

## Looking Around: Why Am I Here?

by Annette Gulick 10/1/2001

### Lesson Two

**Lesson Objective:** That the students understand what God wants them to do with their lives.

**Bible Passage:** Genesis 2:8-17

**Bible Truth:** In Eden God's perfect plan for Adam was for him to enjoy God and his creation, work, and obey God.

#### Before You Begin:

- ◆ a "treasure" of something like candy and extra candy
- ◆ a "treasure map"
- ◆ three sheets of blank paper
- ◆ copies of the handout
- ◆ pencils

#### Opening:

Treasure hunt. Before the class starts hide a "treasure" in or near the classroom and draw a simple map showing where the treasure is hidden and how to get there. The treasure should be something the whole team can share, like candy. Make sure you have enough candy to share with the losing team after the whole activity is finished. On a second sheet of paper just like the one with the treasure map, write, "Search for a hidden treasure." Fold both handouts in half.

Open the class with prayer. Then divide the students into two teams. Explain that somewhere in or near the classroom is hidden a treasure and that the first team to find it gets to keep it. Give each team one of the handouts and instruct them not to let the other team see their instructions. The team with the map should find the treasure quickly. The other team might complain that it was unfair that they didn't have a map, but just tell them that there was a reason. Ask the winning team to wait to eat their treasure and continue with the following discussion.

### Interactive Learning

Once the students are seated again ask the following questions:

- ***How important was the map in finding the treasure? (It made the search easier.)***
- ***How did the person who drew the map know where the treasure was? (Because he/she put it there.)***
- ***How is the treasure map like the Bible in our lives? (Since God made us he knows how to guide us to what is best for us.)***

***The Bible is like a treasure map God has given us. Since He made us, He knows what we need in our lives to make us happy and fulfilled. When Adam was first created and living in the Garden of Eden, a place with no sin or unhappiness, God showed him what things were important in life. Let's continue our study of the lives of Adam and Eve to see if we can learn what God wants us to be doing with our lives.***

### Bible Application

Divide the group into three teams and give each team a sheet of paper and pencils. [At this point tell the students that they may eat their candy and hand out candy to those who didn't get any in the first activity.] Then explain:

***Imagine this: you live in the Garden of Eden where you work in the immigration office. As a group, prepare an informational pamphlet explaining to new immigrants how they should live in Eden using the verses given to your group as a guideline.***

**Group 1: Genesis 2:9; 1 Chron. 16:8-10; Psalm 16:11; Phil 4: 4**

**Group 2: Genesis 1:28, 2:15; Exodus 20:8-11; Ecclesiastes 5:18-19; Col. 3:23**

**Group 3: Genesis 2:16-17; Deuteronomy 28:1-6, 13-15; John 14:21**

While the students are working on this, walk around the room encouraging them, answering any questions they may have regarding their passages, and keeping them focused on the task. After the groups have finished their projects ask them to explain their "pamphlets," and the verses they are based on, to the rest of the group. Then discuss together the following questions:

- ***From these verses, what do we see as elements that God says are important to living a happy life? (Enjoying God and his creation, working, and obeying God.)***
- ***Although these verse in Genesis don't say the words "God made us to have a relationship with Him and to enjoy him" the idea is all throughout the Bible. Can you think of some things in the Bible that show us this? (Hopefully they can think of several things, but here are a few examples: God the Father gave his Son Jesus to die so we could have a personal relationship with him; God created a beautiful world for us to enjoy.)***

- **Read 1Chron. 16:9. If you had to write a song about God's wonderful acts what would some of those acts be?**
- **We know that Adam didn't have to work to buy food or pay for anything, why do you think God gave him work to do?**
- **Did you ever think of work as something that makes you a happy person? Why or why not? ("Yes, when I do a good job at "X" it makes me feel satisfied or significant"; but make sure they feel free to say something like "no, my job is boring and I hate it.")**
- **How do you think working through serving others makes us happy? Albert Einstein was one of the smartest men who ever lived. He once said this, "I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve." What do you think he meant by that? (People who selfishly seek their own fulfillment often end up depressed and miserable. True happiness comes from looking outside of ourselves and serving others.)**
- **Why is obeying God part of a happy life? (Since He loves us and wants the best for us, if he tells us to do or not to do something it's because he knows that is best for us.)**

## Commitment

Hand out copies of "My Life's Report Card" (at end of this lesson) and pencils to each student. Ask them to thoughtfully fill them out, grading themselves in each area from A to F. After they have finished ask them to "average" their "grades." (Tell everyone how to do this in case someone doesn't know.) Then ask people to tell in which areas they scored the highest, and then the lowest. Finally ask what they could change in their lives to improve their scores.

*It is always helpful to examine our lives, comparing how we live with how the Bible tells us that God wants us to live. But as useful as this is in helping us know where we need to focus our efforts and prayers to grow in our relationship with God, it is just as important to remember that none of us will ever earn an A+. And because in order to get into heaven by your works you have to have an A++, no amount of trying harder will get you there. If you have not asked Jesus to be your lord and savior, trying to be a better person to get into heaven is like trying to build a taller ladder to reach the moon. But if Jesus is your savior then I want to you cross out where you wrote your "average grade " and write in "A+" because he has already lived a perfect life and has "credited to your account" his perfectness. All of these good and important things don't make God love you any more than he already does right now, if you have been saved. You may wonder,*

***“if that’s true, why try to live this way?” Well it’s simple, the more we live life God's way, the more "treasure" and joy we have here on earth and in heaven.***

## Closing

***The Bible doesn't tell us everything we would like to know about heaven. But we do know that the very things we have been talking about today--enjoying God and his creation, obeying him, and having meaning and purpose in our lives through work--will somehow be a part of heaven in a more complete way than we can imagine right now. Some people say that the "work" we will do in heaven is to praise God. Let's close today by praising him with our voices.***

**Depending on the preference of your group, either sing a favorite praise song or the first stanza of a hymn or read aloud a psalm, like Psalm 145:1-13.**

## My Report Card

Subject	Grade
Being Thankful to God for what he has created and given me	
Rejoicing in God	
Telling other people how great God is	
Doing my schoolwork or work to the best of my ability	
Resting from work one day a week	
Using the gifts and abilities God has given me for His glory	
Knowing what God wants me to do by studying His Word	
Showing God I love him by obeying his commandments	
Praying for guidance when I don't know what to do	
Believing that God's way is the best way to live and living it	
Average Grade	