



Sharing the Good News!

Penn Northeast Conference of the United Church of Christ

Asking the Right Questions by Alan C. Miller, Conference Minister

A Rabbi was traveling at night to a meeting. Driving on country roads in an area unfamiliar to him, he made a wrong turn onto the access road to a military base. As he approached the guard house an armed sentry called out: "Who are you? What are you doing here?" The Rabbi yelled back: "Excuse me?" Again the guard yelled: "Who are you? What are you doing here?" This time the Rabbi asked: "Soldier, how much are you paid for stopping people and asking them these questions?" The soldier thought for a minute, did the calculations in his head, and told the Rabbi the amount of his weekly pay. To which the Rabbi said: "I will pay you even more if you will ask me those questions at the beginning of each new day!"

Who are you? What are you doing here? Most of us spend more of our day talking than listening. As a matter of fact, most of us are so good at talking that we give "the answers"



to others before they even ask the questions. We give answers to others even if they don't have questions. It's like we are all playing *Jeopardy*, we know all the answers, now we just have to figure out the questions.

How would your day ... maybe even your life ... change if you began each day asking God the Rabbi's questions: *Who am I?* and *Why am I here?* and then sitting in silence listening to God?

I have a very wise Rabbi in my life ... actually she is a very gifted Spiritual Director. She has been teaching me how to pray through listening rather than doing all of the talking and giving God very little time to respond. Ten months into this practice I am beginning to sense some answers. *Who am I?* A child of God. *Why am I here?* To learn how to love my neighbor as God loves me.

I would invite you to evaluate the questions of your life. What are the questions ... if any ... that you ask yourself and God that form the basis for the way that you think, do, and relate to others? Perhaps it might be time to join the Rabbi in asking God these very wise questions: *Who am I?* and *Why am I here?*



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