

Pilgrim's Progress Today

Worldview Discussion Guide

In our postmodern times many of us look to *stories* as vehicles for truth. Young people, especially, absorb truth from stories, whether they are looking for it or not. Like Bunyan's original, *Pilgrim's Progress Today* was written as a story of danger and adventure that delivers the truth of a Christian worldview.

Pilgrim's Progress Today clearly illustrates the differences between a Christian worldview and a postmodern worldview. This guide will help you engage a conversation to explore the basic beliefs of each worldview and consider what difference it makes in the way we live. You'll find a worldview overview on page five. Scripture references, page numbers from the book and *Author's notes* make it easy for teachers and group leaders to flow from discussion of Christian's adventure into how God's Word gives true answers to our deepest questions about life:

How do we know what is true? Is truth discovered, or do I create my own?

- throughout, especially pp. 113-117, 161-164, 191-195, chaps 2, 12

Who makes the rules? How do we live in community when everyone has their own perspective?

- throughout, especially chaps 15, 16

Where have we come from?/Who are we? What is the value of a life—especially the young and weak who require a lot of care?

- chaps 2, 10-12

What are we supposed to be doing? How do we make wise choices about leisure and work—the entertainment culture, and the stewardship of our gifts?

- chaps 4-6, 13-14, 18-19

Where are we going? How can we respond to today's cynicism and longing for a life and a future that matters?

- chaps 17-20

The truth of a Christian worldview becomes clearer as Christian's journey takes him through the kinds of struggles we face in today's world. The heat of conflict and difficult conversations defines the contours of his beliefs. He learns to speak truth with gentleness and respect.

But the real message of *Pilgrim's Progress Today* is ***how a Christian worldview makes a difference in the life of our hearts***. Both *Pilgrim's Progress Today* and Bunyan's original begin with the unforgettable image of a man running, fingers in his ears, crying "life, Life!" We don't just live from our heads. Many of the questions and Scripture verses in the guide probe our appetites, our imaginations, our affections, our wills, and challenge us to live a Christian worldview deeply, from the heart.

May God use this study to encourage you to seek Him.
And may it cast a vision of
His heart, His truth,
His promise of the future that awaits, and
"Life!" lived to the full for Christ and His Kingdom

Additional Resources

Part of my vision for writing *Pilgrim's Progress Today* was to write a story that would bring to life the worldview discussion in my first book, *Worldproofing Your Kids*. Worldproofing addresses the same worldview questions and answers that are woven into *Pilgrim's Progress Today* and supplies additional helpful commentary.

How do we know what is true? chaps 1-2

Who makes the rules? chap 3

Where have we come from?/Who are we? chaps 5-8

What are we supposed to be doing? (a discussion of work, the entertainment culture, and serving with our gifts) chaps 9-11

Where are we going? (the hope of heaven) chap 12.

Worldproofing Your Kids is available from Crossway Books or from my website:
www.laelarrington.com.

Additional recommended resources:

The Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan

How Should We Then Live? Francis Schaefer

Desiring God, John Piper

How Now Shall We Live? Chuck Colson

The Sacred Romance, John Eldredge

The Long Journey Home, Os Guinness

The Right Questions, Phillip Johnson

Deliver Us From Evil, Ravi Zacharias

The chart on page four will be helpful in understanding many chapters in the book and questions in this study guide. You may want to copy it for your class or group. If you would like to print the whole study to distribute to a class or group, you can easily delete this foreword and the "Author's notes," and add spaces for written responses.

Chapter 1

Writing *Pilgrim's Progress* in Bedford jail in 1678, John Bunyan could never imagine that, aside from the Bible, his book would become the most published book in the English language. With vivid images and forceful language he wrote a story of Life as an epic adventure—Christian's journey from the pain and loss of City of Destruction to the blazing glory of Celestial City. *Pilgrim's Progress Today* reimagines that quest through the landscape of today's postmodern times.

1. Mark Twain has said, "A classic is something everyone thinks they should read, but no one has." What, if anything, do you know about Bunyan's original *Pilgrim's Progress*? Can you think of other classic stories of a great journey?

Author's note: *The Odyssey, The Exodus, Huck Finn, Oz, Alice in Wonderland, Lord of the Rings*

- Why do you think that a "journey" is such a popular metaphor for life?
2. "City of Destruction." Bunyan's name for our world is strongly negative. Would you name our world "City of Destruction"? If you would name it something different, what would that be?
 3. How does Chris's quest for "Life!" begin?
 - He has a good job, plenty of toys, perks and privileges. What was missing?
 - What are your heart's desires? What do you most want out of life?

***Author's note:** God was on my short list growing up. But I didn't feel for him what I felt for the other prizes and dreams on my list. I knew him as Savior, but I wish I had caught a vision for what a *treasure* he is and been challenged me to see my dutiful obedience and lack of passion towards him as hardness in my heart—something to cry out to God to change.
 4. The idea of life as a quest is not original with John Bunyan. Acts 17:24-27 tells us God himself created the world and everything in it so we might launch our own quest. What does He invite us to seek?
 - Is that the same thing as a quest for Life, or is it different? How so?
 5. On p. 15 Evangelist mentions "the evil enchantment of worldliness." In his essay, "The Weight of Glory," C. S. Lewis used this phrase to describe the idea that "the good of man can be found on this earth...that earth can be made into heaven." What are some different ways we get the message that "everything we really want can be found or created here in this world"?
 - Do you think the events of 9/11 broke the "evil enchantment of worldliness"?

6. Why do you think the characters in this story float?

***Author's note:** This unfolds a little more in chapter two, but the Bible speaks of a "weight of glory." (2 Cor 4:17) When we seek God and live close to Him, loving and obeying Him, our lives show the weight and value of His glory—His truth and holiness, mercy and grace. We are like the tree in Psalm 1:3, tapped into God's very weighty character. Solid, substantial.

In contrast, when our quest for Life is "all about me"—my endless amusement, my needs, my worries—the Bible describes that kind of life as vanity—empty, shallow. Like the chaff in Psalm 1:4. Always grabbing at the gifts instead of thanking the Giver. Lacking the weight and substance of God's character. The further we get from God, the emptier and shallower our lives become. In our times people seem to be running faster than ever in hot pursuit of endless amusement, vivid experience and self-fulfillment. So, in the story, when people get caught up in that pursuit or come face to face with the resulting lack of meaning and direction, they wind up...^{floating}:

7. In Bunyan's original story, Pilgrim wanders off the path to find God on the Mountain of Morality (Good Works, keeping the Ten Commandments). On pp. 17-18 Pilgrim wanders in a different direction. Where does Mr. Worldly Wiseman direct him to find God?

