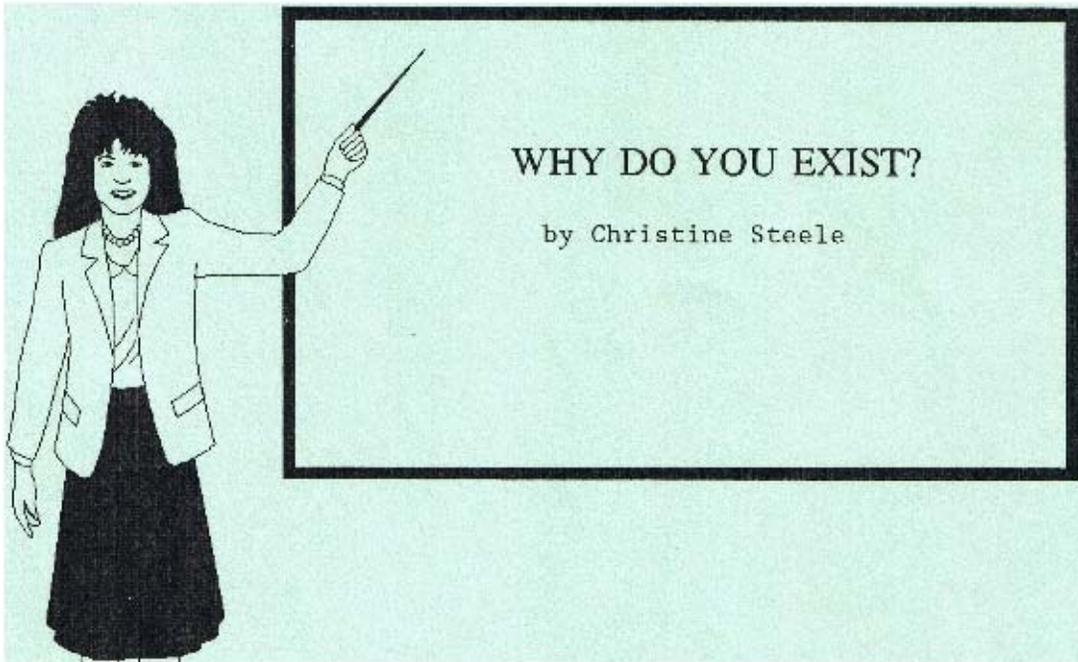


#59136



WHY DO YOU EXIST?

Suggested Agenda

SESSION I

Registration

Ice Breaker

Opening Devotion

Suggestions: “Litany of Praise” (LWML Catalog Code #5408)* “My Father’s World” (LWML Catalog Code #5413)*

BIBLE STUDY: “WHY DO YOU EXIST?” written by Christine Steele (Page 1) Leader’s Guide: Page 5

Song: “Lord, Be Glorified” (The Other Song Book)

Break

Sing-along

Closing Devotion

SESSION II

Opening Devotion:

Suggestion: “Here Am~ I, Send Me!” (LWML Catalog Code #5310)

ACTIVITY: “YOUR PERSONAL LIFE MISSION” (Page 9)
Adapted by Christine Steele from the book,
“Total Life Management” by Bob Shank

Hymn: “Take My Life and Let It Be” (TLH #400 - - public domain) Closing Devotional

Skit from: “Personal Development” (LWML Catalog Code #7140) Available from the 1995-1997 LWML Catalog

Song: “In His Time” (The Other Song Book)

Our life as a Christian is like building a house. There is always a reason or purpose (or should be) why a house is built. An architect draws up blueprints or a master plan, and the workers are assigned individual tasks to complete the building project.

We also have a **PURPOSE** or reason for existing on this earth and doing the things we do. God has a **MISSION** or master plan for how He will fulfill His purpose in our lives, and He expects us to set **GOALS** or take steps in accordance with His plan.

1. Jesus is our model for living a life of purpose. See 1 Peter 2:21. He lived a perfect life. Are we able to duplicate His example? Why or why not? See Philippians 3:12-14.
2. What was Jesus' purpose for living a human life, His reason for existing on earth? See John 17:1-5, Luke 19:10, John 3:17, 1 Timothy 1:15.
3. What is your life purpose? See 1 Peter 4:11 and Acts 20:24.
4. Is this purpose the same for all Christians? See Philippians 2:2.

5. What happens when goals are called a reason for living and they are all achieved? For an example see Ecclesiastes 2:9-11.

Give other examples of when someone's life becomes meaningless when all their goals are achieved.

6. What was God's master plan for Jesus' life, the focus of His ministry? See Matthew 5:17, Matthew 20:28, Luke 4:43, John 13:15.

