

Do You Love Me?

“Do you love me?” Jesus asked Peter this question three times, and He also asks it of us. The question seems simple, but it may be surprising how spiritually close we can come to Jesus without truly being in relationship with Him. This Easter, discover why a genuine, loving relationship with Jesus makes all the difference.



INTRODUCTION

God showed his deep love for us by giving up His Son on the cross so that our sins (past, present, and future), can be forgiven. Pastor David challenged us to search our hearts and think about whether we have the same deep and intimate love for Jesus.

STARTER QUESTION

Pastor David shared a sweet story about the time he “choked” when he did not follow his initial plan to propose to his wife, Kathy. How does it make you feel when you back out or throw away a chance to do something meaningful or when you settle for something less? Are there any opportunities that the Lord has provided to you that you may have overlooked, missed, or want to revisit as seek to walk more closely with Him?

INTO THE WORD

1. Pastor David encouraged us today to “know” Jesus as defined by the Greek word “ginosko.” What does it mean to know Jesus in this way? In Matthew 7:21, Jesus tells us that not everyone who calls His name or completes works in His name will enter the kingdom of Heaven. He tells us that He wants to **know** us and for us to love Him. Consider Matthew 6:24, Matthew 22:37-38, John 14:15, John 14:23-24, and Galatians 2:20. What guidance do these scriptures in the New Testament provide on how to show Jesus we love Him and to establish a relationship with Him?
2. Pastor David told us that God is not looking for a *connection* with us...He is looking for a **commitment** from us. Refer to Deuteronomy 27:10, Deuteronomy 27:10, I Kings 8:61 and Proverbs 16:3. What do these scriptures in the Old Testament tell us we can do to demonstrate our commitment to God?
3. Compare and contrast the scriptures referenced above for questions 1 and 2. Is there a difference between the instructions from the new and old testaments, and is there a difference between how we show love and commitment to God?
4. Pastor David mentioned that we can be spiritually close to Jesus without truly being in a relationship with Him. What did he mean by this? What is the difference between being spiritually close to Jesus and being in a relationship with Him? Refer to Philippians 4:6-7, John 14:27, Romans 5:8, and Psalm 23 for examples of the peace and love that comes from a relationship with God.

APPLICATION

5. Today we learned the difference between the two Greek words **ginosko** versus **eido**, both often translated to the word **know** in English. Can you think of a relationship you are in that would be considered as ginosko? Compare that to someone in your life that you would see as more of an eido relationship. Are the two relationships significantly different, and if so, in what ways?

6. David talked about “choking” or “dropping the ball” in difficult situations. When Jesus was arrested, Peter “choked” three times and denied that he knew Jesus when bystanders asked him if he knew Jesus. Have you ever been asked if you are a Christian by someone who was opposed to Christians? If so, how did you respond and how was your response received? How did you feel about it? Would you say or do anything differently?
7. Would you say that you are in an eido or a ginosko relationship with Jesus? How well do you feel like you know the Word of God and Jesus? Who is Jesus to you and how would you explain Him and what He means to you to other people?

PRAYER

Dear Heavenly Father, we come to you with humble and grateful hearts as we remember what Jesus did for us on the cross. Thank you for thinking of us before we even existed and for loving us as much as you do. Please help us to draw closer to you, to love you as you deserve to be loved, and to be a beacon of light to those around us. Help us to help loved ones who may have drifted from you or do not know you at all. Please help each one of us as we navigate this life and our personal walks with you. We ask these things in Jesus precious name, amen.

SUGGESTED ANSWER GUIDE / MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT FOR SELECTED QUESTIONS:

Question #1

- Matthew 6:24 – Serve God only (you cannot have two masters).
- Matthew 22:37-38 – Love God completely and love others as you love yourself.
- John 14:15 and John 14:23-24 – Obey God's commandments.
- Galatians 2:20 – Become one with Jesus and live by faith.

There are many scripture passages in the Bible that tell us how to love God. Others include: John 2:4-6, 1 John 4:7-8, 1 John 5:3, and 1 Corinthians 13:4-8...just to name a few. In these passages, we are told to love God through keeping his Word and His commandments. Take a moment to think about how you can apply these verses to your life to love and know God more.

Question #2

- Deuteronomy 6:5 – Love the Lord.
- Deuteronomy 27:10 – Obey the Lord.
- 1 Kings 8:61 – Obey God's commandments.
- Proverbs 16:3 – Commit what you do to God.

Question #4 - There are many things that we may do to be spiritually close to Jesus. For example, we may do 'overt' activities such as go to church every Sunday, consistently read a daily devotional, always send out 'religious' Christmas cards, and invite our friends to attend our church.

However, it may be the 'covert' things we do or feel in our hearts that help us to be in a relationship with Jesus. Psalms 34:17-19, Philippians 4:6-7, and John 14:27 give us advice about having the peace of God in our hearts so that we are not afraid. Believing that God loves us even when we do sinful things can strengthen our relationship with Him (Romans 5:8, Romans 8:38-39, and Psalm 86:15). Knowing that God will help us to be confident and courageous brings us closer to Him (Isaiah 40:31, Deuteronomy 31:6, Psalm 112:6-8, and 2 Timothy 1:7).

Questions #5 and #7 – Quick reminders for differences between the Greek words for “know:”

- ***eido*** (to observe or witness...to know by perception or sight)
- ***ginosko*** (to know personally/intimately)

Question #7 - When Simon Peter said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you" (John 21:15-17), it helps us to remember that God is sovereign. He knows our hearts inside and out. He knows our thoughts, feelings, and motives (Psalm 139). He is not only looking for a connection with us, but a full surrender of our life, goals, and desires (Phil. 3:10). He wants us to be completely committed to Him and to share our testimony and the hope we have in Jesus with others (1 Peter 3:15). He is always there, patiently knocking on the door to our heart, pursuing a true, close, and *genosko* relationship with every person (Rev. 3:20).