



Links Players

From Atheism to Christ! - Asking Questions

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" (Matthew 16:15, ESV)

One of the more comical things to observe on the practice range is the number of players telling their PGA Professional what they think is wrong with their swing.

When their Swing Coach, who has studied the swing for years and has taught a million lessons, is telling them one thing, and they are arguing that the problem lay elsewhere, you have to wonder why they are paying him.

More enjoyable is watching the teaching professional ask leading questions of their students to stimulate robust conversations with the player about his thought process and swing philosophy.

A great coach doesn't merely train his students to swing a certain way; he trains them to understand why they should swing a certain way. And one of the most effective ways to do this is through asking questions.

In the history of ideas, this method of instruction is commonly called the "Socratic Method." Socrates was famous for stimulating dialogues with his understudies by asking leading questions to make them think about their assumptions.

While Socrates has historically received "top billing" for this method of instruction, Jesus was, by far and away, the Master of the interrogative—Jesus' questions penetrated much deeper than the mind; his questions penetrated the heart too.

When the rich, young ruler asked Jesus about having eternal life, Jesus responded to him with a question— a question is answered with a question (Matthew 19:16,17). Intriguingly, Jesus seeks to expose this rich young man's erroneous assumption that eternal life could be earned by keeping the commandments.

Crafting simple or complex questions designed to get or keep a conversation going is an art form; however, it is no more difficult than learning to "bend it like Beckham" around a tree from two-hundred yards out.

Suppose a playing partner asks, "What do you believe happens when we die?" Rather than answer right out of the gate, try this—turn to your friend and say, "Before I answer that, let me ask you, "What do you think happens when we die?"

After he gives his answer, then ask him some version of this, "Why do you believe that?" Of course, we are to do this conversationally and in winsome tones. You will usually discover someone who has bought into one of the various philosophies of life that wrongly assumes our eternal destinies are determined by "what one does or does not do."

At this point in the conversation, more times than not, your conversation partner will turn and ask you, "What do you believe happens at death?" By listening to them, you have earned the right to explain grace—the gift of salvation earned by Jesus Christ's death and resurrection.

Prayer: Jesus! Train us to ask questions of those who have not bowed their knees.

READING - Matthew 19:16-30

OPENING QUESTIONS:

How good are you at asking questions that will lead to gospel conversations?

1. Matthew 19: 16-30. How does Jesus respond to the Rich, Young, Ruler's initial question? Why?

2. Read this story and the following discussion Jesus has with his disciples in **verses 23-30** and discuss the connections to Jesus' encounter with the Rich, Young, Ruler.
