



COMMUNICATOR GUIDE

The Big Questions / Week 4

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SERIES BOTTOM LINE

Our biggest questions deserve better answers.

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To point students toward finding their purpose in God's bigger plan and to encourage them to take a step to join in on what God is doing in the world right now.

WEEK 4 BOTTOM LINE

You matter more than you think.

SCRIPTURE

- *1 Corinthians 3:5-9 NLT*

TEACHING SLIDES

All Scripture, bottom lines, and teaching points that are bolded in this script are also provided as slides in your weekly "Teaching" folder.

OPTIONAL VIDEOS

*[OPTIONAL MEDIA](#) for this week available for purchase through the [XP3 HS Media Package](#):

- The Big Questions Countdown (10 minutes)
- The Big Questions Teaching Video – week 4

TEACHING OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- *Note: Tell a personal story about what you wanted to be when you grew up.*

TENSION

- How many of you have been asked this question: “What do you want to be when you grow up?”
- But the problem is, we don’t feel like we’re “grown up enough” to have this all figured out. The question feels so much more complicated now.
 - There are so many things we’re interested in.
 - Nothing seems to really interest us enough to make our whole lives about it.
 - We’re not thinking about the future.
 - We feel pressure to figure it out because everyone else seems to have a plan.
 - We don’t have the energy to think about the future because there are too many problems right now.
- In the church world, we ask a question similar question to, “What do you want to do when you grow up?” Except ours goes like this: “What’s God’s plan for your life?”—or to get real churchy—“what is your calling?”
- The question we’re all asking in some way or another is this: What difference can I make?

TRUTH

- We’re going to look at a passage of Scripture written by a guy named Paul. It’s actually a part of a letter he wrote to some Jesus-followers in a city called Corinth.
 - *After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God’s servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow. The one who plants and the one who waters work together for the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work. For both are God’s workers. And you are God’s field. You are God’s building (1 Corinthians 3:5-9 NLT).*
- Who is this Apollos guy? Well, Apollos was another church leader. Like Paul, he was very well known.
- Paul is saying that people are looking at it all wrong. Instead of deciding who’s more important and who has done better work, Paul levels the playing field: “We are God’s servants!”
- Then he starts talking about plants. Now if you’re like me, you understand that keeping plants alive is hard work.
- Paul is saying that when it comes to plants, everything plays a part, so it would be pointless to sit around and argue about which role matters more. “Which role is more important?” is the wrong question. A better question is, “Did each role accomplish what only it could accomplish?”
- What we should be asking, “Am I doing what only I can do?”
- Each person is uniquely gifted to do something. The point isn’t to create the biggest, highest-paying future or purpose. The point is to do the thing that’s just for you.
- The point is, God is behind it all. Every part, no matter how big or how small, matters. Participating matters. Doing your part matters.
- Your part is to be who God created you to be, right here and right now.
- We don’t have one purpose to find. We have a bigger purpose to join. And that’s God’s purpose. Our responsibility is to bring what we have and to join in with what is already happening.
- This is an everyday choice to do the next right thing. It’s a decision to participate in what God is doing right where you are.

APPLICATION

- Your purpose—God’s plan for your life—is to participate by doing what we’re certain that God wants us to do.
- Your purpose is to love. Love God, love people, and love life.
- You can have purpose every day by joining God in what He’s doing. Because God is always in the business of making the world better—of making the world right—and that’s a story we can join right here and right now.
- You matter more than you think.
- You can be part of what God is doing to make the world better. God’s “better” means that we play a part in making the world all around us better with love and actions.
- And to participate, we have to first pay attention to what He’s doing and join in. Look around.

LANDING

- Imagine if we all began to realize that we matter more than we think—our role in the big picture matters.
- As we wrap up this series, I hope you know that whatever big questions you have, you don’t have to deal with them alone. That’s why we have small group!



TEACHING SCRIPT

The Big Questions / Week 4

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

WORSHIP

STORY

GROUPS

HOME

BOTTOM LINE

You matter more than you think.

INTRODUCTION

1 MINUTE

TELL A PERSONAL STORY.

Communicator, open with a personal story of your childhood. Talk about what you wanted to be when you grew up. Keep it short and upbeat or humorous and less than 1 minute.

Example:

When I was a kid, I loved basketball. I loved playing, and I loved watching NBA games. Well, as long as Michael Jordan was playing. Everyone I knew who liked basketball LOVED Michael Jordan.

