

*Five Minutes with God*

If by some miraculous means, you were granted five minutes with God, face to face, what would you ask of God? What would you do? What would you say? Have you ever wondered such things? Scripture tells the story of such an encounter between God and a young man named Solomon, who was about to be elevated to the position of king. We are told that God encouraged Solomon to ask for what he wanted God to give to him. And what did Solomon ask for? Solomon, in his five minutes with God, asked God for only one thing: wisdom. He asked for the wisdom to differentiate good from evil, so he could lead God's people. God, we are told, was pleased with this request.

So, given an opportunity such as Solomon received, what would you ask of God? Well, we can tell you that if we were granted five minutes with God, we wouldn't waste a moment of it asking God the sticky questions that we people of faith have puzzled over for so many centuries. For example, we wouldn't ask what the practical purpose of religion is. Yes, we see that religious people get just as sick, and get hurt just as badly, and know just as many tragedies as non-religious people do. But, we wouldn't ask God to clarify and defend the fairness of this. Because it appears to us that the purpose of our faith and our religious practice is not to remove our burdens. It is to help us work our way through them.

If we had five minutes with God we also wouldn't ask why there is evil in the world. We have come to see that God loved human-kind so very much that God gave human beings a mind with which to think, and the freedom to put our thoughts to work. Some of us will choose wrongly, will act foolishly, and will do terrible, hurtful, inhuman things. But if we lacked this freedom, including the freedom to do wrong, we would no longer be free to do good and to choose God's good and loving ways without coercion.

In fact, if we had five minutes with God, face to face, we don't think we would ask God a single thing. Nothing. Rather we would say something like this. We would thank God for the years of life given to us on this beautiful earth. It hasn't always been easy, but it has still been wonderful! We would say that we are grateful beyond belief for friends who have helped us along the way, for inspiration, and for encouragement that has helped us to stay focused and committed. We would say thanks for our children whom we love so very much. We would thank God for reaching out to us in love. That is what we would say in our five minutes with God!

What would you say? What would you do? It doesn't need to remain an academic question. Find a quiet place, and start talking to God. Then be still and listen. We can be granted more than five minutes with God. In fact, each of us is granted as much time as we want with God every single day. We hope you'll take advantage of every minute.