

Why does God ask questions?

Hmm: God knows everything. God asks questions. This seems strange. If God knows everything, why does He ask questions?

Before I respond to your question (“Why does God ask questions?”), please respond to 3 situations for me:

1. You’re teaching single-digit addition in first grade. You know $4 + 5 = 9$. Why do you ask SongHo, “What’s $4 + 5$?”
2. You’re starting a unit on the negative affects of substance abuse. You have researched the topic, developed an effective set of notes, and put up 2 bulletin boards. You start class by asking your 7th graders, “What could happen to you if you take illegal drugs?” Why do you ask this?
3. You’re leading a workshop on using questions to help students understand and use a biblical perspective. You have carefully prepared for this workshop. So why do you ask, “How can questions help students understand and use a biblical perspective?”

In each of these 3 situations, you already know the answer.

- You know that $4 + 5 = 9$.
- You know quite few negative affects of taking illegal drugs.
- You know that using questions helps students understand and use a biblical perspective because questions, among other things, help students connect their learning, their lives, and a biblical perspective.

If you already know the answers, why do you ask the questions? Because you know that questions serve purposes other than helping *you* learn something. Because you know that questions, among other things, give *others* the opportunity to learn, share, think, and grow.

God knows this, too. (He knew this before you did.) God knows where Adam is hiding in garden, yet God asks, “Where are you?” (NIV Genesis 3:9) Why does He ask this?

Jesus, the Master Teacher, asks questions. All through the Gospels. Think of 1 question Jesus asks. Why does He ask it?

Want to read some questions that Jesus asks? Look in Mark (2:19, 3:4, 4:13, 5:30, 6:38, 7:18, 8:12, 9:16, 10:3, and 12:16).

Why does Jesus ask questions? Among other things:

- To set the context for learning
- To focus attention on something significant
- To promote self-examination
- To prod thinking
- To show an interest in others

Can you think of some other reasons Jesus asks questions? How can you follow Jesus’ example of asking questions?

So, what’s the real question? It’s not “Why does God ask questions?” or “Why does Jesus ask questions?” It’s “How will I use questions to help my students love God?”

Ask your students a question. Today.

Tom Postema

Questions are a great tool for helping my students increase their understanding and use of a biblical perspective.

While studying the geometric and artistic concept of the vanishing point, we discussed the relationship between the vanishing point in works of art and the vanishing point in the real world.

How? By responding to the question "What does the vanishing point in art tell you about God's world?"

As a result of our discussion, one student wrote: "Colossians 1:16-17...tells about God...who holds the world together." I felt good about this. I plan to keep asking questions.