

“Good afternoon. GracePoint Community Church”, I said to the caller.

She asked, “Are you a church?” I said, “Yes, we are.” To be candid, I really wanted to say, “No, I’m not a church,” but that seemed a little snarky.

She then asked, “I live in Thornton. Who do I call to get my food stamps from in Adams County?”

“I’m sorry. We’re in Arapahoe County, and I don’t have that information.”

“Well, you’re a church aren’t you? You’re supposed to have all the answers. I’m from Oregon and I need my food stamps.”

I replied, “Hang on a moment and let me look it up on my computer and see if I can help you.” The information was easy to find, I shared it with her, and she thanked me and hung up.

So . . . the church is supposed to have all the answers. I know a lot of people think Google has all the answers, or Wikipedia does, but the church isn’t a data bank.

There was a seminal moment in Jesus’ ministry when He spoke some hard truths – truths that not only were difficult to understand, but also difficult to accept – and we’re told, *From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him* (John 6:66 [notice the order of the numbers]). These “disciples” were hangers-on who were more concerned about what they could get as result of Jesus’ miracles and ministry than they were about who Jesus was.

Jesus then asked His handpicked twelve (v 67) *You do not want to leave too, do you?* This was a cross-the-line in the sand question.

Peter, speaking on behalf of the others, made a bold statement (vs 68-69) *Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.*

The implied answer is, “Jesus, there is no option B. You are it, the answer to our spiritual need.”

Here’s where my seminary education is helpful. The order of the verbs in verse 69 is significant. Belief is a powerful response to Jesus, who He is, then followed by a “knowing” conviction. The perfect active indicative tense of both these verbs emphasizes Peter’s intention, so it would read this way, “We have come to believe and know and still believe and know.”

Where do you go when life begins to shatter or collapse or deteriorate? When life begins to get in the way of life, Peter’s answer is timeless. *To whom shall we go? You have . . . we believe . . . we know . . . you are . . .*

Yes, the doctor and the auto mechanic and the dentist and the government each have a particular role to play in our lives. But when it comes to matters of the heart and soul and spirit – To whom shall we go?

This is the mark of the true believer – when everything around you tempts you to leave, tempts you to put aside your faith even for just a moment, tempts you to compromise who you surrendered your life to – the true believer responds with, *To whom shall I go?* It’s the true Christian answer; in fact, it’s the true church answer.

And, ultimately, I guess the Church has all the answers . . . to real life.