

# Questions Pt. 3

Pastor James Foley – Sunday, May 7, 2023

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Thank you for joining us. Whether you are here in person or joining via the livestream you are most welcome! Please have a Bible at the ready and be prepared to take notes as you like. We have much to cover in a rather short space of time.

## SETTING THE STAGE

**NOTE 1** – Today we conclude our sermon series on the questions Jesus asked throughout His earthly ministry. Did you know that Christ posed some 130-questions in the Gospel record? Could it be that Christ continues to ask such questions of us in life and living through His Word and the inner working(s) of His Holy Spirit? Questions like...

### **Matthew 9:28b (NIV)**

28 . . . “Do you believe that I am able to do this?”

### **John 5:6b**

6 . . . “Do you want to get well?”

### **Matthew 8:26b**

26 . . . “You of little faith, why are you so afraid?”

### **Matthew 16:31b**

31 . . . “You of little faith . . . why did you doubt?”

### **Luke 12:25**

25 “Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?”

### **Matthew 16:15b**

15 “Who do you say I am?”

### **Mark 9:33b**

33 . . . “What were you arguing about on the road?”

### **John 13:12b**

12 . . . “Do you understand what I have done for you?”

### **Matthew 5:46–47**

46 “If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors [i.e., sinners] doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?”

**NOTE 2** – Review these messages and their notes online at [www.NewLifeBarre.org](http://www.NewLifeBarre.org).

**NOTE 3** – Let us conclude with the following slate of timeless and timely questions. Let us delve in...

## QUESTION #1

### Luke 10:25–30a

25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

26 “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

27 He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’ [Deut. 6:5]; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ [Lev. 19:18]”

28 “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

30 In reply Jesus . . . [Parable of the Good Samaritan – i.e., Universal Obligation to Our Fellow Man].

**NOTE 1** – From the outset we see a profound Q asked of Jesus (i.e., though it arose from a person of ill intent)...

### Luke 10:25b

25 “Teacher . . . what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

**Q1. How many recognize that this is a great question worthy of genuine consideration?**

**Q2. How many would love to have someone rush up to you in order to ask such a question?**

**NOTE 2** – Yet what I want to address is NOT Jesus’ ultimate or eventual response and the ramifications thereof, but rather the means by which He began His reply (v. 26): “What is written in the Law . . . How do you read it?” In other words...

**Q. What does the Word of God have to say upon the matter?**

**NOTE 3** – This query is more impacting that we might think! Why? Because it indicates that Scripture is the place wherein we are to search for answers to the deep(est) questions of life and eternity. Herein, Jesus points to an inviolable principle: that the Word of God is to function as the ultimate authority for C. faith and practice!

**NOTE 4** – Note, this was one of the core principles of the Great Reformation which took place centuries ago. The Reformers believed in the principle of *sola scriptura* (i.e., Scripture alone), upholding that the Bible is to be the sole and final arbiter of that which was right, holy and true (v. a clerical leader, creed, tradition, and more).

**KEY 1** – This is sensible, for...

### 2 Timothy 3:16–17 (Emphasis Mine)

16 All **Scripture** is **God-breathed** [i.e., inspired] and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**NOTE 5** – Yet not everyone is sensible! A great many reject Scripture, much preferring to place their trust in a religious leader or celebrity pastor, a denomination, fellowship or faith tradition, an ancient creed/statement, or perhaps a secular leader, earthly guru, an institution of men, and more...

**Q. Yet what say you?**

**NOTE 6** – Where do you look for answers? When you: **a)** seek to comprehend the nature of God and His ways; **b)** seek answers concerning this life and the life to come; **c)** seek to discern between right and wrong; and/or **d)** need guidance for the effective navigation of this life, where do you look? To whom or to what do you turn?

**KEY 2** – In such moments, may we hear the voice of Jesus, asking...

**Luke 10:26**

26 “What is written in the Law . . . How do you read it?”

**Luke 10:26 (PJV)**

26 “What does the Word of God have to say upon the matter?”

**KEY 3** – You will find that Scripture has much to say on such topics! As we have noted...

**QUOTE** – “The Bible reveals the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here Paradise is gained, Heaven opened, and hell disclosed. Christ is its grand object, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It shall fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened in the judgment and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, promises the highest reward for labor, and condemns all who trifle with its sacred contents.”

**Q. How can we access the pages of Scripture? How to learn its truths?**

**A.** Sunday Sermons; Bible Studies; Study Bibles; Reliable Sites and Resources, etc.

**YET...**

**Q1. What are we to do when we are “put-off” by the Word of God in Christ?**

**Q2. How should we respond when the contents of Scripture offend us in 2023?**

**A.** Consider the following in reply (i.e., wherein Christ Jesus offers a “hard teaching”)...

## QUESTION #2

### **John 6:53–57 (NIV)**

53 Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.”

**NOTE 1** – Though time does not permit us to “unpack” this rather enigmatic call (i.e., a call to faith in Christ), let us consider that these words put-off much of His audience, including many within the ranks of His disciples! Knowing this, Jesus would ask a rather piercing question. Consider...

### **John 6:60–61**

60 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, “This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?” 61 Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you?”

