

## **SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE**

Message Series: GOOD QUESTION!  
Message Title: Where am I Going?: Destiny  
Speaker: Pastor Miles Welch  
Date: August 27, 2017

### **Icebreaker:**

Do you make decisions quickly, based on a gut feeling, or do you overthink decisions, waiting for as much information as possible before you decide?  
Do you have an example of a decision you made where things did not turn out how you had hoped or planned?

### **Message Overview:**

This week's message was the final conversation in the *Good Questions* series. In the first week, Pastor Kevin (PK) described how the philosophers of Athens asked a good question to Paul: "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we would like to know what they mean" (Acts 17:19-20). Paul taught them about Jesus and listened to their questions. In this series, PK and Pastor Miles taught and answered questions submitted by you to campus pastors.

We have all sat down to complete a jigsaw puzzle at one time or another—and the system most of us use for completing a puzzle is to find the four corners first, and then piece together the flat-edged pieces to create a complete frame. It is only after putting together the framework that you can see how all the smaller pieces fit together in the middle. That's a metaphor for life and faith. The four weeks of this series will cover the four big questions in life, which are the corners of the framework for the puzzling questions that you have. The way you answer these four BIG questions determines how everything else in your life fits into place.

### **Four Big Questions:**

- **Origins: Where do I come from?**
- **Meaning: Why am I here?**
- **Morals: Who am I?**

- **Destiny: Where am I going?**

**Discussion:**

(Leaders: The questions that follow are designed to stir reflection and discussion on this week's primary message points. Please read through them prior to your meeting, so you can be prepared to prayerfully pace your group well. And remember, as leader, your goal is to promote increased *biblical* awareness, as well as individual *self* awareness – a combination that with the help of the Holy Spirit, results in revelation and...transformation!)

This week, Pastor Miles answered questions about destiny. Paul taught in the Areopagus, and there were three responses from those present: some received, some rejected, and some needed to hear more. On the topic of destiny – most of us fall in one of those three camps. And Miles' teaching helps us as we seek to know more.

1. Your **decisions** determine your destiny.

**Read Acts 17:30-34.** At the end of Acts 17, Paul explains that God made everything, including you (week 1), and he gives us meaning (week 2) *so that we would seek him, reach out for him, and find him*, and that he could do this because *he is not far from any one of us* (week 3). Finally, the crowd had to make a decision based on what they had heard (this week).

Some received what Paul had to say and entered into a relationship with God through Jesus, which had an impact on their destiny both on earth and in their eternity. Others rejected what Paul taught, and that rejection also determined their destiny. Others asked for him to return to teach them more. It is okay to have doubts, but the key is to keep digging deeper to discover the truth.

Pastor Miles said that the answer to the question, "**Where am I going?**" is "**Wherever your decisions take you.**"

The audience present for the Q & A was young adults, but the teaching is applicable to all of us. We all must realize that our decisions determine our destiny. Miles said, "The older you get, the more you move from the decisions you make to the destiny that you've built for yourself. The good news of God is

that at any age you can begin to make great decisions which will make a great destiny for you, because God is a God of second chances.”

- If you are a young adult, discuss what it means that your decisions determine your destiny. How does this knowledge impact your day-to-day life?
- If you are not as young of an adult as you used to be, do you have decisions that you made in the past that you regret? Have you been able to use what you learned from the consequences of those decisions to influence better decisions in your life currently?

2. Pastor Miles offered five arenas that define your destiny. The questions this week fell into one or more of these arenas.

- **Faith**
- **Values**
- **Relationships**
- **Career**
- **Money**

The first question was about sexual purity and reserving sex for marriage. Yes, the young adults dove right into the deep end with Miles, and so we are going to dive in deep in this group!

**Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8.** Most of us want to live to please God, but we aren't willing to avoid sexual immorality; however, that is what Paul said must happen. He said “that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust . . . to live a holy life.” Miles showed two paths—the first was the path to promiscuity, and the second was the path to purity. Do you remember the paths?

