why one would lose a child?*

*If Jesus could heal, how come Joseph died?*

3. Does God really expect us to be "happy" and joyful in all situations?

4. The Return of Christ--

*What is the rapture and what are the signs of when it might happen?*

*We are told when the time is right Christ will return to earth. I'm not sure I even want that to happen for we have our lives to live together here.*

*However, if He did not return in response to the Holocaust what would possibly lead to His return?*

*Or is this all just a metaphor?*

5. Knowing God's Will--

*Since God has His plan and works in His time, do we pray for His will? Or can we pray for our will, hoping that His will is our will, and then be ready to accept the outcome as God's will?*

*Why did God give us free will and desires that are not a part of His plan for us?*

6. The Nature of Scripture--

*Did God write the Bible through people Hello God. Is everything in the Bible true or mostly man's word? Why are there so many versions of the Bible. Love you.*

7. The Bible and Today-- Michelle (1 minute)  
*Why do we not see Biblical sized miracles in our world today?*

8. *Why do we stand [in worship services] for the gospels and not the other books of the Bible?*

9. Heaven and Hell—

*How will the dead in Christ who have been cremated rise in Christ?*

*Do we sleep when we die?*

*What will it be like to be in Heaven for eternity? Will there be measures of time, day-night, rest, work, etc?*

*Will you look like a person when you rise from the dead to meet Jesus? Like Jesus who arose from the dead and they recognized him (eventually) or will have a spiritual body?*

*Why don't the sermons ever include what is hell and more clarity on who is going to hell?*

11. Abortion--

*When does God say that life begins?*

*How can someone say they are a Christian and vote for a candidate who supports abortion?*

12. Role of Women--

*What does the Bible say about women's role in the church? Teaching?*

13. Homosexuality—

*Several questions were asked from different perspectives about what the Bible says, how the church should be in ministry with LGBTQ persons, divisiveness in the church and what the pastoral staffs views are.*

14. Repentance--

*Can you show us what true repentance is like? How do I do this more effectively?*

15. Sharing Your Faith--

*What is the best way to start a conversation about faith with an unbeliever?*