

Study Notes: Session 1

“Life is a Journey with Potential for Growth & Development”

Concepts

- Life is a journey meant for growth.
- We journey in stages.
- The psychological journey.
- The pilgrimage journey.
- Jacob’s journey.
- The goals of journey.
- Requires growth.
- Requires faith.
- Requires a vision, a purpose, a goal.

Your Scriptures to Read

- ⇒ Journey: Genesis 29:1; Hebrews 8-10
- ⇒ Pilgrimage/Sojourn: Psalm 119:54; 120:5
- ⇒ Jacob’s journey: Genesis Chapters 25 through 49
- ⇒ Growth: Ephesians 4:15; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18
- ⇒ Ignorance: Hosea 4:6; Isaiah 5:13; Ephesians 4:18
- ⇒ Understanding: Daniel 10:33; Luke 24:45; 2 Timothy 2:7
- ⇒ Faith: Habakkuk 2:4b; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11-12; Ephesians 3:12; Hebrews 11:1
- ⇒ Goals: 1 Corinthians 9:24-26; Philippians 3:14; Hebrews 12:1

Other Suggested Reading

In this e-group, I will often refer to psychiatrist M. Scott Peck’s book, *The Road Less Traveled: A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values and Spiritual Growth*, Simon &

Schuster, Inc., 1978, especially “Section I: Discipline” and “Section IV: Grace.” You do not have to get the book, but if you are interested, I think it must be available in German.

⇒ M. Scott Peck, MD, “*The Road Less Traveled*,” Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1978.

Some quotes I collected in my journey

- ◆ The unexamined life is not worth living. – Socrates
- ◆ All growth comes by “seeing” truth, not by trying to change, conform, or reform: see who you already are in God and who He is in us. – Dr. Bruce Morgan
- ◆ Failure to know one’s meaning of life or causes of personal destiny is the deepest cause of negativity, unfulfillment, and unhappiness. – David Seabury, *The Art of Selfishness*
- ◆ To go back is nothing but death; to go forward is fear of death, and life everlasting beyond it. I will yet go forward. – John Bunyan, *Pilgrim’s Progress*
- ◆ We always find time for what we are interested in. – Unknown

Reflection Points

Reflection: Jacob’s journey

- What caused Jacob to run for his life?
- What kind of experiences did Jacob go through in his journey?
- What role did dreams, visions, and angels play in Jacob’s journey?
- How did Jacob encounter a Divine Power greater than himself?
- What deal did Jacob make with God?
- What was the purpose of Jacob’s sufferings, trials, and tribulations?
- At the end of his life, was Jacob satisfied with his journey?
- What was the goal of Jacob’s journey?
- If you published the story of Jacob’s journey in a book, what title would you give the book?
- What did Jacob learn about God in his journey?

Reflection:

- Why do you think God wants you to grow and develop?
- What kind of a God do you want?
- What does God have in mind for you?
- What does it mean to win the race?
- What is the prize?

Your Responses

1) Title of your book

- When reading the story of your life in a book, what is its title?
- Are you the author of your story or the victim in it?
- Are you willing to add a new chapter in your life’s book? What title would you like to give it?

2) Major accomplishments

- Identify five major accomplishments in your life.
- What was your motivation behind each one?
- What recognition, rewards, or prizes did you receive because of your accomplishments?

3) What was the most significant crisis in your life?

- Who do you blame for this crisis?
- How did you respond to it?
- What resources did you rely on?
- Are you satisfied with the way you navigated this crisis?
- How would you have changed the way you navigated this crisis if you could?
- What have you learned from your crisis?
- Do you need to make peace with this crisis?

4) How have you experienced God in your journey?

- What role has faith in God played in your journey?
- List spiritual experience, those times when it seems that God had broken through and touched your life.
- Do you have more awareness of God in your life than you did two years ago?
- Have you ever made a deal with God?
- What three things have you learned about God in your journey?
- Do you have a prophetic word, dream, or vision that you want to be fulfilled?

5) 14 more questions about your journey in life

1. What kind of map have you used to guide you in your journey in life?
2. Whose map are you navigating life by?
3. What has given your life direction and satisfaction?
4. Identify the major turning points in your life.
5. What was your most important choice? Greatest risk?

6. What is the biggest disappointment you have experienced?
7. What was your biggest mistake you made in life?
8. What new capacities or skills have you developed?
9. In what areas have you grown? Extended your borders?
10. What boundaries have your broken or crossed over?
11. What is the purpose or goal of your life at this time?
12. What goals do you hope to fulfill?
13. If you were to take your last breath tonight, how satisfied will you be with your life?
14. Do you need to make a decision to embark upon a journey of growth?

Suggested Creative Exercises

1) Draw a road (life map) to represent your journey in life

Remember, a picture is worth a thousand words. I suggest you tape sheets of paper together so you can actually create a long road to represent your life (make it as long as you want to).

Give yourself time to create a picture to represent your journey in life so far. Using different colors, draw symbolic images or pictures on the road to represent key events & experiences that have impacted your life.

Choose a symbol to portray difficult spots: bumps, potholes, rain, clouds, lightning, etc. Also choose a symbol for significant spiritual events.

Here are some ideas to help you reflect on your journey in life.

- a) Consider key events & experiences on your journey such as:

Encounters	Turning points
Crossings	Impassable barriers
Reaching destinations	Difficult spots
Spiritual events	Breakdown
Changed direction	Serene place of beauty

- b) What road markers have you encountered on your road?

Dead end	Dangerous curve ahead
Construction underway	Strong crosswinds
Scenic view	Slow
One way	Bridge out
Yield	Do not pass
Warnings	Bridge out

- c) Name the many branches of your road, detours you took.

- d) Where did you find filling stations? Rest areas?
- e) Did you discover any unusual treasures on your road?
- f) What name does your road want to be called?

2) Choose 3 most significant events of each day

At the end of each day, write down the three most significant events of that day. This will help you see more clearly what you are living for.

3) Choose five positive & five negative words you are attracted to

The following exercise may give you clues to your next growth point or to your need.

- Choose five positive words you currently have an attraction to – words you like to say. Then select your favorite one.
 - Choose 5 negative words you do not like – words you hate, that repel you, give you pain. Which one is the most negative word for you?
- a) “My favorite positive word is . . . “
 - b) “My most negative word I do not like is . . . “
 - c) Ask yourself: “Why did I choose that word and what does it mean to me?”