**Promiscuity:** Desperation → Infatuation → Isolation → Consumption → Concession  
**Purity:** Dependence → Interest → Invitation → Contribution → Creation

These paths are applicable to dating relationships for all adults. They are also applicable to purity within marriage. We do not stop striving for purity once we get married—it is not a single struggle!

1. Looking at the five levels in the path of purity, where do you think the breakdown occurs in the pursuit of purity?
2. What is required of you to follow the path of purity?

Sunday's teaching covered decisions that young adults need to make. Questions included:

1. Why No Sex Before Marriage?
2. How Should We Date and Save Sex For Marriage?
3. How Far Is Too Far Sexually in Dating Relationships?
4. How Do We Practice Emotional Restraint When Dating?
5. How do we submit to Leadership and Authority when we don't agree?
6. Why Is There a Generational Shift in Authority and Opinion?
7. How Do We Stay Connected With Jesus?
8. What Practices Can Help Get Us Through A Spiritually Empty Season?
9. How Do I Know My Calling?
10. What Is One Thing You Wish Someone Would Tell You in Your 20s?

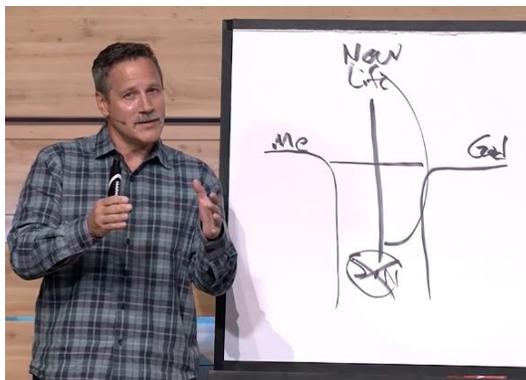
Leaders: Take time to discuss these questions and Miles' responses. A brief summary of each of the responses, along with the video of the sermon, is available on the 12Stone app and at [www.12Stone.com/watch](http://www.12Stone.com/watch).

There were other questions that were not in this week's message but that your group might want to spend time on this week. Ask group members if they would like to discuss any of these questions. The video clips of these discussions are also available on the 12Stone app and online.

- How Should Young Adults Financially Plan?
- Is Having Debt A Sin?
- How Can Young Adults Not Fear The Future?
- How Should We Share Our Faith Without Being Preachy?
- How Should Christians Build Relationships With Non-Believers?
- Should We Tithe Before or After Taxes?
- Should We Give Beyond Tithing?
- How Should We Distinguish Between Moral Outrage and Authentic Passion?
- How Do We Pursue a Calling and Marriage Simultaneously?
- What Are Some Practical Resources on Christian Theology?

- **Bridge Illustration**

PK closed each service by sharing the illustration of the cross of Christ as the bridge to reconcile us to God.



- Do you understand the diagram?
- Have you walked away from your past—repented—to accept the new life that God offered on the cross?
- Can you describe how this decision to follow Christ impacted the way you pursued decisions and destiny in your life?
- How comfortable would you feel sharing this with someone who has not made that decision?

**Wrap-Up/Close:**

- This group is a safe place to discuss our journey with God so that we can practice it in our everyday lives. This series demonstrated that a lot of people have questions about living out our faith. Can we commit together to be real in this group as we try to live lives that demonstrate that we are Christ followers, so that those who are far from God but matter to Him will start looking for the existence of God, to stay connected to the voice of God, and to make decisions with the knowledge that they shape our destiny – here on earth and for eternity?

**Throughout the Week: (Optional)**

- Visit the 12Stone app or [www.12Stone.com/watch](http://www.12Stone.com/watch) to review the questions and answers and read some helpful explanations of moral questions.
- Plan to attend the Prayer Gathering on September 8 at 7:15 p.m. at Central campus.