



# Perspective

By JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

## Not To Question



In the Amazon jungle of Peru, several years ago, I met an old Indian evangelist. He was no Billy Graham or Rex Humbard. He had never worn a suit and tie. In fact, he had never worn a pair of shoes. He had never been inside a church building or even heard the sound of a piano or pipe organ. But for more than 20 years, since he had become a Christian, he had lived among his primitive people, going from village to village telling the Indians about a God who cares. In a society where suicide is considered the only way out of the hopelessness, he had brought hope — for this life and the hereafter. He was known throughout the jungle as a “man of God.”

Now he was horribly sick. His body was bent and twisted with the excruciating pain of arthritis. His hands were gnarled and misshapen. His feet bent backward at the ankles so even when he was able to drag himself erect, he had to stand on the sides of his insteps. On top of that he had contracted jungle tuberculosis. All he could do was sit in front of his jungle hut and wait to die.

I visited him briefly that morning, squatting in the dirt in front of his thatched home. Despite the dirt and poverty, there was an aura of the Holy Spirit all around him as we talked.

“Many of my Indian friends ask me ‘Why?’” he said. “They say, ‘You have served God all these years. You have renounced the false cures of the witch doctor. You have walked many miles through the jungle. You have laid hands on the sick and they have been healed. Now this. Why?’”

The bent little man smiled at me through his pain, exposing his rotting teeth and swollen gums. “I tell them if I would go into my hut and see Jesus sitting on the floor in the corner near the fire, I would not start asking him ‘Why?’ No, I would put my face in the dirt and say, ‘Jesus, I love you.’ I no longer ask why. I just tell Jesus I love him Him and when I say that, nothing else matters.”

I learned more from that bronzed old Indian with a tattered loin cloth, than I have learned from most of my learned professors. I learned there are some things in

this world which cannot be reasoned out by logic — things which do not fit the mold of our western, scientific minds. In many cases the answer to the question “Why?” is purposefully withheld by a loving God. In other cases, the question “Why?” is simply the wrong question to ask. Satisfaction comes only when we worship, as the old Indian said, not when we continue to pound at the door of knowledge with our many questions.

I was thinking about all that early this morning as I prepared to leave for a two-week trip to the Sinai — a sort of religious pilgrimage (under the guise of collecting research material for a book I’m writing). For weeks I’ve been thinking that as I return to the Sinai and stand on the exact spot where Moses and Joshua stood, I would be free to ask — and receive — answers to some deep questions in my life. I think now, however, I shall not do as much asking, as I will worshipping.

And leave the answers to God.