**Excerpt From: “Fish Prison…Living Beyond the Glass”
*by Pastor Doug Dees***

**The Three Questions:**

Before we launch into how the three questions function, we have to start with you and the Trinity. How the three persons of the Trinity are the Trinity and relate to us. We start with a prayer about ourselves concerning these three questions to all three persons of the Trinity. If we don’t, we might turn them into another program. The three questions help us know where we are and where others are spiritually. They help us move forward in following Him. They will help others do the same. But you must start with yourself. You will fall flat if you treat these as some church growth model.

I know you are probably thinking three questions…that’s it…three simple questions will change things? Yep, they will. The difference here is that the three questions are all three looking Him, God, straight in the eye. Facing directly at Him - all three of Him. All three questions focus on all three of Him (the Trinity) and His activity in our hearts, minds, and lives.

***“One of the hardest things to realize about this relational Trinity is this: if you talk to any one of the Trinity, the other two hear and know. Always.”***

They all love you and want to see you become the you They see already. God the Father is not only the sovereign Holy Father—He wants to be your Abba Father. Jesus is not only Savior and Lord—He also wants you to grow into His likeness. The Spirit is not only your comforter and constant companion—He also is to be your guide throughout your whole life.

I dare you to ask all three of these questions and look to Him for an answer. He is God, and He is listening. Are you focusing on Him or your nice little setup in your ‘comfort zone’? Do not ask these questions if you don’t want positive change in your life. But if you do, positive change will be great, and as I’ve said, possibly messy. These “Three Relational Questions” will help you determine how you are doing as a follower of Him. They help me daily.

1. **Father, how can I know and love You better?**
2. **Jesus, what needs to change, so I look more like You?**
3. **Spirit, who are You leading me to invest in?**

I ask these questions to Him, Them, in the morning as soon as I get up. Then I continue to ask them as I go about my day. My day needs to be His day. As followers, we are always related to all three of the Trinity. Why not access those relationships to the fullest? When we get to the “Six Relational Habits” (in the book ‘Fish Prison’), they will help us define ways to keep the questions moving forward. They will help us determine how we move from where we are and show us areas for potential relational change and how to develop it. These are not formulas. They are relational intents of life and character change we are to live by. But for now, focus on three questions.

What follows is not a perfect pattern but a relational template starting with three questions. It is not a process to follow as a pattern, as though a pattern or process will work. These relational questions will help you and those you lead/disciple to be able to connect to the three persons of the Trinity in deepening ways and then move forward toward others, behind the glass, and beyond the glass. These questions happen in concert and all the time. The Trinity is never apart.

**Four Ways of Asking The Three Questions**

You must start with you and how you love God. Why not just start asking Him?

**ONE - The three questions I ask Him in prayer:**

* **Father, how can I know and love You better?**
* **Jesus, what needs to change, so I look more like You?**
* **Spirit, who are You leading me to invest in?**

These three work in concert, as does the Trinity. You, as a disciple, are to get as relationally close as you can to them, as well as Their work in Their Kingdom.

* **Father, how can I know and love You better?**
* He looks at your heart. Are you looking at His heart?
* Renew your mind and heart, so you know Him and how deeply He loves you.
* The more you face Him and stare at Him, the more you reflect His image.
* **Jesus, what needs to change, so I look more like You?**
* Do you see Him for who He truly is? Knowing your character can change
Because of Him?
* He loves you enough not to allow you to stay the same and wants your

character to change so you look like Him.

* If you are being conformed to the image of Christ, His image should be increasingly evident in your life. His character should be increasing in your

life, which would be a change from your birth character.

* **Spirit, who are You leading me to invest in?**
* Do you see and love people? He is guiding/sending you to love them.
* Do you trust Him enough to allow Him to decide who, when, and how?
* Do you see Him as your guide, not just the One who comforts you and guarantees your entrance into Heaven?

**TWO - The three questions I ask myself - as I read/study His Word:**

There are so many ways to read, study, and apply scripture. Asking three relational questions about what He has written will help you find Him, His ways, how He and people related well (or didn’t), and how those people affected others…for good and bad.

* **What do I see about God here?**
* Look for Him—How could I know Him better?
* **What character traits (good or bad) do the main people in the text exhibit?**
* Look for change—How can I exhibit the good traits and avoid the bad ones?
* **How are others in the text affected by the traits of the main characters?**
* Look for how people affect others. How are the others in my life affected by me?
* Who is positively investing in who on purpose?
* Who is helping others move forward spiritually?
* Who is hindering others from finding Him?

**THREE - The three questions I ask myself:**

* **How do I know and love my Father better?**
* **How am I changing so I look more like Jesus?**
* **How am I doing with those the Spirit is leading me to invest in?**

**FOUR: The three questions I ask others:**

I do not actually ask these each time groups meet or with a person. But that would not be bad a bad idea to get in the habit of keeping the topic and intent fresh and focused. You don’t want to become rote, pharisaical, or legalistic. But for me, they help point meetings and groups in an intentionally relational spiritual direction. For groups to gain the spiritual depth we want, these must be constant reminders.

* **How do you know and love our Father better since we last met?**
* **What needs to change for you to look more like Jesus?**
* **Who is the Spirit leading you to invest in?**

These questions are imperative to your spiritual growth and the change and development of your soul.

It is good if we can regularly ask these to Him - of the biblical text as we read what He wrote - to ourselves as we contemplate where we are - and to others as we help disciple them to do the same. A simple graph can remind us to continually seek Him and change ourselves and others.

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| **TO HIM** | **AS WE STUDY** |
| **TO OURSELVES** | **TO OTHERS** |

About the author: Doug Dees has served for over thirty years in full-time church ministry, rural churches, and mega-churches, including pastoring to single adults. Whether serving in the city or the country, in small and large communities, Jesus is the same. Doug lives in Moore, Oklahoma, with his wife, Karen. Connect with him at [FishPrison.com](http://www.fishprison.com/).