When there were no other kids outside on the basketball court—and I was hooping by myself—I would always pretend like I was MJ playing in the NBA finals. And, of course, there would always be somewhere between 3 and 5 seconds left on the clock in the last game: “5,4,3,2,1.” And I would take the final shot. If I made it, the imaginary crowd would go wild. If I missed it? Well, then I’d just do it over again!

If you would’ve asked me what I wanted to do when I grew up, I definitely would’ve said play professional basketball. Over time, my hoop dreams deflated as I realized that I didn’t have that type of talent. But hey, at least I dreamed big!

TENSION

3 MINUTES

How many of you have been asked this question: “What do you want to be when you grow up?” You probably had all types of answers when you were a little kid. But now that you’re in high school and thinking about what happens next—whether it be college, taking a gap year, going into the workforce, or joining the military—chances are that this question is on your mind now more than ever. You’re probably feeling some kind of pressure around knowing how to answer it.

But here's the thing, we don't feel like we're "grown up enough" to have this all figured out—to have an answer to that question. That question feels so much more complicated now. Why? Well, it could be a number of reasons . . .

- **There are so many things we're interested in.** With so many potential directions we could go, how are we supposed to decide which one we should take?
- **Nothing seems to really interest us enough to make our whole lives about it.** How are we supposed to know at 15 or 16 what we want to do forever? The idea of having to pick something at this stage is stressful.
- **We're not thinking about the future.** Maybe you're thinking, "The future? I'm still trying to figure out how to keep my room clean for more than one day at a time! I can't be bothered with figuring out my life plans!"
- **We feel pressure to figure it out because everyone else seems to have a plan.** You sit next to someone in Geometry who has plans for being a neurosurgeon and the timing laid out on how to make it happen, but you can barely stay awake to pay attention to the lecture.
- **We don't have the energy to think about the future because there are too many problems right now.** Maybe your family is struggling to make ends meet, so making future plans feels like a luxury that you don't have right now.

In the church world, we ask a question similar to, "What do you want to do when you grow up?" Except ours often goes like this: "What's God's plan for your life?" People in the church often desire to figure out not only what they want to do, but also want God wants them to do. Talk about pressure. This is a HUGE question. And when you bring the desire to interpret what God wants you to do into it, it sometimes feels like even more pressure.

But no matter how you talk about this idea of the future, the effect is the same. It can feel really overwhelming, which can make you want to give up on the idea completely. But when you get behind why we feel overwhelmed by the pressure, it really comes down to this—we all just want to matter. That's why it feels like a lot of pressure. That's why we want to get it right. Because we want what we do with our lives to mean something. We want a sense of purpose.

In fact, you could put it this way. The question we're all asking in some way or another is this:

What difference can I make?

TRUTH

5 MINUTES

We're going to look at a passage of Scripture written by Paul, who we've talked about already in this series. Let's read a part of a letter he wrote to some Jesus followers in a city called Corinth. He said this:

After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God's servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. It's not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow. The one who plants and the one who waters work together for the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work. For both are God's workers. And you are God's field. You are God's building (1 Corinthians 3:5-9 NLT).

Okay, so first things first. Who is this Apollos guy? Apollos was another church leader, and like Paul, he was very well known. In fact, they were both so popular that people would talk about whether they followed Paul or Apollos like it was some type of contest. Paul and Apollos would be today's TikTok influencers.

But Paul is saying that people are looking at it all wrong. Instead of deciding who's more important and who has done better work, Paul levels the playing field. He says, "We are God's servants!" Paul is telling us *THAT* is what matters—not *WHAT* we are doing, but *HOW* we are doing it and for *WHAT* purpose.

And then Paul starts talking about plants. Now, if you're like me, you understand that keeping plants alive is hard work. The watering, the right amount of sunlight, and all the other things I don't know. Trust me, it's more difficult than it sounds.

He is saying that when it comes to plants, the person who does the planting has a specific role. The rain plays a specific role. The sunshine has a specific role. Everything plays a part, so it would be pointless to sit around and argue about which role matters more. **"Which role is more important?" is the wrong question. A better question is, "Did each role accomplish what only it could accomplish?"** "Did they let God do what only God can do?"

In other words, it's possible we're spending a lot of time trying to imagine a future that . . .

