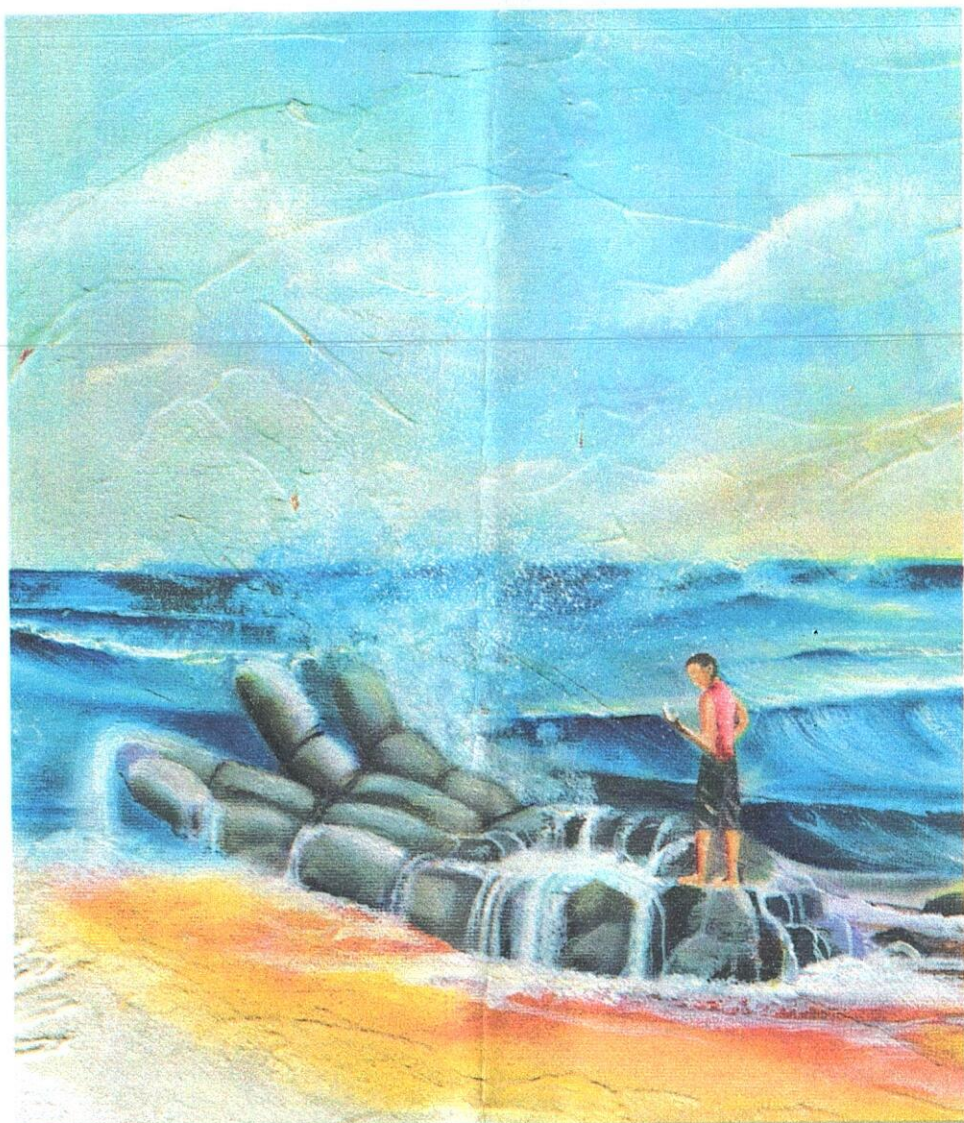


WHO ARE YOU?



Cover artwork by Nickolas H., Crossroads student

LESSON 1

The Big Questions



CROSSROADS

LESSON 1: The **BIG** Questions

Lesson Focus:

God wants us to know Him.

Humans, by nature, have a desire to find purpose for their lives. They are looking for direction. They are looking for meaning. They want to know why they are here. They want to know who they are supposed to be.

