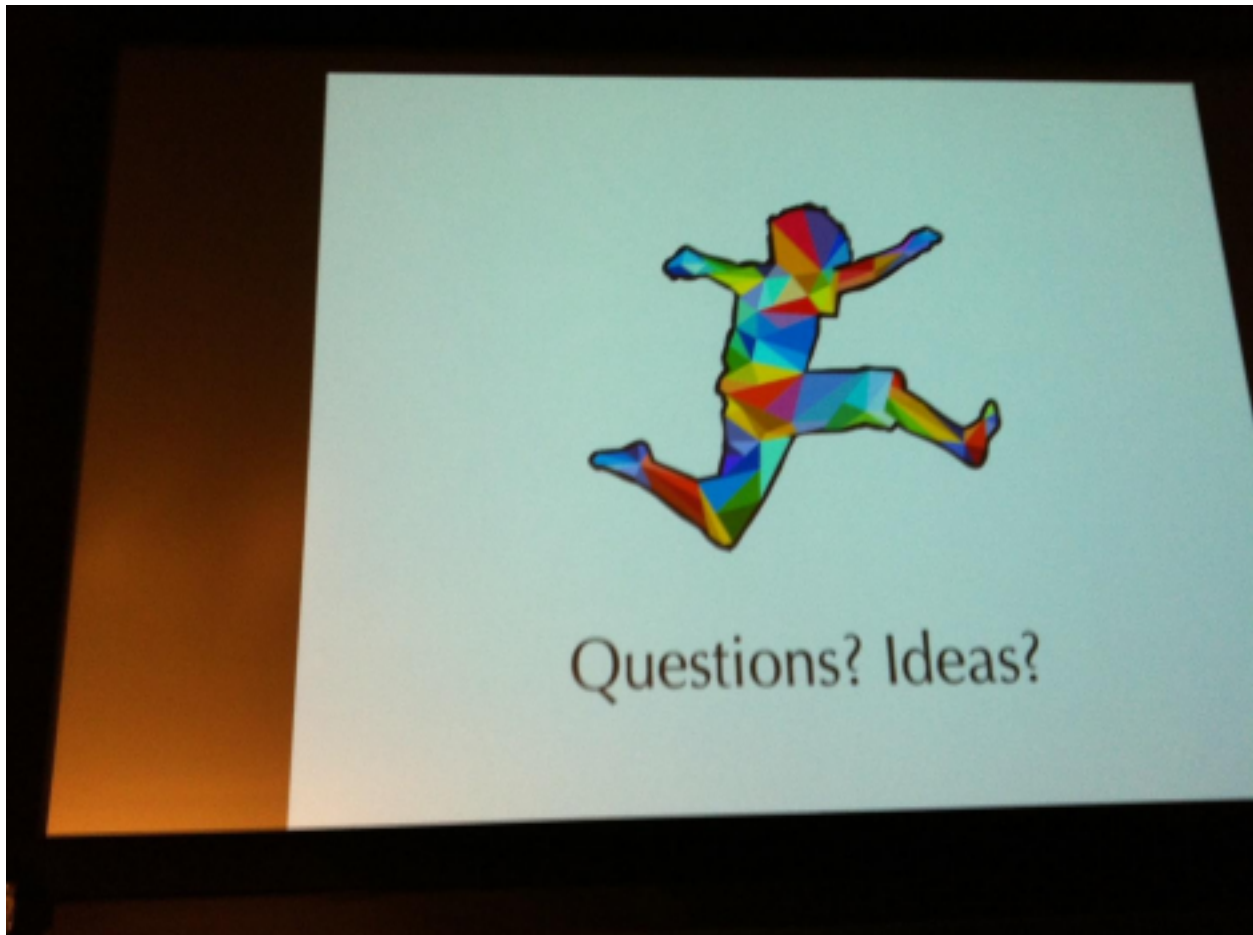




**The Nourishing Vocation Project**  
**Near and Now:**  
*Discernment as a Way of Life: Nicodemus*

**Warm-up Question**  
*How often do you find yourself asking questions?*



"Questions? Ideas? Camera Roll-3589" by [Roland Tanglao](#) licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)

**Discussion Questions**

1. What do you see in this image?
2. What do you feel looking at this image?
3. What stories from your own life does this image bring to mind?
4. What stories of the world does this image bring to mind?

## How Can These Things Be?

Read [John 3](#)

### Bible Story Reflection

It would be nice if being a Christian meant all of our deepest questions were answered or that everything was figured out for us. And yet, the story of Nicodemus reminds us that's not the case: following Jesus *does not* guarantee perfect knowledge or understanding. Following Jesus *does not* preclude us from ever asking questions again.

What's more, the conversation between Nicodemus and Jesus reminds us that *it's okay* to bring our questions to Jesus. Nicodemus recognizes that Jesus is different because "no one can do these signs [that Jesus does] apart from the presence of God" (v2). Yet there's still something that Nicodemus can't quite understand about Jesus; something about this teacher from Nazareth has created questions in Nicodemus's mind. And what Nicodemus probably thought would be a simple exercise to gaining answers only resulted in more questions as the conversation unfolded: "How can anyone be born after having grown old" (v4)? "How can these things be" (v9)?

Jesus doesn't chide Nicodemus for not knowing everything or send him away for seeking clarification. Instead, Jesus hears Nicodemus's questions and invites the Pharisee into conversation. Does Jesus answer all of his questions or explain when his answers are metaphorical or literal? No. But through that conversation, Jesus does more than just provide information: he provides an invitation into the story of God's unending love as revealed through the gospel (vs.14-17).

### Discussion Questions

1. How do you react when somebody in a group setting asks a question?
2. How do you react when somebody asks you a question?
3. Do you find it's easy or difficult for you to ask questions? Why?
4. Describe a time in which you wrestled with faith-related questions. What helped you through that wrestling? What was harmful in the midst of that wrestling?
5. Describe the ways in which you identify with Nicodemus.
6. How would Nicodemus tell this story?
7. What does it mean for you that Jesus doesn't condemn Nicodemus for asking questions?
8. What questions do you have for Jesus, today?
9. How is the God of conversations present for you, today?



## Activity Suggestions

Take time to list three to five (3-5) questions you have about God, faith, theology, etc. Share these questions with a trusted family member, friend, or your small group and take notice of what you see on the list (e.g. recurring questions, the kinds of questions asked, etc.). Brainstorm about lists of books, resources, etc. that could be helpful in addressing said questions.

Over the course of the next week, lift up one or two (1-2) of the questions you listed in the first activity to God in prayer. If possible, take time to journal about how God responds to your question(s).

Take one (1) of the questions you listed in the first activity and begin to look for an answer or a response this week. As you look for an answer or response, make note of what sort of additional questions come up. Lift these additional questions up to God as part of your ongoing conversation.

## Prayer Concerns

Those who are seeking answers, those wanting to know God better, those who don't know what to make of Jesus.

## Closing Prayer

Help me, O God to live the questions of my life in relationship with you, trusting that you will walk with me into the answers. In the name of +Jesus, Amen.