- Why do you think the story for today's times was changed from Bunyan's original?

Chapter 2

1. Christian lands knee-deep in the toxic Dump of Despond. What does this place represent? (See Evangelist's quote, bottom of p. 23)
 - Can you think of any other items that belong in the dump? Some physical objects that represent the error of our "whatever" world or the sin in our own lives?
2. What do you think *most people* mean when they say, "I'm just following my heart"? Is that a good thing? A bad thing?
 - What do the following quotes and verses say or imply about following your heart?
 - a) "The heart wants what it wants." Woody Allen (from the cover of *Time* and the billboard on p. 19)
 - b) Evangelist's comments to Chris (pp. 23-24), Jer 17:9-10
 - c) "If I find in myself desires which nothing in this world can satisfy, the only logical explanation is that I was made for another world."—C. S. Lewis; Eccl 3:11
 - d) "Love God and do what you want to do."—Augustine, Church Father; Eccl 11:9, Ezek 36:26-27

***Author's note:** Sometimes when I say, "I'm following my heart, I mean that I'm following my dreams and desires in a way that honors God, like Augustine. I'm doing what I'm passionate about. My desires, my thirst for what really satisfies, is ultimately the very thing that leads me to Life! in Christ. (Psa 16:11) But, no doubt when my desires rule apart from Christ, I make a lot of bad life choices.

***Author's Note:** Even though verses like Jer 17:10 make a distinction between the heart and mind, as Oswald Chambers writes, "The use of the Bible term 'heart' is best understood by simply saying 'me.' The heart is not merely the seat of the affections (emotions), it is the center of everything. ..."

3. The cross seems hateful and bigoted to Worldly Wiseman. Why does he think tolerance is morally superior to the way of the cross?

Author's note: It's seen as so much more modest and humble. Claiming you know truth is seen as prideful.

- Why do you think we put so much value on tolerance these days? How might globalization and the sexual revolution have influenced this development?
- In what way is love a "better way" than tolerance? (p. 24, Jn 15:11-12)

4. ***A worldview is a Story of the way the world works and our place in the world. It answers the Big Questions of Life.*** On the next page you'll find a chart contrasting Christian, modern and postmodern worldviews (stories) of life. These stories shaped the images that Chris watched on Evangelist's billboard and the face of the dam as he stood in the Dump of Despond. Any attempt to summarize this on a neat little chart cannot hope to capture the complexity and depth of answers that it takes all our lives to fully discover, but these are questions that really matter and sometimes even an inadequate overview can be helpful. After you've read the chart, look at the questions below:

- Why are these questions important to think about?
- What difference does it make if we have answers that are really true?
- Reread the ideas in the first row of boxes. Which of these is based on facts that you can prove? Which are matters of belief that must be taken on faith?

Author's note: *Every worldview statement on the chart must ultimately be taken by faith.* Modern people like to claim that Science and Progress are based on nothing but *facts* and *data*. However, their method of handling the facts is driven by their *belief* that God didn't create or design the world and that he doesn't hold it all together or manage it now. But they cannot prove this. It is ultimately an assumption made by faith.

It has been said that the true test of a worldview is

- ***Consistency—it must be reasonable, with each idea logically supporting the others***
- ***Coherency—it must agree with reality***

Belief in a Christian worldview is not a leap in the dark. The Christian looks at all these ideas about the way life works and asks, "Which of these worldviews is the most consistent and coherent? Christianity is reasonable, logical and gives the answers that best agree with the reality of the way the world works." For example, only the Christian worldview tells us that we are great, but fallen. (continued top of p. 6)

<u>The Big Questions of Life</u>	<u>Christian Worldview Kingdom Story</u>	<u>Modern Worldview Science, Progress Story</u>	<u>Postmodern Worldview small stories</u>
What is truth?	God is Truth. Truth is discovered in His Word, the Bible and in nature—the world that he made.	Truth is an ideal only discovered “out there;” in nature. “We hold these truths (about justice, virtue, etc.) to be self-evident” Reasonable people can discover & agree on it.	We can’t agree. Truth is created. I decide what truth works for me. Something may be true for you, but not for me.
How do we know what is true?	By faith. A faith based on reason and reality, but ultimately, by faith.	By reason. The Scientific method. What I can see, touch and measure.	By personal feelings, experience and intuition. Emotion over reason.
Where did we come from?	There is an Author who has written a Kingdom Story with great <i>purpose</i> . He created the angels, the universe, and He created us in His image.	There is no Author, but still a Story of Progress—by <i>chance</i> we evolved out of chaos to become the most intelligent and creative species.	Creation, evolution, reincarnation. Whatever.
Who makes the rules for life?	God does. Our laws should reflect his commands. Our choices should honor him as King.	We do. We make our laws and personal decisions based on these “self-evident” truths “out there” on which reasonable people can agree.	For the community, we listen to every perspective and let the majority vote. For myself, I just do what’s right for me and try to get along.
What happened? Why are things so broken?	We are fallen and the whole world with us, by Adam’s sin and our own daily failure to line up behind God’s leadership. We’ve lost God and his Story.	There is no fall. Only the steady ascent of man making progress. Lack of education and poverty are the biggest challenges to fulfilling our potential.	There is no God and no Story. We are not getting “better,” just more powerful. And the powerful oppress the weak. Life is a struggle for power.
How do things get fixed? What are we supposed to be doing?	Jesus’ came to seek and save us from the penalty and power of our sin by dying for us. We are called to seek God as the greatest treasure, come to Him through the cross, line up behind him, heart and soul. Be his agents of redemption in our relationships, work, and communities.	With enough money, technology and education we can continue our progress and build a better world. If we work hard enough we can create a utopia here on earth.	Whatever. Just live in your own small story and make it as interesting and exciting as you can. Grab as much power for yourself as you can.
Where are we going? What hope do we have?	The hope of Heaven. Resurrection. Reunion. To live with God, face to face, forever—worship him, serve him and reign with him.	The scientific answer is, ultimately, oblivion. Everything we’re building will be lost. In this life we have the hope of building and enjoying this Utopia we’re creating.	I invent my own hope. Whatever.