7. Does God have the same life plan or mission for every Christian? See 1 Peter 4:10.

8. When was Jesus' life mission determined? See Matthew 1:20-21.

9. When was your life mission determined? See Ephesians 1:11.

10. Will God ever fully reveal His plan or mission for our life? See 1 Corinthians 13:9-10.

11. Who restated Jesus' life mission? See John 1:29.

12. Have you received any clues as to what God's plan for your life might be? If so, how? See Romans 12:2.

13. Who did Jesus share His life mission statement with? See Matthew 16:21.

14. Who should you share your life mission with? See Philippians 2:2 and Hebrews 10:25.

15. Did Jesus necessarily enjoy the life mission God gave Him? See Matthew 26:39.

16. Is God able to use you for His purpose even when you don't enjoy or feel good about the plans He has for you? See 2 Corinthians 12:10.

17. Did Jesus depend on what others thought of Him to define His life mission? See Matthew 16:22-23.

18. Was Jesus able to accomplish His mission? See John 19:30 and Romans 3:21-26.

19. Are all God-given life missions accomplished? See John 15:1-6.

20. What was God's special plan for the lives of:
 - a. Joseph, the son of Jacob (Genesis 45:5-7)

 - b. Moses (Exodus 3:7-10)

 - c. John, the Baptist (Luke 1:16-17)

 - d. Paul (Romans 15:15-16)

21. Do you have a life vision that gives you direction for setting and meeting goals?

BIBLE STUDY LEADER'S GUIDE

Note: The opening paragraph compares building a house with building a Christian life. Comments/responses to the Bible study questions are underlined.

1. Jesus is our model for living a life of purpose. See 1 Peter 2:21. Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. He lived a perfect life. Are we able to duplicate His example? Why or why not? See Philippians 3:12-14. Not already made perfect, but I press on toward the goal to take hold of the prize Christ has won for me. We cannot duplicate Christ's example because we are sinful.

2. What was Jesus' purpose for living a human life, His reason for existing on earth? See John 17:1-5 Jesus prayer - to glorify you, give eternal life, completing the work you gave me to do, Luke 19:10 to seek and save what was lost, John 3:17 not to condemn the world, but to save it, 1 Timothy 1:15 came to save sinners.

To save sinners, to be used by God for His purpose, to glorify God.

3. What is your life purpose? See 1 Peter 4:11 in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ and Acts 20:24 finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me - - the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

To glorify God! To be used by God for His purposes.

4. Is this purpose the same for all Christians? See Philippians 2:2.

Yes, be like minded, having the same love, being one in spirit ~ purpose.

5. What happens when goals are called a reason for living and they are all achieved? For an example see Ecclesiastes 2:9-11. All King Solomon had obtained was meaningless without God.

Give other examples of when someone's life becomes meaningless when all their goals are achieved.

Mother whose whole life revolved around her children, now grown. Retiree whose whole life was centered on work.

6. What was God's master plan for Jesus' life, the focus of His ministry? See Matthew 5:17, Matthew 20:28, Luke 4:43, John 13:15. To fulfill ~ prophesy, serve by giving up His life, preach, be an example.

7. Does God have the same life plan or mission for every Christian? See 1 Peter 6:10. No, each is unique, given by God.

8. When was Jesus' life mission determined? See Matthew 1:20-21. Before His birth.

9. When was your life mission determined? See Ephesians 1:11. Formulated by God before you were born.

10. Will God ever fully reveal His plan or mission for our life? See 1 Corinthians 13:9-10. Not until we are in heaven.
11. Who restated Jesus' life mission? See John 1:29. John declares Jesus to be the "Lamb of God".
12. Have you received any clues as to what God's plan for your life might be? If so, how? See Romans 12:2. The Spirit working through the word and sacraments confirms if you are within the will of God.
13. Who did Jesus share His life mission statement with? See Matthew 16:21.
To His disciples.
14. Who should you share your life mission with? See Philippians 2:2 and Hebrews 10:25. With other Christians who share our same life purpose.
15. Did Jesus necessarily enjoy the life mission God gave Him? See Matthew 26:39. No. He would have preferred another way.
16. Is God able to use you for His purpose even when you don't enjoy or feel good about the plans He has for you? See 2 Corinthians 12:10. Yes, when I am weak, then I am strong.
17. Did Jesus depend on what others thought of Him to define His life mission? See Matthew 16:22-23. No, Peter rebuked Him and His plan: Jesus found Himself in His mission.
18. Was Jesus able to accomplish His mission? See John 19:30 and Romans 3:21-26. Yes, completed when He died, fulfilled the law perfectly so that we may be made perfect.
19. Are all God-given life missions accomplished? See John 15:1-6.
No, not when we take matters into our own hands by rejecting His plan. Through Christ, our efforts are perfected and God's will is done: we can't accomplish it without Christ.
20. What was God's special plan for the lives of:
 - a. Joseph, the son of Jacob (Genesis 45:5-7) - - To save the lives the Israelites from starvation.
 - b. Moses (Exodus 3:7-10) -- To bring the Israelites out of Egypt and back to the promised land.
 - c. John, the Baptist (Luke 1:16-17) -- To make ready a people prepared for the Lord.
 - d. Paul (Romans 15:15-16) -- To be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.
21. Do you have a life vision that gives you direction for setting and meeting goals?

