

## **“The Power of Personal Interest”**

One of the many irresistible aspects of the life of Christ was His ability to ask questions. He used questions to expose the hypocrisy of first century religious hypocrites:

But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. “Why are you trying to trap me?” he asked. “Bring me a denarius and let me look at it.” They brought the coin, and he asked them, “*Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?*” “Caesar’s,” they replied. Then Jesus said to them, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” And they were amazed at him. (Mark 12:15-17 NIV - emphasis added)

Jesus was able to get to the heart of issues with His capacity to ask questions. He also used questions to win the hearts of potential followers and friends. His very disarming conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s Well began with a question, “Will you give me a drink?” (John 4:7). He could have asked, “Please give me a drink,” which would have put the emphasis on His thirst and caused the woman to think, “Now this Jewish man must be really thirsty to ask me to give Him a drink of water.” Instead, Jesus’ use of a question sliced through a multitude of first century gender, ethnic and religious issues in a very inviting manner. The question communicated that Jesus valued her opinion enough to let her express herself. Jesus’ question also expressed interest in her as a person. As a result, she wanted to know more about Jesus and did all she could to help others come to know Him.

In the narrative of the woman caught in adultery, Jesus ended a conflict with a pair of questions:

When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.” Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, “*Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?*” “No one, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.” (John 8:7-11 NIV - emphasis added)

I invite you to go through the Gospels and note every time Jesus asked a question. Note how Jesus used the question in each case (informational, rhetorical, confrontational, convicting, comforting, etc.) Practice using intuitive questions in every conversation. It may revitalize your pastoral ministry as people discover that you are really interested in them. They might even consider you to be a friend.

Friends in Christ,  
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