

THE BIG IDEA: Christianity is best lived in community.The Take-Off

There was a guy once who lived in New York City and didn't own a car and had to get rid on a long fluorescent bulb, so he took it with him on the subway. At each stop, more and more people would get on and grab the bulb thinking it was a pole. So, he eventually got off and left the bulb on the subway.

Well, last week I did that to you. We looked at the first 6 verses of Luke 9 and then I left you holding the bulb for a week, because while we know that the disciples went out like Jesus told them to, we don't know exactly what happened beyond that.

But today, I want us to look at 3 specific things that happen whenever we preach Jesus.

Here's number one...

1. Jesus raises questions

- a. Remember back when people tried to convince us that Jesus answered every question?
- b. Well, that may be true, but He has to raise questions before He can answer them, and that's what happened as soon as the disciples went out to preach the gospel and heal the sick.
- c. Word got back to Herod, who had killed John the Baptist, and he started to wonder if John had been raised from the dead.
- d. He had no idea who Jesus was, and as a result, tried to see Him.
- e. When you and I represent Jesus to the world, Jesus raises questions.
- f. Questions about who Jesus is, what Jesus does, and what His followers are doing.
- g. Questions aren't bad, because questions make us grow. In fact, Jesus asked a whole lot more questions than He answered.
- h. According to one author, Jesus asks 307 questions in the gospels, is asked 183, and only answers 3.
- i. I know you're expecting me to tell you which 3 He answered, but I'll let you look into that this week.
- j. Besides, if I did that, you'd miss the growth that comes from searching for the answer.
- k. Parents already know this, which is why we help our kids find answers instead of only giving the answers.
- l. Jesus knew that, and that's why He rarely answered questions with a direct answer.
- m. He answered with answers, with parables, and often, with silence.
- n. It doesn't mean that we can't trust Jesus or that who He claims to be is questionable.
- o. He's exactly Who He claims to be - True Story! - but His unwavering claim to be God often leaves us scratching our heads.
- p. They left Herod with questions, too, because Jesus raises questions.
- q. And in our search, we find the answer. It's a promise! (Jeremiah 29:13)

2. Jesus creates hunger

- a. I love what happened after the disciples came back from being sent out!
- b. They want to hang out with Jesus and rest, but the crowd wouldn't let that happen.
- c. Not only did the disciples NOT get to hang out alone with Jesus, but they eventually had a hungry mob!
- d. Jesus creates hunger, and much like the disciples, we don't know what to do with the hungry.
- e. They asked Jesus to send the hungry away! Sometimes, so do we.
- f. But not only did Jesus tell them to let them stay, Jesus actually told the disciples to feed the crowd!
- g. Jesus calls us to do the very things that we are often least prepared to do!
- h. We want to sit around and talk about what we've done and what we know, but Jesus keeps stretching us to trust Him, and He often stretches us by pointing us to the need and saying, "Meet it."
- i. And when the disciples stepped out in obedience, everyone was satisfied, and the disciples each had a basket full of leftovers!
- j. Jesus feeds us when we feed the hungry.

3. Jesus demands commitment

- a. It's going to feel like I'm breezing through these last verses, and they're extremely important, so strap in.
- b. After Jesus raised questions and created hunger, He turned to His disciples and - surprise! - asked them a question: "Who do people say that I am?"

- c. There's Jesus again, always asking questions, and after the men gave Him the answers of others, Jesus leaned in and threw the fastball at Peter.
- d. But who do YOU say that I am?
- e. Jesus is never going to be content raising questions and creating hunger. His ultimate desire is for us to see Him for who He is, and when we do, Jesus demands commitment.
- f. Once Jesus was convinced that Peter was convinced, Jesus threw down the gauntlet and demanded all.
- g. Read vv. 23-27

The Landing

Let me just make a few observations before we close.

#1: The surest way to see Jesus for who He is is by serving those He loves.

- why was Peter able to answer with such conviction?
- because he had just seen Jesus take what little Peter had and multiply it
- that miracle in service led to Peter's "all in" moment

#2: We believe that questions get answered, hunger gets fed, and commitment gets solidified in community

- when we ask questions together, we grow together
- when we hunger together, we're satisfied together
- when we go all in together, we stay committed together

This is what happens when Jesus gets preached: people see people loving Jesus and others, and Jesus is exalted

The Big Idea puts it like this: Christianity is best lived in community.

No Lone Rangers, no walking off and keeping the fish and bread to ourselves.

We preach to everyone, we serve everyone, and we give everything to the only One worthy of it.

Let's pray.