God has a special mission or plan for our lives. His plan will not be fully revealed to us until we meet Him face to face in heaven; but for now we are able, through Christ, to seek His will and develop a vision that will direct our actions.

Bob Shank in his book, Total Life Management (1990, published by Multnomah Press, Portland, Oregon) suggests an eight step process to help you develop a personal mission statement for your life.

1. YOUR UNIQUE GIFTS AND ABILITIES

You did not choose your unique natural talents and spiritual gifts. They have been assigned to you by God. Every Christian has been given at least one spiritual gift to further God's kingdom; however, God may add or remove them as He works His plan in your life.

List the three natural talents you have that you feel are most likely to play a part in your future:

- a.
- b.
- c.

List the spiritual gifts you have that you are aware of.
(See Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, 1 Peter 4:10-11)

2. YOUR UNIQUE PERSONAL PASSION

A personal passion is something that so moves your heart and demands your energy that you'd do anything to make it happen (see Ecclesiastes 9:10).

Describe the cause or issue that raises your temperature and wins your loyalty.

3. YOUR UNIQUE PERSONALITY

God made you the way you are for a reason, and He wants to put you to work in a way that takes maximum advantage of your strengths, not in a way that painfully exhibits your weaknesses! As a result of your temperament, you may:

- enjoy being with people or prefer being alone.
- like living with risk or need to feel secure.
- enjoy taking leadership or want to follow.
- tend to focus on projects or tend to focus on people.
- create a movement or look instead for your niche.

None of these differences is right or wrong; they are just God-given differences to be used to further His kingdom. (See 1 Corinthians 12:12-26.)

Describe your unique personality.

4. YOUR UNIQUE RESPONSIBILITIES

You carry around a unique set of connections that God takes very seriously. (See 1 Peter 4:10.)

- If married, you pack a lifetime linkage to another person. Everything you do has to be considered in light of that person and his or her needs.
- If a parent, you are charged with the task of raising your children to become independent, functioning adults.
- If a child of surviving parents, you carry an obligation to assure the life support of your folks as they did for you.
- If a Christian, you are your brother's keeper to the extent of your capacity to supply his needs from your abundance.

List those whom God considers dependent on you.

5. YOUR UNIQUE EXPERIENCES AND EDUCATION

Nobody will ever have the exact mix of lessons and life that you have. As you review your background, what are your assets that make you a better person today?

Describe what you have learned that sets you apart from others.

Describe where you've been and what you've done that was worth the investment.

6. YOUR UNIQUE NETWORK

Who you know can radically affect the course of our life.

List the ten people who are most important to the quality of your life, both now and in the future.

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

7. YOUR UNIQUE RESOURCES

The assets you hold and manage were placed in your hands intentionally by God, and He plans for you to use them to advance His agenda, not yours. (See 2 Corinthians 9:6.)

What do you have that most of the world doesn't? List the things you possess that are most likely to be noted by other people.

8. YOUR UNIQUE ALLEGIANCE

Your life is either pointed toward the King of heaven and His agenda, or it is pointed somewhere else. Any direction other than toward God is a move away from Him. (See Matthew 6:24 and Romans 8:31.)

The last big question: Where is your unique allegiance? Only two choices are possible - - which team are you on?

WRITING YOUR PERSONAL MISSION STATEMENT

All of the eight areas above represent distinguishing characteristics that make you different from everyone else. If you have thought these through and filled in the blanks, you have described a person who is set apart from every other individual on earth.

Your **LIFE PURPOSE** as a Christian is to glorify God by being used by Him for His purpose. (See 1 Peter 4:10-11 and Colossians 1:10-12.)

Your **LIFE MISSION** is more specific and tries to answer the question, "What work has God given me to do on earth and thus bring Him glory?"

List all of the words, phrases and thoughts that seem to best describe the focus of your life:

Continue simplifying your thoughts until they form one, non-technical sentence which anyone can understand.

"My mission is to

_____ for the glory of God."

What is the benefit of writing a Personal Mission Statement?

Post your Personal Mission Statement where you will see it often to keep you focused on Christ and what you consider important in your life and to help you make decisions.