It explains why the Progress story is not marching toward Utopia and why we have such intense longings for a hope and a future the postmodern person can't account for. It only makes sense that if God created one reality, only one worldview would truly explain the way the world works and our part in it.

Additional, optional worldview questions about the *modern/progress story* not addressed in this book:

- According to Evolution, where have we come from? Where are we ultimately going?
 - How do we find meaningful life and a future that matters beyond the fight for survival?
 - Do you think the modern promise of Utopia is a false hope? Have our technology and education improved the life of the heart? Our relationships? (Think about popular songs and movies.)
 - Why is our belief in God's creation of the world so important to our confidence in the Kingdom Story? (Good resource: *Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds*, Phillip Johnson)
5. On p. 31 Evangelist explains how the "floating" is connected to losing confidence that *any* larger story of life is true. Why do you think the image of "floating" might describe a person with a postmodern worldview more than someone with a modern/progress worldview?
- Author's note:** A person with a modern/progress worldview still has confidence in truth and a story that gives focus and meaning to her life, that gives her life more of a weight and an anchor.
6. At the end of Evangelist's story, the smaller screens on the dam disappear. Why do you think that is?
- What story are you living in? Do you sometimes feel you have one foot planted in two different stories?

Chapter 3

1. In all of the movies about the afterlife, I've seen images of hell, heaven, angels, demons, Satan, God, but never God on His throne in judgment. Why do you think that scene gets left out of our stories?
2. Creation and accountability are inseparably linked. If God created us then one day we will give an account of our lives to Him. On the Day of Judgment where will we be? (Rev 20:12)
 - Peter describes something happening to the heavens. What? (2 Pet 3:12)
 - What will be happening to the people? (Rev 20:12, 15)
 - Did you notice that most of these verbs are passive? Picture yourself standing there, as Chris did, with these things happening to you and around you. How might you feel? What will this mean for you?
3. Which worldview (p. 5) best matches the following descriptions of Truth?
 - a) "You will know the truth of science and education. And the truth will set you free from ignorance, superstition and poverty.
 - b) "You will know the truth—that there is no truth. And the truth will set you free—free to create your own small stories and private realities." (written across the dam on p. 36)
 - John 8:32 is a conditional statement. What "if" condition must be met in order to know the truth? How have you experienced this verse in your life?
4. Has anyone ever sacrificed something for you? What did it mean to you? How did it make you feel?
5. As Chris makes his way from the Dump to the cross, he is in no danger of floating. Why? (p. 37) According to 2 Cor 5:21, what happened to Chris' sin at the cross? What happened to Chris?
 - What could it mean for the holy Son of God "to be made sin"?

***Author's note:** On the cross Christ became Chris's (our) sin. I wonder if he felt our anger and lust—the state of our hearts at the darkest moments of our sin and selfishness. If he became the sexual rage of a Ted Bundy and the cold, maniacal bloodthirst of Hitler? If he became the guilt that washed over Judas and horror of regret and torment of every soul in hell? Whatever it was, it was hell and Jesus embraced it along with the physical torture to bind our hearts to his.

- Now picture yourself, like Chris, standing before the cross. How do you think God values you? Feels about you? How do you respond?
6. Today there is so much cultural pressure to believe what the billboards were saying in chapter one: “All paths lead to God.” Judaism and Islam view Jesus as a great prophet or teacher. They deny that He was the Son of God or the only way to God. Jesus said He was the Son of God and the only way to the Father. Can all three worldviews be right? Why or why not?
Author’s note: Consistency. The most basic rule of logic is, A does not equal non-A. Two opposite ideas cannot both be true. Judaism and Islam hold opposite ideas from Christianity about who Jesus is and what he did on the cross. If Christianity is true, their belief about Jesus and how to come to God cannot be true.
 - How does Isa 28:16 and 1 Pet 2:7-8 speak to this truth?
 7. I once heard a respected Muslim leader say, “I don’t need anyone to go between Allah and me. I stand as a man before Allah, responsible for my own sins.” Why do we need a mediator to stand before God? (Heb 9:19-28) Where do we find such a mediator? (1 Tim 2:5,6)
 - Isn’t there any other way to God? (Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12)
 - When we read these verses, we may wonder, “Is that fair, God?” But our Creator invites us to stand before the cross and consider, “Is it fair to ignore this? To reject my Son’s immeasurable sacrifice to give you Life?” What do you think?
 8. On pp. 40-41, how can you tell that Guy Wealth and Jimbo Health are not Christians? What is their motivation to follow the Way? If these two offered similar reasons for wanting to marry someone do you think they would get the girl? God offers blessings when we seek **Him** but He wants us to seek Him for more than that. Like a bridegroom seeking his bride, why does He want us to seek him?
 - How do you think the prophet Jeremiah or Chinese pastors imprisoned for preaching Christ might respond to Guy and Jimbo? (See Heb 11:35-39)

Chapters 4-6

1. What was your first clue that Christian went off the Way? How did he rationalize he was still on it?
 - God gives us basic commands to follow, but also gives us much freedom to choose what is best. More than anything, God wants a love relationship with us. Which nurtures a love relationship more: lots of rules or the freedom to respond out of our own desires? Why do you think God gives some commands?
2. What would your idea of a perfect room in the Pyramid at Pleasant Arbor look like?
 - Why do you think the Ladies’ rooms and the Guys’ rooms are so different?
 - What similarities, if any, do you see between the picture of the sluggard in Prov 26:14-16 and the scene on pp. 55?
 - The longer Christian stays, the harder it is to leave. (pp. 56, 59-60) Have you ever felt that way once you sat down to watch TV or play a video game? Why do you think that is? What helps you leave?
 - Do you think we’ve been created primarily for work or leisure? (Gen 1:26, Ex 20:9-10) Was Adam’s assignment to work a result of the curse? (Gen 2:15; 3:17-19) What difference did the curse make?
 - How can Jesus give us the power and desire to work with excellence? (Col 3:23, Eph 4:11-13)
3. Contrast the *fantasy* of the Pyramid at Pleasant Arbor with the *reality* of Castle Beautiful in as many ways as you can. Try answering Christian’s question about his passion for the challenge and adventure of video games on p. 73: “So what if it isn’t real?”
4. Christian has launched a quest for Life! What do the following verses tell us about where Life! is found—both where it is **not** found and where it **is** found? (Matt 6:25; Luke 12:15; John 5:39-40; Luke 25:27; John 17:3) What do you think that means?

