**The Questions We Ask God Outline**

**Series Title**: “Questions We Ask God?”

**Big Idea**: “We meet God in the questions… not just the answers.”

**Felt Need**: People are searching for God and for answers to meaningful questions in their lives. God is with them even as they search for the answers.

**Series Summary/Description**: “Questioning takes courage. It’s the way we learn and the way we grow. When we ask God questions we keep the conversation going. Through stories of people who were seeking and questioning we learn of the in-breaking of God’s grace and love. This Lent, rediscover your curiosity and meet God in the questions… not just the answers.”

**Topic 1 – Forgiveness**

Question of the Week – Is forgiveness really possible?

Scripture: Matthew 6: 12 (Lord’s Prayer Matthew 6: 9-15)

**Topic 2 – Silence / Listening for God’s voice**

Question of the Week – How do we deal with God’s silence?

Scripture – 1 Kings 19: 11-13 and Psalm 22

**Topic 3 – Hope**

Question of the Week – How do we to Hope in Times of Trouble?

Scripture – Psalm 73

**Topic 4 – Cross (brokenness to wholeness)**

Question of the Week – What’s the deal with the cross?

Scripture – Genesis 3: 8-9 and Philippians 2: 5-11

**Topic 5 – God’s presence in difficult times**

Question of the Week – Why do bad things happen to good People?

Scripture – John 11: 17 – 36 – Lazarus story

**Topic 6 – Eternal Life**

Question of the Week – Why do we need Jesus?

Scripture – John 3: 14-21

**Easter Sunday Title**: “Why did God Fool the World?”

**Lenten Sermon Series Detailed Weekly Planning**

**Week Title: “Is Forgiveness Really Possible?”**

**Focus Topic**: Forgiveness

**Week 1 Scripture**: Matthew 6: 12 (6: 9-15)

**Week 1 Big Idea**: The cost of not forgiving/unforgiveness

**Opening:** An act that needs to be forgiven (could be personal)

**Points:**

1. Who is hurt by not forgiving/unforgiveness
2. Is God’s forgiveness contingent on ours?
3. Healing power of forgiveness

**Action Step:** Envelop and card to write something you need to be forgiven for or to forgive someone else of.

**Week Title: “How Do We Deal With God’s Silence?”**

**Focus Topic**: Silence / Listening for God’s Voice

**Scripture**: 1 Kings 19 (Elijah’s still small voice, especially verses 11 - 13), Psalm 22 (Why have you forsaken me)

**Week Big Idea:** Since God has been faithful in the past (in times of noise) and God is faithful in times of silence, therefore God will be faithful in the future.

**Opening**: Mother Theresa’s story about her “long dark night of the soul”

**Points:**

**Action Step:** We have to adjust our expectations of how God will speak to us

**Week Title: “How Do We Hope in Trouble?”**

**Focus Topic**: Hope

**Week Scripture**: Psalm 73

**Week Big Idea**: From Hell to Hope (or God is our Hope)

**Opening**: Tell a “hellish” story at the beginning with it being a “hope” story as an end resolution

**Points**:

1. We all have “hellish” moments
2. We are not able to generate hope
3. Hope comes from God

**Week Title: “What’s the Deal with the Cross?”**

**Focus Topic:** Cross

**Week Scripture**: Genesis 3: 8-9 and Philippians 2: 5-11

**Week Big Idea**: From Brokenness to Wholeness

**Opening**

**Points:**

1. How do we/people see the cross? Decorative Jewelry. Tattoo. Crucifix.
2. What’s under the surface? What ever became of sin? Brokenness. Fear. Guilt. Deep Hurt. Shame. Loneliness.
3. Our hope/healing is found/experienced by coming to the cross.

**Week Title: “Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People?”**

**Focus Topic:** God’s presence in difficult times

**Week Scripture**: Job Scriptures and John 11: 17 – 36 (Martha, Mary and Lazarus)

**Week Big Idea**: God’s presence in the midst of bad things (thinking). We will get through this (feeling). We become the presence of God.

**Opening**: She was pregnant with triplets and everything was good then one baby was in distress and she lost all three babies. Then pull from the news (most recent shooting and then they lost their home in fire/flood/tornado)

**Points:**

1. Weep – allow the tears – our tears bring us to Jesus or drive us away from or closer to God.
2. Go to Jesus or cry out to Jesus

**Action Step**: When bad things happen to good people our tendency is to back away. We say they need time, or we don’t know what to say or do and Christ calls us to step in, go to, instead of separate ourselves from them. The Christian community is called to be the presence of Christ.

**Music Ideas**: “Cry Out to Jesus” by Third Day

**Week Title: “Why Do We Need Jesus?” / “Why Jesus”**

**Focus Topic:** Eternal Life

**Big Idea:** What is eternal life – quantity or quality

(What is a full life? Nutritious & Fullness v. Emptiness & Deficiency, Culture v. Kingdom of God)

Aionios word study: outside time, inside time, beyond time(salvation isn’t just pie in the sky, it effects our whole being - -it begins right now)

**Scripture:** John 3:14-21, What’s the tension in the text??

**Opening:**  A story or illustration of a life that falls apart because they ran toward quantity (work junkie, indulging in negative behavior, and end with the turnaround to quality)

**Point:**

1. We don’t want to perish (John 3:16-17)

**Action Step:** Be fully present wherever you are. Fast from distractions (cell phone, television, Gameboy) and add time building relationships (family, friends, the stranger becomes a friend). Jesus gave all to us; what can we give back?

Baptismal vow: Time, talent, prayer, witness, giving, service?

**Music Ideas:** O How I Need Jesus, What a Friend We Have in Jesus, choir: God So Loved the World, To God Be the Glory, Freely, Freely, This Little Light of Mine, Siyahamba, I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light