- Impresses the most people
- Makes us the most money
- Has the most influential outcome
- Makes us really happy

When we should be asking, **"Am I doing what only I can do?"**

When this becomes the question we ask, we can stop worrying if our future plans are "big" enough or if they'll make us famous or earn us the most followers. We can stop stressing out about whether we've chosen the "right" career path. Our career doesn't have to be our purpose for living. How we pay the bills can be different from the hobby or interest we have that we gift to the world. When Paul says, "Each one did the work the Lord gave them," he pointed out that everyone's work was different. **Each person is uniquely gifted to do something.** The point isn't to create the biggest, highest-paying future or purpose. The point is to do the thing that's just for you.

Here's the deal: God is behind it all. No matter what you do. No matter what part you play. Every part matters—no matter how big or how small. Participating matters. Doing your part matters.

So then, what is your part? Well, this might be the most freeing thing yet. **Your part is to be who God created you to be, right here and right now, with the people around you.**

I spent a lot of my life thinking I had to have one purpose for my life in order for me to have the kind of impact I wanted to have in the world. The biggest challenge was trying to find what that purpose was. I thought that as soon as I got that figured out, everything else would come together. I saw it as kind of like a "Choose Your Own Adventure" book. Did you read those as a kid? It was a book where you would get to the end of a chapter and there would be a choice to make like, "If Brian makes the winning shot, head to page 54. If Brian misses, go to page 62." Whatever you decided determined how the rest of the story went.

That's what finding your purpose can feel like—like one decision sets the course for everything. But that's not how it works. **We don't have one purpose to find. We have a bigger purpose to join.** And that's God's purpose. Our responsibility is to bring what we have and to join in with what is already happening.

This isn't a one-time thing that happens when you pick your elective courses, or when you decide if you want to go to college or not, or when you decide your major in college. **This is an everyday choice to do the next right thing. It's a decision to participate in what God is doing right where you are.**

Let me put it this way. Your purpose isn't

- Your job
- Your financial status
- Your relational status (whether you get married or stay single)
- Your parental role (whether you become a biological parent, step-parent, foster parent, adoptive parent, or not a parent at all)

Those things can change. Those things may or may not happen to you. You may or may not want those things. You can have purpose when you're unemployed or purpose if you're a CEO. You have purpose if you change jobs a dozen times over the course of your life or if you stay in the same place the entire time. You have purpose if you get married or not, have kids or not. **God's purpose isn't tied to the labels you wear.** The point is, are you doing what only you can do, where you can, with what you have?

APPLICATION

2 MINUTES

I hope you feel freedom when you hear that there isn't this one thing you have to discover to make or break your purpose. Your purpose—God's plan for your life—is to participate by doing the next right thing where you are.

What does participating in God's purpose look like for you right here, right now? Well, it may be things like . . .

- Being kind to the people in your class
- Showing up on time and working hard in practice
- Helping your family by getting a job or making sacrifices when things are tight financially
- Helping someone when you don't have to and no one made you
- Showing respect and honor to those above and below you

You could say it this way. **Your purpose is to love.** Love God, love people, and love life. Doing that exactly where you are in the way only you can is exactly what God wants for you. And love is possible no matter what path you choose. You can have purpose before you have a career, a plan, or a way forward. You can have purpose every day by joining God in what He's doing. Because God is always in the business of making the world better—of making the world right—and that's a story we can join right here and right now. Think of it this way . . .

You matter more than you think.

You can be part of what God is doing to make the world better. It doesn't mean we'll get everything we want in life. It doesn't mean that everything will work out the way we want. When we talk about making the world better, it doesn't mean God will make our bank accounts bigger or give us a nice car. We're talking about a bigger version of better. God's "better" means that we play a part in making the world all around us better with love and actions. **And to participate, we have to first pay attention to what God's doing and join in. Look around.** It's already happening! All you have to do is take part.

LANDING

1 MINUTE

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Imagine if we all began to realize that we matter more than we think—that our role in the big picture matters. What if we had confidence in doing our part, which is to be who God created us to be, right here and right now? What if we found purpose in showing as much of God's love to the world as we possibly can? Wouldn't that be a world that you'd love to live in?

As we wrap up this series, I hope you know that whatever big questions you have, you don't have to deal with them alone. That's why we have small groups and small group leaders. Because we don't want you to think that you have to ask questions and try to find answers alone. We can do this together.



TRANSITION INTO SMALL GROUPS