Author's note: As we live our way to understand what this means, we realize that pursuing *relationships of the heart* with God and others in obedience to His teaching is the key to Life)

5. The Enemy moves in the opposite direction. Look at the way Satan tempted Jesus in Matt 4:1-11. "Life *is* the food you eat. Life *is* possessing the Kingdoms of this world and all their splendor In what way is the temptation of the entertainment culture similar to Satan's final temptation of Jesus? (Matt 4:8-10)
6. The entertainment culture is built on images that seep into our souls and wallpaper the rooms of our imagination. But the more we seek a heart relationship with God, the more clearly He shows himself to us. We see Him and his Kingdom reality with the eyes of faith. That is the story of the heroes in the Hall of Faith. What were they looking for? What could they see/imagine with the eyes of faith? (Heb 11:10; 13 and 14; 26 and 27)
7. Scripture mentions many "signposts" that help us see God and want him:
 - Nature (Rom 1:18-20)
 - Worship (Psalm 27:4)
 - Prayer (Heb 4:16)
 - Community—relationships with others who are becoming more and more like Him (2 Cor 3:18)
 - God's response to our obedience. (Jn 14:23)
 - Testimony of Jesus (Jn 14:8-10)

Describe how the Enemy uses entertainment and media to

- a. **distract us** from seeing God through these "signposts"
 - b. **devalue** what we *can see* of Him
- We also see God clearly in his Word. The very act of reading is becoming a lost way of seeing. God has always seemed very careful about the use of images. How can becoming so conditioned to learning through images keep us from seeing and desiring God?

Author's note: The images we view are mostly shaped by the Enemy's agenda, bypassing our reason, grabbing our hearts. God's truth is communicated in his Word with a depth and detail images can't capture.

8. Read Isa 55:1-3, 6 and consider these two statements:
 Life is found more in fun and entertainment.
 Life is found more in loving and serving God and others.
 Which statement best reflects your heart? (Perhaps one reflects your head and the other your heart. The heart may "want what it wants," but we can ask God to change us, help us choose Life.)

9. One advantage of writing a study guide is the opportunity to give you a "director's cut" of the story. After you read the following scene cut from the beginning of chapter 7, think about the following questions:

(As Christian and Lord Prudence are on their way down the landbridge)

"I appreciated your honesty last night," Prudence said. "It's tough to own up when our hearts want to romp in fantasyland. Makes it even tougher when we live in times where 'reality is what you make it.'"

"True." Christian recalled his flirtations with private realities beyond even his game and sports fantasies.

Prudence shook his head, "There's so much freedom in being who the King made me to be and live with integrity in the reality he created." His gaze lifted. "But even this isn't the final reality. Just the dress rehearsal."

Christian followed his gaze up and over the drab valley and iron-gray hills ahead.

"My goal is not just to *arrive* there." Prudence said. "When you were talking about living in your small story of games and fantasies because real life wasn't as exciting, I thought of our Scrolls. I love the part where it says, 'Your lives aren't small, but you're living them in a small way. Open up your lives. Live openly and expansively! (2 Cor 6 MSG)' I do *not* want to live small. I want Life! and a future that matters. I want to take every gift and talent and opportunity I've been given and think, 'OK, how can I invest this in God's Kingdom today?'"

Christian looked over at him. "I remember last night, looking at you—exhausted, sweaty, *bleeding* even, yet seeing this...this passion in your eyes."

“Well, dinner was on the table...”

“No, come on.” Christian grinned.

Prudence reflected a moment and answered, “On our way home we were talking about how, when we arrive at the finish, maybe we don’t all start over at zero. Maybe we take the fruit of living large for the Kingdom with us. Maybe the learning curve becomes *easier* when we can see things as they really are. But what if there’s *so much more* to learn? And how we worship and serve and reign there depends on how we’ve invested here? I want the ‘well done,’ the joy on His face, and ‘more talents’ to invest.”

That’s a new thought. Christian filed it for future reference. “It’s hard to wait, though. Hard to live on this journey.” He slipped sideways and gave his pack a resettling hoist. “I want all that now.”

“I do too. So did every hero in Hebrews 11; they lived and died longing for Celestial City. But they had the faith to see it shining at the end. On quiet evenings maybe they could smell the fruit on the Trees of Life, see the King waiting at the finish.”

“Oh yeah.” Christian glimpsed it too. The man's passion was contagious.

- When life feels small and boring, we may find that entertainment and fantasy make life feel larger and more exciting for the moment. In what ways did Christian’s escape to entertainment and fantasy result in living smaller? (esp. top of p.56)
- As you look at the big picture of chapters 4-6 how did living for fun and entertainment result in separation, pain and loss for Christian? Do you identify with his struggle? With his loss? How so?
- What can you do to push back against the intrusions and distractions of the entertainment culture to see Christ and live large for His Kingdom?

Chapter 7

1. If you were going to cast Satan as a character in a story, what would he look like? (2 Cor 11:14, Eph 2:2)
2. Christian boldly takes on Apollyon. But he has no idea who he’s up against. (Jude vs. 9) Ezek. 28:12-17 reads as a prophecy against the King of Tyre, but, like many prophecies, it has a double meaning. The references to Eden indicate it is also Satan. What seems to be the root of Satan’s pride?
 - Why do you think we struggle so with pride when God lavishes his gifts on us?
3. So many Christians today cannot articulate why they believe what they believe. Those of us who study worldview must beware of Scripture’s warnings in 1 Cor 8:1-3 and 1 Cor 13:1, 2, 8. How can our knowledge damage our hearts?
 - How can we tell if this is happening? What will it look like in our relationships with God and others?
4. Christian’s journey through the Valley of Humiliation began with just a touch of pride. A self-congratulatory, “I’m good at this.” But as the battle heated up, his pride did too. What are the touches of pride that make you vulnerable to the Enemy?
 - How did Satan humiliate Christian?

Author’s note: Satan knew exactly how to expose Christian’s real pride and anger in the moment. He took him down with guilt over past sins already paid for by Jesus’ death and forgiven when Christian came to the cross. God may allow the Enemy to wound us to expose the hidden pride in our life. When we acknowledge our pride, Satan is only too happy to switch gears and destroy us with false guilt.

 - How did God use it for good in Christian’s life? How has he used humiliation for good in your life?
5. How did God provide healing for Christian’s soul and power to overcome the Enemy?
 - Perhaps you have tapes of moral failure that replay in endless loops or sudden remembrances of poor judgment that make you wince. Christian could barely hear the words of Psalm 103 scratching through his headset. What is God saying to you in vs. 10-14 and 17, no matter what your failure?
 - Christian lost heart over the guilt of his sin. Consider James 4:6-10 and describe how God responds to us when we are in that place.

