

"Top Questions You'd Like to Ask Jesus"

Intro – "Huh?"

- As you are all well aware... This weekend marks the beginning of the new church calendar year. We start the new year with the **Season of Advent**. Advent comes from the Latin word: *Adventus* which means: coming or arrival.
- The season of Advent helps us prepare to celebrate the greatest "coming" in the history of the world – the birth of the Son of God... the coming into this world in human flesh of the Messiah... the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!
- Jesus' coming fulfilled a 4000 year old promise that God made to our first parents to send a champion into the world to defeat the power of Satan and to win for all mankind the free gift of eternal life in heaven.
- Not only does the season of Advent prepare us to remember and celebrate this first coming... but it also gives us pause to think about the reality of Jesus' Second Coming... the Day of Judgement... the Day, if it happens during our lifetime, when we will be delivered from this vale of tears and taken to the eternal riches and glory of heaven.

When is Jesus going to return?

- History is filled with BIG questions like that...
- Back in 1979, a rather clever English writer named Douglas Adams wrote a humorous science fiction book entitled, "**The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy**." And then... in 2004, the book was made into a movie, and eventually released on DVD.
- The basic story is about a British ^{chap} guy who just happens to escape the planet Earth hours before it is destroyed to make way for a galactic super highway.
- After his rescue, this last human ends up hitchhiking his way across the galaxy... Where he eventually runs into a group of alien intellectuals who had constructed a planet-sized computer named **Deep Thought**... Its purpose – take come up with the ultimate question. But rather than coming up with the ultimate question, the computer went right to coming up with the answer to the ultimate question.
- The Hitchhiker just happens to be there when Deep Thought reveals the answer after 7.5 million years of computational effort... The answer to the ultimate question is = **42!** And the story goes on... *with no explanation... Or revelation of what the question was.*
- What do you expect from British humor?
- Debating the "big" questions in the Jewish faith was one of the favorite "hobbies" of the leaders of the Jewish church of Jesus' time. A Pharisee - an "expert in the law" decided to take advantage of Jesus' incredible knowledge and wisdom by asking Jesus the ultimate question (as far as they were concerned):

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" – Matthew 22:36 *same*

- It appears that the question is sincere... maybe for just a brief moment... they ^{saw} the immensity of Jesus' divine wisdom... and saw an opportunity to answer a question that they had been debating for a long time... After all, the Jews had over 400 laws,

besides the 10 Commandments, that they had to obey... Knowing which one which the most important might give them some relief in the endless, daily task of obedience.

- Jesus' response to the ultimate question is flawless... just as insightful and amazing as he gave to other questions that had been asked of him:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment.

- Jesus' response is the perfect summary of the 1st tablet of the 10 Commandments. The first three commandments deal exclusively with our relationship with God – clearly the focal point of the first three commandments is that we place God ahead of everything in life, nothing less will do.

- Then, it's as though Jesus read their minds (which he could)... because he then went on to answer the next most obvious question, even before it is asked:

And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

- After loving God first and foremost above all else... Jesus makes it clear that extending that love to others is our second most important commandment in life. So, without any effort, Jesus summarized ~~all 400+ of their laws~~ into two concise, easy to understand rules: Love God above everything... Love your neighbor as yourself.

remember

WOW! You would have loved to be there to see the look on their faces!

To put an end to the silliness, Jesus ^{then} turned the tables on the Jewish leaders by asking them a question to put them in their place.... And, presumably, stop them from wasting his precious time:

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” “The son of David,” they replied. – Matthew 22:41-42

If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?” Oops! Mathew tells us:

No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions. – Matthew 22:45-46

Jesus' question reveals one of the mysteries of our Christian faith – that when we believe and confess that Jesus ^{is} the Messiah... that he is both David's Lord and David's Son: We reveal our belief that Jesus is both true God and true man. Any religious group that denies this truth... denies a fundamental truth that Jesus revealed about himself.

Wouldn't it be fun... if we could talk with Jesus and get simple answers to lot of other questions that occupy our thoughts about the Kingdom of God?

What I'd like to do is further the discussion with the: **“Top 5 Questions I'd Like to Ask Jesus”**



Questions

1. What will we be in heaven?

- Contrary to Hollywood's imagery... not an angel... sorry – no wings... angels are messengers created by God to serve God... In fact, in relation to angels the Bible tells us:

Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! – 1 Corinthians 6:3

- Perfectly healthy and happy!

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” – Revelation 21:4

- Just like Jesus!

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. – Philippians 3:20-21

- It wouldn't surprise me if there were t-shirt stands in heaven to celebrate this truth: **“Body by Jesus.”**

2. What is hell like?

- It's the only place in all the universe where God has chosen not to manifest His presence... the place is entirely under the rule and dominion of Satan...
- Not to make light of this, but I always remember Gary Larsen's take on hell: “Your room is right here, Maestro” (eternity with a room of banjo players).

“But he will reply, ‘I don't know you or where you come from. Away from me, all you evildoers!’ “There will be weeping there, and gnashing of teeth... - Luke 13:27-28a

3. When are you coming back?

“Behold, I am coming soon! – Revelation 22:7

The only problem we have is... God lives in a timeless existence... meaning “soon” could be in the next 10 seconds... and in 10,000 years.

4. How can you be totally at peace in heaven if not all of your loved ones are with you?

- God promises us eternal peace... peace that is based on the perfect work of redemption and salvation that Jesus Christ won for all people. Again, I think of the promise in Revelation:

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” – Revelation 21:4

He will wipe every tear from their eyes... the old order of things has passed away!

5. Finally “Will I go to heaven if I die while I'm in the middle of a sin?”

- This is a good question. But we're only going to get to the right answer if we put the emphasis in the right place. Our salvation does not depend on how good we are... but only on how good Jesus has been for you and for me. The Apostle John wrote these powerful words of assurance:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:7

- Again, Jesus suffering and death on the cross has made perfect and complete payment for all of our sins: past, present, and future. Faith in Jesus is the only requirement for entry into heaven.

Conclusion

- Obviously, there are a lot of other questions that could have been asked.
- So, contrary to the "Hitchhikers Guide," the ultimate answer to the ultimate question is *not* only: Jesus. *not 1/2*

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." – John 8:12