**NOTE 2** – The answer was a resounding “YES” in light of what Scripture reveals in v. 66...

### **John 6:66 (Emphasis Mine)**

66 From this time many of his **disciples** turned back and no longer followed him.

### **Q. What do we see herein?**

**A1.** We see many taking offense at the teaching of Christ (i.e., causing them to abort connection and service)...

**A2.** We see a prime example of what NOT to do in those moments when Scripture and His teaching offend us!

**KEY** – Note that such offense will certainly come. Much of the Word and the teaching of Christ is so utterly contrary to the heart, desires and ways of man, many men ways with Christ when His teaching is too difficult to receive. In my experience, many are happy to speak of Jesus and their connection with Him until He calls them to forgive an enemy, pray for an undesired leader, abandon sinful personal pleasures, conform to His standard of righteousness and morality v. that of the world, trust Him in the midst of personal crisis and more!

**NOTE 3** – At some point you will be offended by the Lord and His ways. In such moments, do not abandon Him.

### **Q. Will you allow me to show you a better way (i.e., based on comments which are the outflow of a key Q)?**

**NOTE 4** – With the number of His disciples dwindling due to offense, Jesus asked the following of the Twelve....

### **John 6:67a, 68–69**

67 “You do not want to leave too, do you?” . . . 68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

### **Q. You want to know what you see in this selection and passage of Scripture?**

**A.** The response of the apostles which should serve as our response in moments of offense at the Word of God.

### QUESTION #3

To Christ Jesus, obedience is the only proper response to His Word (i.e., and the broader teaching of Scripture)...

#### **Luke 6:46–49**

46 “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”

**NOTE 1** – To Christ, a confession of lordship without the corresponding act of making Him Lord is futile indeed. In fact, Scripture speaks endlessly to the vanity of religious confessions of faith devoid of corresponding works!

#### **James 1:22 (Emphasis Mine)**

22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. **Do what it says.**

#### **James 2:14–22, 24 (NLT)**

14 What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don’t show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? 15 Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, 16 and you say, “Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well”—but then you don’t give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?

17 So you see, faith by itself isn’t enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless.

18 Now someone may argue, “Some people have faith; others have good deeds.” But I say, “How can you show me your faith if you don’t have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds.”

19 You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror. 20 How foolish! Can’t you see that faith without good deeds is useless?

21 Don’t you remember that our ancestor Abraham was shown to be right with God by his actions when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see, his faith and his actions worked together. His actions made his faith complete. . . . 24 So you see, we are shown to be right with God by what we do, not by faith alone.

#### **Luke 6:43–46 (NIV) [Immediate Context Leading to the Query of Christ]**

43 “No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. 44 Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. 45 A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. [THUS!] 46 Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”

**NOTE 2** – J. C. Ryle posited the following: “Happy is that man who possesses a Bible! Happier still is he who reads it! Happiest of all is he who not only reads it, but obeys it, and makes it the rule of his faith and practice!” Why? Because the one who puts the Word into practice is promised the following through J. Christ...

#### **Luke 6:47–49**

47 As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. 48 They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. 49 But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”

## QUESTION #4

**KEY** – I posit that the Word of God, believed upon and properly applied, brings forth health, vitality and beauty.

**NOTE 1** – Show me a life given to the rejection of the Word and its principles and I will show you a life marred by sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft; hatred discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like (Gal. 5:19b–21a). Such lives are ruined, broken, fractured, fractious and spiritually repugnant (i.e., ugly) before the Lord and amongst men!

**NOTE 2** – However, show me a life given to the keeping of the Word and its principles by power divine, and I will show you a life abounding with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and temperance (Gal. 5:22–23a)—a life that is beautiful and being beautified in ever-increasing degrees before God and among men.

**Q1. Have you ever met a person who was given to the rejection of the Word? Want to RUN.**

**Q2. Have you ever met a person given to the Christ and to His Holy Word? Want to REMAIN.**

**Q. Might it be that God wants your life to so abound that others might be attracted to Him?**

**NOTE 3** – Consider this selection and the rhetorical question of Christ Jesus on such a matter...

### **Mark 4:21**

21 He [Jesus] said to them [His disciples], “Do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or a bed? Instead, don’t you put it on its stand?”

**NOTE 4** – A lamp is not lit in order to be hid away, but in order to shine and bring illumination amidst darkness! God has not done a work in you in order for you to stay silent, but that you might be a showcase of His power (i.e., shining through you into order to dispel darkness and win the lost)...

### **Matthew 5:14–16 (Emphasis Mine)**

14 “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, **that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.**”

**NOTE 5** – You see, obedience to His Word is not just about bringing you to a place of blessing, vitality and life. It is about winning others to Him, that you might serve as an effective witness and agent for Christ in this life! Could it be that the Church of Christ fails to attract lost men and women to Him because the members of the Church live no differently than the lost (i.e., functionally)? Might it be time to change this?

## SUMMATIONS

**Q1. Will you look to the Word as the rule of Christian faith and practice?**

**Q2. Will you trust the Lord and His ways in seasons where His Word offends?**

**Q3. Will you seek to dutifully and practically apply His teachings in life and living?**

**Q4. Will you let Him glorify Himself through you (i.e., in order to “reach” this world)?**

## CONCLUSION

**NOTE 1** – Feel free to give either in person or online at [www.NewLifeBarre.org](http://www.NewLifeBarre.org).

**NOTE 2** – Check out our website for any of our beyond Sunday ministries (MM, WM & CYC).

**NOTE 3** – Women’s Ministry Updates for the month of May? Men’s Breakfast this Saturday at 9–10am.

**NOTE 4** – Spring Clean-Up Day this Saturday following the Men’s Breakfast (i.e., starting at 10:15am). Join in!

### **2 Corinthians 13:14**

14 May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.