Chapters 8-9

1. Has there ever been a time when you were excluded from the inner circle? Separated from the family or community of comfort and celebration? Describe your experience.
2. No sooner has Christian recovered from his battle with Apollyon than he descends into the Valley of the Shadow of Death—Bunyan’s metaphor for a close brush with hell. As you were growing up, how did you think or feel about hell? Fearful? Safe? As if hell were unreal?
3. When the Enemy sells destruction, he casts a vision of kingdoms of the world *now*, present tense, short-term future. He doesn’t show what happens in the end. God wants us to choose Life and is always asking us, “What will you do in the end?” (Jer 5:31) Some people will end up in “outer darkness.” (Matt 25:30) As Christian creeps through the Valley of the Shadow, the voices of the lost rant and murmur in the darkness. What kind of small stories did they cling to?
 - Which voice impacted you the most? Why?
4. James 1:17 tells us, “Every good and perfect gift is from above...” Lost people do not acknowledge nor thank God for the greatest gift of His Son. So, in the end, God will withdraw from them *all* His gifts. *But what will be left?* As we think about God’s good gifts, we can think of beauty, relationships. What other precious gifts will lost people be *separated* from for eternity?

Author’s note: *Adam and Eve*, a 30 minute drama, takes the viewer into the pain and loss of being separated from God’s blessing. Arts Pastor David Taylor (Hope Chapel in Austin, TX) has written a very thought-provoking piece about the new reality Adam and Eve face in the moments after they’ve been cast out of Eden. Available on the CD-Rom, *Glimpse*, from Jeffrey Travis Studios, jeffrey@jeffreytravis.com, \$12.
5. Every worldview casts a vision of final reality: “annihilation,” “our genes carry on,” “resurrection,” “reincarnation.” The movie, *What Dreams May Come*, conveys the postmodern message of heaven: “Even heaven is what you make it, different for each person.” I once heard Bill Maher of *Politically Incorrect* say, “We all have our own god we pray to and go to when we die.” If you had been on his show, or heard something similar from a friend, how would you have responded to a truth claim like that?
6. Pastor and author Bill Hybels has said, “We have never looked eyes with another human being that Christ didn’t love enough to die for.” What do you feel for people who may be separated from God forever? What, if anything, can you do to invite them into relationship with Him?
 - How can studying a Christian worldview help you reach lost people for Christ?
7. In Bunyan’s original, the giant, Pagan, was long dead. Thinking about the times in which these stories were written, why do you think Pagan was pictured as dead in Bunyan’s story, but alive on p .97?
8. When we think about the grim reality of hell, we may feel like Christian did on p. 103, “But I want mercy! Mercy for everyone!” How does Faithful respond?
 - What would you think of a God who didn’t mind evil and overlooked sin?
 - How is the cross the perfect demonstration of justice and mercy? (To echo Phillip Yancy, “That is the kind of God I want my God to be.”)
9. Christian chafed for adventure and challenge, but finding the Life he really longed for meant walking a path of study and discipleship. What did he study? How was he taught?
 - How is your study and discipleship giving you the Life! and challenge we long for?

Chapters 10-12

1. Are you a “mercy heart” or a “law-and-order” type? Can you give an example?
2. What is the “guiding principle” that HeartLanders live by? (p. 114) Whom do you think this “guiding principle” values most? Whom do you think it values least?
 - What are God’s greatest commandments? (Matt 22:37-39) Whom do they value most? How do they assign value for others?
 - It has been said that, “The true measure of any system of ethics is the way it treats the very old and the very weak.” Compare the way God’s law and Heartland’s law treat the very old and the very weak.

Author’s note: Think of Jesus’s example of continual caregiving. Also James 1:27, Matt 25:3-46.
3. According to NuDave on p. 115, what do words mean? On p.116, what does Christian say words mean? Match their statements about the meaning of words with two of the worldview ideas about truth on the chart (p. 5). How does Christian point out the *incoherence* of NuDave’s worldview?
 - How do NuDave and BlueJay respond? What is Christian’s response to them? What could he have learned from 1 Pet 3:15? How might you have responded?
 - What happens to your relationships when you use twist or hedge the meaning of your words?
4. How do the Heartlanders “know” their beliefs are true? (p. 116, bottom of p. 137, p. 140) How is that *consistent* with the postmodern worldview?

Author’s note: The emotional Angel moments are the “experience” that validates their beliefs. BlueJay *intuitively* knows that some lives aren’t worth saving.
5. Give examples of the general lack of interest in caregiving in Heartland. What is the connection, if any, between their “guiding principal” and the value HeartLanders place on caregiving?
 - On p. 127 the Mommy candidate gives her “Plastic is Beautiful Speech.” In God’s economy, do you think beauty is worth working and caring for?
6. If there is one word that describes the supreme value of our times, perhaps it is “compassion.” In Jn 15:13 Jesus gives us a picture of ultimate compassion in action. How is HeartLand’s value of compassion different from a biblical understanding of compassion?
 - Why did SpinDoc’s understanding of compassion change?

Author’s note: Because he hit the wall of the reality God created. He loved BabyGrace and he knew translation was a lie. What is true is what is real, and in the depths of his heart he touched the *incoherency* of the idea that we can create our own truth.

 - How did his life demonstrate that change?
 - Christian and Faithful were deeply discouraged by HeartLand’s failure to show compassion on the very weakest. They may have despaired of changing the system, but they stopped to give care to one HeartLander in trouble. How did their one act impact the system that seemed so overwhelming?
 - How might God want you to show more compassion?

