

SEPT 26

# QUESTIONS THAT NEED

## ANSWERS

#QTNA

JUDGES 6:11-13



A SERMON BY **REV. DR. HOWARD-JOHN WESLEY** | @PASTORHJW

#QTNA | #PHJW13 | #ASBCSERMON | #THATSMYPASTOR



VILLAGE

@ASBC

MOVING FROM CROWD TO COMMUNITY

Sunday, September 26, 2021

Preacher: Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley

Sermon: "QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS, #QTNA"

Scripture: Judges 6:11-13 (NRSV)

# CURRICULUM GUIDE





## Sermon Summary

Whatever happens to us, God can transform it for our good. The pandemic has changed and challenged us but good has come out of it. We have learned new ways of doing things, even new ways of doing Church. The pandemic has also forced us to ask new questions. It is not always the ability to have the right answers; it is the ability to ask the right questions. When God questions us it is an invitation to participate in what God is about to do. When we question God, God uses our questions as an opportunity to reveal God's self in new ways. God will release you into an orchestrated and ordained struggle. The struggle creates the question which allows God's revelation. God is transforming us as a people, nation and as the Body of Christ. We are living in a spirit of Cain, where the focus is on me, myself, and I. You must determine where the line is that separates your individual liberty and your communal responsibility? God values community. Your source of truth is critical to the way you behave. Your truth should reveal the life of Christ in you. God's blessings during this season of pandemic may not look the way you want or expect but God is right in front of you. You still have a harvest and a reason to rejoice and be glad even in the middle of the pandemic.

# Sermon Summary (cont)

**Key Points:** It is not always the ability to have the right answers; it is the ability to ask the right questions. God is not offended by our questions. When God questions us it is an invitation to participate in what God is about to do. When we question God, God uses our questions as an opportunity to reveal God's self in new ways. God may release you into an orchestrated and ordained struggle. The struggle creates the question which allows God's revelation. What you believe is not the real test of truth. The test is how does or doesn't align with the truth of Christ and the life of Jesus?

Three questions that opened the door for God to reveal God's self in a new way in the Bible that are relevant and applicable during this pandemic:

**Genesis 4. Am I my brother and sister's keeper?** We are living in a spirit of Cain, where the focus is on me, myself, and I. You must determine where the line is that separates your individual liberty and your communal responsibility. God values community.

**John 18. What is your source truth?** Does your truth reveal the life of Christ in you? Pilate asked Jesus, What is truth? Is truth absolute or situational? What are your sources of Truth? Who's in your ear? Where do you find truth? What source of information is true? What you believe is not the real test of truth. The test is how does or doesn't what you believe align with the truth of Christ in the life of Jesus?

**Judges 6. Where is God? If God is with us, why is this happening?** God is always right in front of you. What is happening in front of you is proof that God is still with you.



# Getting To Know You Questions:

1. In honor of Pastor Wesley's Thirteenth Anniversary of Pastor and People, briefly share your favorite story about Pastor.
2. Thinking back over the pandemic, have there been adverse circumstances that God turned around for your good? If so, did this impact your faith?
3. Have the questions you ask in your faith walk changed over the course of the pandemic?
4. Has God ever asked you a question that turned out to be an invitation? If so, did you accept the invitation?





## Into The Bible Questions:

Pastor Wesley noted that Gideon looked in the eyes of the angel and asked “where is God?” In this Bible story, from chapter 6 of the book of Judges, Gideon is called upon to save the people of Israel by leading them against the Midianites. The people of Israel had done “what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian.” The Midianites were capturing any crops produced by the Israelites, giving them grief. When the people of Israel realized the error of their ways and cried out for help to the Lord, a prophet was sent to deliver them as they had been rescued from Egypt. Enter Gideon!

1. Have you ever missed a sign from God that was standing right in front of you?
2. What is your understanding of the importance of angels in the Bible?





## Life Application Questions:

1. How do you determine who to trust in turbulent times? What does it look like for your trust in God to deepen?
2. Has God's assignment over your life shifted or stayed the same during the pandemic? How can you tell?

## "Can I Push It?"

1. Pastor Wesley asks about the sacrifice of personal liberty for communal responsibility; where does the line exist for you? What determines if a personal sacrifice is worth communal wellness for you?
2. How has your 'harvest' during the pandemic been different than what you thought it would be?

## Activity:

1. Consider Gideon's question, "...if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us?" Create a playlist that would have encouraged Gideon in his time of need.

## Spirit Work:

1. As a maturing Christian, what are the things that you are challenged to tell yourself 'no' about, in order to sacrifice for the good of your community? How can you make community responsibility a part of your weekly routine?
2. As Christians, we are called to be united, not uniform. How can we be a united community, while honoring our differences?

### **Additional Questions for Married Couples:**

1. Are there any good things as a couple you are believing in God to bring out of the pandemic?
2. Pastor Wesley challenged us to consider the need to occasionally sacrifice personal liberty for the sake of communal well being, does this same concept apply to you as a couple? Have you sacrificed your individual preference for the sake of the good of the marriage? Was it worth it?

### **Additional Questions for Young Adult:**

1. Young adults often think of our twenties and thirties as a time to plant seeds for our individual lives such as internships, degrees, connections, and relationships for later harvest. How can you plant seeds of community responsibility to harvest, as well?
2. While Millennials and Gen-Zers are often portrayed as very individualistic in mass media, can you think of instances where a sense of community responsibility has shown up in this age group that disrupt that narrative?

### **Additional Questions for Parents:**

1. In terms of parenting have you experienced harvests in your relationship with your children that were completely unexpected or that manifested differently than expected?
2. What, if any question have your children asked you about the pandemic and God's role in it? What have you told them?

### **Additional Questions for Women:**

1. Pastor Wesley spoke of the harvest that looked different than what Gideon expected. Has God shown you favor specifically in your role as a woman during the pandemic?
2. During the pandemic have you been impacted economically because of your role as a caretaker, mother, or wife in a way that you feel may be different from men?

### **Additional Questions for Men:**

1. Sometimes men are expected to make decisions based on putting the interests of their family first. If that is true for you, how do you reconcile the need to look out for the best interests of your family while being mindful of your responsibility to the community.

### **Further Study**

**René Descartes**, French philosopher, March 31, 1596 - February 11, 1650. "*I think, therefore I am*" (Latin: *Cogito, ergo sum*),

**Ubuntu** (Zulu pronunciation: [ùbúnt'ù]) is a Nguni Bantu term meaning "humanity". It is sometimes translated as "*I am because we are*" (also "*I am because you ...*") ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu\\_philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu_philosophy))