

FAITH ASKING QUESTIONS



A ST FRANCIS COLLEGE SHORT COURSE

THE TRANSCRIPT

Episode 3 Who Am I?

3.1 Is there a reason for me? What is the purpose of my life?

John Roundhill : I think I'm here – as probably I think the rest of us are here – ultimately to give glory to God. Growing up in England you see lots of places with inscriptions to the Glory of God. On buildings, plaques and things. What were people thinking when doing things to the glory of God. There in Paul's letter to the Corinthians "whatever you do, do everything to the glory of God" (1 Cor 10). It's about making God's presence, present in the world. That is what I think I'm here to do. I think I do that really by living my life as fully and as lively as I can.

Josephine Inkpin: I think it's difficult to do that, to know until afterwards in a way, and I think we spend a lot of time agonising about those things as if the most important thing in life is our personal identity and the salvation project.

Ceri Wynne: Well I'm here, I believe because my life is a gift from God, the creator. So yes, I have a purpose and there's a beautiful section in Psalm 139 about how God knows us from even before we were conceived in our mother's womb, which I just love, so there's a sense that we have always been known before we even existed so all of us are an act of love from a Creator God. And that God of love is where I base my purpose too. It's actually about responding to that love in ways that are specific and unique to me and to my journey. You imagine if 6 billion people around the world all responded to God's love in the way they are made it would be a very awesome, awesome world. So, it's tied very intimately to that God of love who created me.

Josephine Inkpin: In a Christian sense, part of our job is to give yourself away, that's what God does in creation, that's what Jesus does. So rather than worrying about yourself and who am I in this world, ask "what is it going on in myself that I want to express and what is there around me that I want to connect with



and how do I do that? If the centre of your life is love, then how do you want to express that? Do you want to paint a picture, dance, feed the homeless, how do you feel called to those things? What are the things and what are the people around you doing? Are you being grateful and thankful for the things that are there? So, if we focus on how do we grow in love, and who do I belong to rather than 'who am I?' it can send us around a little spiral about ourselves. It's about making that connection as much as anything. That's partly about loving oneself which is the hardest thing of all in many ways – learning to love yourself, love God and love others. For me that's the way I'd sum up purpose.

Tiffany Sparks: Well, that's a pretty difficult question, I think about that on a pretty regular basis. I think the reason for us is to journey out through our lives, learning all we can. I like the idea that one of the reasons and purposes for our lives is that we are constantly journeying to find who we are supposed to be in God and what that looks like, and a lot of the time that means shedding and getting rid of a lot of the stuff that we've learnt and gained, like our grudges and our anger and our envy and our determination to be better than others, and to journey into what is more an authentic self. Which is usually someone who is there for others and one who is trying to make the world a better place.

John Roundhill: Yeah, I think that's a great question. The purpose of life...I once heard a guy say, "the meaning of life is our making the meaning" and that sounds really neat, but it's not enough. We are more than just meaning creators; I think we're meaning discoverers. I think the thing about the Christian life is that we're actually about discovering the meaning that's been there for all time.



You can find the video of this session, along with reflection questions for individuals or groups at www.stfran.qld.edu.au under “SFC Short Courses—Faith Asking Questions”.

THE CONTRIBUTORS

The Rev’d Dr Josephine Inkpin
Senior Tutor & Lecturer in Theology

The Right Rev’d John Roundhill
Bishop, Anglican Diocese of Brisbane

The Venerable Tiffany Sparks
Archdeacon & Ministry Development Officer
Anglican Diocese of Grafton

The Rev’d Dr Ceri Wynne
Chaplain, St John’s College
University of Queensland