Author’s note: Excellent resource: *A Patchwork Heart* by Kim Moore and Pam Mellskog (NavPress 2002)

 - Now for a sensitive but relevant question: How do you think the biblical value of compassion and caregiving speaks to women with children who want to work outside the home?
7. How is the appeal for compassion used as a tool of manipulation in the election?
 - Give some examples from our world of the ways the call for compassion (especially for children) is used as a “wedge that gets hammered and hammered until laws and institutions built upon the wisdom of the ages finally crumble.” (p. 126)
8. Animism is an ancient worldview. Animists may acknowledge a remote and inaccessible God, but their worship is directed to spirits of nature and people that directly affect their lives. The object of their

worship is to appease these potentially hostile spirits so that life will go well and the spirits might even help them prosper. What example of Old Testament Animism did Faithful talk about in Chapter 9 that is alluded to on p. 143? (See chapter note p. 265)

- The HeartLand translation centers “translated” significant numbers of unborn babies. What, if any, similarity do you think there is between Israel’s animism in Jer 19 and what goes on in the translation centers? What does God think of that kind of sacrifice?
- Struck down by Apollyon back in chap 7, Christian remembers his own aborted child. Abortion for the sake of prosperity and a certain lifestyle grieves and offends God. What is the message of Psalm 103 to those who have aborted their children?
- Animism is making a comeback. HeartLand’s angel worship is not that different from some of the New Age spirit encounters. What is the difference between HeartLand’s adoration of angels and our biblical relationship with angels seen in Rev 19:9-10? What do you think the angel in Rev 19 thinks about today’s fascination with angels, even in the Christian marketplace?
- What does Christian find appealing about Animism? (top of p. 113)

Author’s note: “You just go through these steps and you connect.” Animism is very concrete and straightforward. Its rituals can be beautiful, mesmerizing. But it is bondage to a no-god. (How many prayers and sacrifices are enough to get the god to take care of you?) There is great freedom in a mutual relationship of the heart with God in Christ Jesus. But it requires everything we have—all our heart, mind and strength.

Chapter 13

1. John Bunyan coined the phrase, “Vanity Fair” as in indictment against the emptiness of our headlong pursuit of the things of this world. That indictment is now proudly worn by a glamorous fashion mag. How do the fashion mags and Hollywood advise us to make ourselves beautiful?
 - How do you feel that pressure?
 - Do you think there is more emphasis on the way we look now than, say, five or ten years ago? Why?
2. The Enemy longs to rob us of joy and contentment by continually pointing out to us the difference between the way we look and the world’s measure of outer beauty. But the game is rigged. He delights in “raising the bar” so that no matter how beautiful we are on the inside, or try to look on the outside, the standard of outer beauty keeps being raised to unattainable heights.
 - How do you see this principle at work in Chapter 13?
3. Do you think it’s OK to want to be noticed? Jot down your answer. Then look up Song of Solomon 4:1, 2, 12, 16 and 5:1, 10-12; also Psalm 144:12.
 - Why are pillars used in a building? Why would they be carved?
 - There is a validation of a desire to be “noticed” in the above verses from Psalms and Song of Solomon. What is the context of these verses? How does that desire compare to the desire to be noticed that drips off the pages of the fashion mags?

Author’s note: The kind of beauty referred to in these passages is a wholesome, healthy beauty. The kind of beauty that a father is proud of. A beauty that is aimed at pleasing a husband, rather than a cultural sensibility of what looks hot or sexy.

4. Describe the “clothing” of the ideal woman in Prov 31:25. How is modesty an expression of dignity?
5. On p. 159 Christian stares at the mirror in the back of the grille and “measures” how his looks are fading. Sooner or later, we will all “measure” the same result. Look at 1 Sam 16:7, Prov 31:30 and 1 Pet 3:3-6. If Jesus were sitting on the stool next to Christian or YOU, what might he say about the sadness we may feel over the wrinkles, and tatters in our “tent”? What would he say to us even if we’re still young, but disappointed in what the mirror shows us?
 - What do you make of the absence of any descriptions of people’s looks in the New Testament? What does Isa 53:2 tell us about Jesus’ look?

- WWJD? What would Jesus do? How do you think Jesus would counsel someone about the possibilities of plastic surgery? About working out? About buying make up and clothes?
- Author's note:** Would he even look at their face or their figure? What about their heart? As you discuss this, be tender to cancer survivors and those who are married to carnal Christians or unbelievers.
6. Telling the truth is telling it like it really is—telling the reality of God and what he has created. How was Gracie living in unreality and deception? Why can't reality be what we make it?
 - How was that truth made clear to Gracie?
 - How has the truth that we cannot create our own reality become clear in your life?
 7. On pages 162-4, Faithful and Christian build on their ministry of compassion in Gracie's life to invite her to Life and relationship with God. Gracie was not a person who went to the Bible to understand truth. How were they able to convince her, apart from the Bible, that she was a sinner?
 - How is the truth of Rom 2:12-15 woven into their message?
 - How did God respond to our (Gracie's) sin? What does He invite us (her) to do?
 - How did she respond? How have you responded to this message of forgiveness in Christ?
 - Why do you think Gracie rejected their message? When we offer God's truth in love, like Faithful and Christian did, where does our part end and God's part and their part begin?
 - If you struggle with sharing your faith, is it more an issue of lack of compassion, or not knowing what to say?

Chapter 14

1. For many people, shopping is a religious experience. What does shopping do for you?
2. Judging from the Corporate Worship Service, what are the most cherished values in Vanity Fair?
 - Do the young people ascending the Acropolis on pp. 172-3 share those values?
3. How does Pastor Wealth challenge the people of the Fair to take great risks? What are the stakes? (pp. 69-70)

Author's note: To "double down" is a poker term adopted by business that means to risk everything by betting all your winnings (chips) on a new hand or game, not holding anything back.

 - How have Christian and Faithful take risks? What are the stakes?
4. As the chapter note indicates, the historical marker inscription on p. 172 is taken from Bunyan's original story. From what Scripture did Bunyan draw to write this description of Vanity Fair? Why is the Fair named "Vanity"? How does the floating fit with Bunyan's original description?
 - From reading this passage, how would you describe Bunyan's writing style?
5. How is Vanity Fair a great example of The Modern/Progress worldview? How is it *inconsistent* by "borrowing" beliefs from the Postmodern worldview? (See chart on p. 5)

Author's note: The Fair-goers are definitely seeking to build a Utopia with their Science, technology and education. They live as though all their happiness can be found in this world. Darwinian "survival of the fittest" is woven into their moral code. But they are borrowing the postmodern idea of truth and reality being created by the individual.)
6. Just as Bunyan drew his description of Vanity Fair from Scripture, the description of events on the Acropolis is drawn from Acts 17:16-34. Read the story of Paul's witness to the Athenians in the shadow of their Acropolis (which was also full of temples like the Parthenon). How does Paul respond to all the idol worship? What similarities do you find between the two passages?
 - How is today's fascination with celebrities similar to the idol worship of the Greek gods and goddesses?
 - Do you think that romantic or lustful fantasy about celebrities is close to idol worship?