We can't find answers to these questions by buying more, doing more or learning more. Knowledge, possessions and experiences do not make us feel whole. The richest people in the world keep trying to earn more money because it does not satisfy them. The smartest people in the world admit there is so much that they do not know or understand.

When we search for meaning, we are often limited by our past experiences. We think about who we want to be based on ideas about ourselves that may not be true. This may cause us to miss out on the real meaning of life. This course has been created to help you think about these things in a different way.

1. What are some of the ways you've seen people look for meaning and purpose in the past?

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relationships | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Body Image | <input type="checkbox"/> Success |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Status | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approval | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Money |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drugs/Alcohol | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fame | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sex |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | |

2. How do people look for meaning and purpose inside prison or jail? *Acceptance, Drugs, strength*

We're All Looking for the Same Thing

We all want to know the answers to the three big questions in life: **Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?**

In his book *An Anchor for the Soul*, Ray Pritchard said it this way:

It is the same in every country and every culture. On the surface we are very different in our appearance, background, language and customs. But dig a little deeper and you discover that basically, we are all the same. . . . Everywhere we are the same—with the same longings, regrets, dreams and hopes; with the same need to love and be loved; with the same desire to be remembered after we die.¹

Everyone you'll ever meet has the same desire to know the answers to these big questions.

3. What are some things you think everyone might have in common?

They don't like to fail
And they don't want to be alone



I don't know who I am or where I'm going and often find it hard to stay happy, focused, and positive.

1. Ray Pritchard, *An Anchor for the Soul*, 19

The Three Big Questions

Our answers to the three big questions reveal what we think about ourselves. We often respond to the question "Who are you?" by sharing facts about ourselves: what our job is, whether we are married or divorced or single, our favorite hobbies, etc. We might answer the question "Why are you here?" by telling people about our past or about events that led to our current situation. We may respond to the question "Where are you going?" by mentioning a jail or prison sentence, a place we will go after we are released or nowhere at all.

4. How would you answer the three big questions? Take a few minutes to think about the questions below before you answer them.

a. Who am I?

Someone who is lost and looking for my way

b. Why am I here?

I don't know

c. Where am I going?

I don't know

Our answers to these questions can also have a deeper meaning. They can reflect who we want to be. They can reveal who we really are when no one is looking. They can define our purpose—why we are alive or here on the earth.

5. Which of the big questions seems most important for you to answer right now? Why?

Who Am I? because I'm really lost and don't understand who I am

When you ask people these questions, you find out two things. We all think that asking these questions is important. We also think there is something more to life.

A King's Answer

King Solomon* was one of the richest and most powerful kings of Israel.* He is believed to be the writer of Ecclesiastes,* one of the wisdom books in the Bible. In Ecclesiastes, he wrote about where he looked for answers to the big questions. He tried relationships. He tried parties. He tried wealth and power. He tried everything there was to try. None of those things answered the questions for him. He still felt empty. It was all meaningless. Solomon reported what he found in three short words: "I hated life" (Ecclesiastes 2:17).

6. What do you think Solomon meant when he said he "hated life"?

He was lost, alone, scared, and worried

* An asterisk after a word or phrase indicates that it is defined in the Glossary of Terms on page 5.

Solomon was tired of trying to find things that would give his life meaning. What can you do when you've truly tried it all, but you have not found any answers? This is the way Solomon felt.

7. Have you ever felt that way? What brought you to that point?

Yes. Because everything failed

Solomon felt empty, even though he had tried almost everything in his search for meaning. He decided that there had to be something more to life: knowing God and following Him (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

8. How would you describe yourself when it comes to knowing God? Are you skeptical? Are you a believer? Are you still trying to find the truth?

☒ I'm searching for answers

☒ I have a lot of doubts

☐ I believe in God

☒ I'm skeptical about God

☐ I used to believe in God

☐ I'm not sure about religion

☒ I feel lost and confused

☐ Other:

Knowing God

Like Solomon, most of us long for something more from life. We want to be loved. We want our life to have meaning and purpose. And, like Solomon, we have the same sense that there must be a God of some kind who made us.