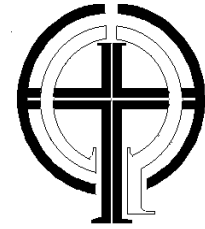


Proclaiming Christ in Every Way

Week 3 Discussion Questions: God's Role in Revealing Christ



"Assurance is two-thirds of success." ~ Gaelic Proverb

1. This week we are talking about one of the most debated and complex parts of the Christian message, the twin beliefs that God is sovereign (in complete control) over everything and each person is responsible for their acceptance or rejection of God in Jesus. Some Christians would rather emphasize God's power in leading people to Himself Others will emphasize each person's personal choice in whether to accept or reject God in Jesus, but the Bible expresses both. What are we to think and how does knowing God is involved every time we witness help us as Christians? Well, take a deep breath, dive on in and we'll see if we can't find out!
2. The first verse of an old hymn goes as follows: **"I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew He moved my soul to seek Him, seeking me; it was not I that found, O Savior true; no, I was found of Thee."** As you reflect on your own conversion experience, do the words of this hymn ring true for you? Does it make a difference that God first pursued you and not the other way around? Do these words embolden you to be a witness, if so, why?
3. Read Genesis 25:19-26. Do you get a sense of God-ordained destiny in this passage? Can you think of other examples of God-ordained destiny in the Old Testament stories of the nation of Israel? Do you think it is any different for us today? Can you think of a time in your life when you felt that God lead you? **Can you think of a time when, upon reflection, God was involved in your life even though you didn't recognize it at the time?** Can you share one such example with the others in your group?
4. Does God-ordained destiny exist for His followers, and perhaps more importantly, those who don't yet know Him as well?? **If God is active in calling people to be his disciples, what is our human role?** What was the role of the disciples in the early days of the church?
5. Read 2 Corinthians 2:14-17. Consider and discuss the fact that by sharing Christ you bear a double edged sword—spreading an aroma of both "death to death" and "life to life" to those you encounter? **As Christians how do we handle knowing that for some our message will not be one they are glad to hear?**
6. Consider the last phrase in 2 Corinthians 2:14-17: "we speak in Christ in the sight of God." What does this phrase mean? Does it empower you or intimidate you?
7. Aaron spoke of the tendency of some contemporary Christian churches to make the Gospel more palatable and less offensive. Have you seen evidence of this? Do you find yourself "going soft" on some of the sobering aspects of the Gospel (e.g. judgment, eternal damnation) with your non-believer friends? **Should we go soft or should we speak of "sinners in the hands of an angry God" (in line with Jonathan Edwards' famous sermon)?** How does your understanding of 2 Cor 2:14-17 influence your thinking on this topic? What is humility's role in delivering a challenging truth?

8. Aaron spoke of our role as ambassadors as followers of Christ. "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making his appeal through us." (2 Cor 5:20). **Reflect on the role of American ambassadors** in distant embassies in our current world. Who do they (ambassadors) serve? Where do they live? What is their mission? At whose request do they serve? How long do they serve? Do they speak on their own authority? What are the characteristics of an ambassador? **Is our role as Christ's ambassadors similar?** Why or why not?
9. Think back to a time when you had a disagreement with another person about something that you thought important. When the other person took up the contrary position did you simply give up? Did you contend for what you thought was right? Do you believe that if you are certain that you are right you have more confidence to contend for your position? Jude 3b says, "I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints." **Are you confident enough in what you believe to contend for your faith? What could give you more confidence?**
10. Aaron pointed out that our understanding of how God moves in the lives of men and women is a mysterious combination of the actions of a sovereign God and human responsibility to respond to God in repentance and faith. Do you agree with this idea? Are you content with embracing this apparent mystery or are you driven to "figure it out?" Does your degree of acceptance (or unacceptance) of this mystery influence the way you go about sharing Christ?
11. **Read Acts 8:25-40. Share your first impressions after reading this story?** Was this a "cold call" for Phillip or was the Ethiopian already on a spiritual quest? What is the evidence of his quest? Do you think it is possible for the Spirit to speak to us today with the same clarity he spoke to Phillip? Could it be that the Spirit is speaking and that we are not listening? If so, what do we need to do to become better listeners to the Spirit's promptings?
12. **Reluctant to Share** ←—————→ **Joyful to Share**
Honestly now...where are you on this line? On the one hand, sharing Christ out of a sense of duty...or...sharing Christ with a sense of marvel, adventure, expectancy as to how God is going to use you. If you don't think you are in the right place on this continuum, how can you get to where you think you need to be?

Last Thing: Leaders, Take a minute a write down some of your group's unanswered questions from your discussion or comments about sharing faith in general. Email them to this address (hcppcomments@ymail.com) or drop them by the Information Desk on Sunday. We will incorporate them into our *Proclaiming Christ in Every Way* series.

Thanks! The Adult Discipleship Team

You can listen to the sermon series and print the discussion guides off our website at <http://www.heightscpc.org/sermon.html>.