- The pull of the celebrity culture is to *identify* with celebrities. We want to be like them and celebrate the ways they are “just like me.” In what ways does Phil 2:3-16 cast a different vision of who we can identify with and be like?
- In Phil 2:15 what image does Paul use to describe someone who identifies with Christ? What is the beautiful irony of that image in the context of this discussion?

Chapters 15-16

1. What risks have you taken to achieve your desires? What risks, if any, have you taken for the Kingdom?
2. Christian and Faithful found God’s strength to love their enemies. How did it open doors for ministry?
3. In order to live together in community in postmodern times where everyone has different perspectives and competing truth claims, “*Who makes the rules?*” Look back at the chart on p. 5 and describe how the Power Table illustrates the postmodern answer to this question.
 - Do you see any similarities between the Power Table and our Supreme Court? What are the differences?
 - As Christians living in a democracy that has lost confidence in the Truth of God’s Word, how should we try to influence the rules (laws)?

Author’s note: We can try to win people to uphold God’s laws through lives of love and integrity and principled persuasion. We can impact public policy by presenting the case that laws based on God’s commands are the most protective and in our best interests. In the public square it can be shrewder to show how God’s commands work in the reality he created than just quote the Bible.

4. What was the charge against Christian and Faithful? What was the evidence against them?
 - Pastor Wealth’s opinion of Christian and Faithful’s truth claims on p. 192 was *inconsistent* with his postmodern worldview of truth. How did the OP point that out?
 - How did Pastor Wealth defend his intolerance and inconsistency?
 - The OP pointed out that it is *incoherent* to insist on complete tolerance. That doesn’t make sense in the real world. “Everybody draws lines.” How is his argument similar to the conversation Christian and Faithful had with Gracie? How is it different?
 - When Pastor Wealth’s attempts at reasoned debate were shown to be so *inconsistent* and *incoherent*, he turned to another persuasive strategy. What was it and how was it similar to the strategy used in the HeartLand election? Why do you think that strategy is so successful in our postmodern culture?

Author’s note: Both appeal to compassion for the hard cases. Because the postmodern way of knowing is based on emotion.

5. In the end, it didn’t matter that there was no evidence that Christian and Faithful attacked anyone. It didn’t matter that the Fair-goers were also “intolerant.” It didn’t matter that they all drew lines between right and wrong. Why were Christian and Faithful labeled as bigots and uncompassionate hatemongers and sentenced to death?
6. One person murders someone they love in a great betrayal. Another murders someone they don’t really know because they hate their race or sexual orientation. When both are premeditated, do you think the one who murders in betrayal should be punished less than the one who murders out of hate?
 - Judging from what happened to Christian and Faithful, in what ways are hate crime laws cause for concern among Christians?
7. Why is God uniquely qualified to give us truth? (See p. 196 and Isa 45:18-19) How does his gift of Life through his Son answer the needs and longings of the postmodern person who sees the world as a struggle for power between the strong (the oppressors) and the weak (the victims)? (See Acts 4:8-12)
8. How did Evangelist’s prediction come true? How was God already bringing good from Faithful’s death?

Chapter 17

1. Christian is stuck in Doubting Castle Glen where he must deal with the hard questions that inevitably loom large in life: *Is God real or imaginary? Is his journey from the cross to Celestial City real or imaginary? Is he really a pilgrim making progress or a romantic waking up to reality?* Have you ever been in that place where you wonder if God and His Kingdom Story are real? What was it like?
2. Dr. Despair claims to be the realist. Look up “nihilism” in the dictionary or encyclopedia. How does Dr. Despair fit the description?
Author’s note: *Nihilism* is a belief system that takes its name from nil—nothing. A *nihilist* does not believe in God, truth, hope or meaning, heaven or hell, right or wrong, good or evil. Frederick Nietzsche, the most famously consistent *nihilist*, said there is only power. And the strong, the Superman, must will to take it. Life is about nothing more than the will to power.
 - Which worldview on the chart on p. 5 most reflects the *nihilist* philosophy?**Author’s note:** Most postmodernists question or reject truth, rules, right and wrong. But they are *not consistent* with *nihilist* beliefs. It is extremely difficult to live with no ultimate meaning or hope, which is why they invent a small story that seems to offer some.
3. Neptune Nellie offers Christian another way to deal with his pain. What is it?
Author’s note: She urges Christian to live in the victim small story. All the pain in his life is everybody else’s fault. His anger at being a victim can generate the power he needs to overcome all the oppression in his life. Both she and Dr. Despair value power far above love.
 - Look over 1 Cor 13:4-8. In what ways is God’s description of love just the opposite of a relationship based on power? This passage tells us love is more important than power. Why do you think that is so?
4. Throughout the chapter, Christian feels as if he is standing on the edge of a precipice. What does the precipice symbolize? Why is it so hard for him to move forward in the Kingdom Story and jump?
 - Why is it so hard for him to turn away from the edge, and return to his small story?
 - Have you ever felt like you were on the edge, afraid to trust God and jump? Have you felt pulled to give in to despair or the anger of being a victim? What happened?
5. Christian has struggled with overwhelming pain before, in his battle with Apollyon. Why does the pain of Faithful’s loss seem so much harder to bear?
Author’s note: The pain from his battle with Apollyon was the consequence of his own sin. He lost Faithful as he was walking in obedience and sacrifice. It seems like God is the enemy, or at best indifferent.
6. My life’s verse is 2 Cor 4:16-18. It tells us how we do not lose heart when God doesn’t seem to come through for us. What do these verses tell us about God’s heart?
 - How are we renewed when there is no deliverance from pain, sorrow and loss?
 - How did this play out for Christian in Doubting Castle Glen?
7. How does God’s promise of Life take on new meaning for Christian? How is his experience much like the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11?

Chapters 18-19

1. “Youth” is almost synonymous with “idealism.” Growing up in America means all kinds of dreams of the future. But “life happens.” Are you more of an idealist or a cynic? Why?

2. The Nomads of the heart (and many of our friends and neighbors) try to find happiness in more and more entertainment and creative experience—the never-ending search for “something new under the sun.” How did Solomon’s affluence and power lead to a crisis of meaning in Eccl 2:1-11?
 - How was his experience similar to that of Thank-God-I’m-an-Atheist on p. 238? How was it different?
 - “Advanced cynicism” doubts everyone’s motives and creates a detachment from life. “Don’t take anyone or anything seriously,” is their advice. But pain and hardship *demand* to be taken seriously. Cynicism is *incoherent* in the face of tragedy. What happened to the cynical voices in our culture in the wake of 9/11? (ie. the late night talk shows, comedians etc.) Why do you think the impact didn’t last?

