



CAN I REALLY ASK THAT?

"But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"-Romans 5:8

Have you ever had a question that you weren't sure you were allowed to ask? I have definitely experienced that throughout my life, ranging from questions about how a certain Bible passage fits in with another one to bigger questions about God's will and plan. I have these questions, but I'm afraid to ask them. And I wasn't exactly sure why. Then I read a really interesting fact and things clicked: Did you know that the majority of those people who hire a cleaning service for their house admit to cleaning the house *before* the maid service gets there? I read that and thought, "That's ridiculous! You want them to clean your house, but you don't want them to think it's that bad. You're hiring them to clean your house! I think they're okay with the mess!"

But then I realized, this isn't really that ridiculous at all. It's actually a symptom of a deeper issue: we don't want anyone, even people we hire to clean messes, to know how much of a mess our houses are, much less our lives. We want people to think that we have everything together. Because deep down, we're afraid that if people really knew what was going on with me, what I was dealing with, what I have done, then they would leave. This is why there's a stigma about asking questions in the church too. We have this fear that if I ask the wrong thing, then I will get kicked out. People will look at me differently or judge me if they knew that I didn't have it all together or that I wasn't sure about something. So instead, we keep our questions, fears, and doubts to ourselves and what we find is that we're not strong enough to handle them.

But God is. God can handle your questions. You are not going to surprise God. He's not going to say, "Oh myself! I haven't thought of that question before!" He's not going to abandon you or leave you. Because your God is the One who pursues you, even when you are His enemy. While you were dead in your sins, Christ died for you. He knows that you are a mess, so you don't have to hide it from him. He has forgiven those sins through Jesus' death, so you don't have to carry them anymore!

That's why God gives you permission to ask your questions, whatever they are. He doesn't want you to carry that burden alone. Who else can you cry out to, if not God? If you can't ask a question at church, then where can you ask it? God gives answers in His Word to the most important questions in life, and He also gives you something even greater. God gives you Himself. Truly present in His Word. Truly present in His body and blood in the Lord's Supper. Truly present with you through the Holy Spirit. God is with you. No matter the question. If you find yourself wondering, "Can I ask that of God? Can I ask that at church?" The answer is a resounding: yes! There's nowhere else that God would want you to ask your questions, because the place you will find truth, peace, and comfort is in His Word and in His Church. So walk with God and His people through whatever the question, the trial, the doubts. He is always with you, to the end of the age.

Prayer: God, thank you for being bigger than my questions. Thank you for your forgiveness and your promise that you will be with me no matter what. Help me to trust you with my questions and to hold my hands out in faith to receive the gifts that you have to gift to me in the midst of my questions. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Journal Prompts:

- What are some ongoing questions that I have about faith and life?
- Why should I go to God with my questions rather than keeping them to myself?