3. The questers try to cast a vision of hope in the Nomad Camp. They pull together as a body in ministry, each bringing their gifts to try to reach the hearts of the lost Nomads. Read 2 Cor 3:3-12. What is the “ministry of the new covenant” Paul is talking about? (See Heb 9:14, 15)
 - When we are engaged in this ministry, how does God work in our lives? (2 Cor 3:4, 5, 12; 4:1)
 - In what way can God’s invitation to ministry be a great gift—an answer to boredom and apathy?

Author’s note: We are called to a ministry more glorious than Solomon could imagine, a ministry far more glorious than the ministry of the Old Covenant—the Law and the sacrificial system he knew. It is a challenge and a battle to share Christ with people who are desperate for meaning, authentic loving relationships and the hope of a future that matters.

4. Christian must battle the power of Buyme’s seduction. What similarities, if any, do you see between the picture of the temptress in Prov 7 and the scene on pp. 225-6?
 - How does the story reveal that his refusal was an act of authentic love for her?
 - Why is moral purity important to keeping our confidence in a Christian worldview?

Author’s note: Because two opposite ideas cannot both be true. If we believe that sexual impurity is OK, then we don’t believe Jesus’s word is true. Eventually the tension becomes too great. We discard our faith.

5. Christian’s message (pp. 243-4) casts a vision of Life rich in meaning and hope. What part of his message, if any, enlarges your vision of a future that matters?

6. God loves. God wants to save us from destruction. How does this episode parallel God’s deliverance of his people from the fiery serpents of Numbers 20:4-9?
 - How much faith did it take to be saved from the serpent’s bite?

Author’s note: Faith enough to take God at His word and look up.

 - Now read Jn 3:14-16. What is the connection between the events of Num 20 and Jesus death on the cross? How much faith does it take to be saved from the power and punishment of our sin?
 - Just like Diabolique, there were probably people in Israel’s camp that shut their eyes tightly and refused to go to the bronze serpent, even as the fiery venom did its work. What is the certain outcome of willful rebellion against God? What do you think of Diabolique’s response?
 - The chapter ends with the juxtaposition of two powerful images. How do these images represent the choice God puts before us in Deut 30:19?

Chapter 20

1. A Chinese pastor who had been jailed for his faith spoke to an interviewer in halting English, “We must struggle against persecution, but you in the West must struggle against apathy. Who can know which is more difficult?” In what ways did the questers at Café Hope struggle against the Nomad’s apathy?
 - How did their perseverance pay off?

2. The Modern/Progress story (p. 5) measures success by growth and numbers. It can be easier to fly off on mission trips where the harvest is plentiful than to venture out at home and sow the seeds of the gospel in the hearts of our postmodern friends and family. Christian, the marketing guy, was looking for “seeable results” from his investment in God’s Kingdom. How does Gracie offer perspective?

- How does the story of Gideon' in Judges 7:1-7 give us insights into the way God thinks about numbers?
 - Through Paul's words in 1 Cor 15:58, how does Christ encourage us to persevere in a "whatever" world?
3. God invites us on a great journey. Christian's journey turns into a race. The symbolism is taken from Heb 12:1, 2 and 1 Cor 9:24-27. Use these passages and what you've learned about race-running to list as many differences as you can between a journey and a race.
- How do the differences speak to how we are called to live for the Kingdom?
 - Can you give an example of a strategic, race-running use of your time and talent or money?
4. When you were growing up, what did you think heaven would be like?
- When you've been away on a journey and you finally come home, what is it that makes coming home so sweet? How will heaven be like that homecoming?
 - As Christian observes, the beauty of Celestial City is only the setting for the characters to worship, serve and reign forever. But settings still matter. The city where Christ is preparing our future home is described in Rev 21:9-22:5. Which feature of its beauty appeals to you most?
 - Christian's greatest Celestial delight comes from the relationships—the people—he'll enjoy forever, first and foremost, Jesus Christ. Thinking deeply about it, why do you most long for heaven? Is it for the setting, the plot, the resurrection and reunion of the characters? Is it to be with Jesus?
- Author's note:** Here is a bit of a heart check: If you responded, "being with Jesus," is your answer **consistent** with the way you spend time with Jesus now? If not how can you ask God to grow your heart that direction?)
5. At the time of Christ's return, the Kingdom will be like the man in Matt 25:13-30 who went on a journey. He entrusted his property to his servants, each according to his ability. With what gifts has God entrusted you while he is away?
- Our Kingdom future, our place of leadership (reigning) with Jesus will be determined by how we invest what he gives us. What kind of Kingdom future was awarded the two and five-talent servants?
 - How does that vision of reward give our lives meaning and inspiration?
6. Looking back on the worldview chart on p. 5, what future does the Modern/Progress Story offer? Postmodern small stories?
- What is the main evidence that we are not just inventing our own hopeful ending?
- Author's note:** Jesus' resurrection from the dead.
- Author's note:** For the group that is movie literate: What is the common final reality in *Braveheart*, *Titanic* and *Gladiator*? (resurrection and reunion) Think back to the worldview chart on p. 5. Which movie is somewhat **consistent** in its worldview. The other two embrace the Christian ending but reject the Kingdom Story. If a true test of a worldview is **consistency**, then it is nonsense to invent an ending like that. Why do you think these movies cut and paste the Christian ending without regard for reason or consistency?
7. In chapter one (p.15) Evangelist quoted C. S. Lewis from "The Weight of Glory": "You and I have need of the strongest spell that can be found to wake us from the evil enchantment of worldliness. Almost all our modern (education and) philosophies have been designed to convince us that the good of man can be found on this earth. . .that earth can be made into heaven, giving a sop to your sense of exile in earth as it is." Do you have that "sense of exile in earth as it is"? How do you experience it? What does it feel like?
- Something has happened on my journey. I long for heaven. I long for "his appearing." More than anything else. I can see the city like my fellow-saints in Heb 11. And nothing on this Earth compares. I've made some sort of "heaven shift." If you've experienced a similar "heaven shift," how did it come about? How is your life different in that respect than it used to be?
8. If this study has changed your understanding or vision of our quest for Life in God's Kingdom, how would you describe that change?

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