

Why Am I Here?

Discussion Notes

Philip explained that it is a miracle that any of us are here at all; the incredibly low chances of the Big Bang, the creation of life, the development of our human bodies, the emergence of consciousness amongst many other incredibly improbable factors. He said that when we think about all this we have to say that "you are a miracle".

- Have you considered this before - the miracle of your own existence?
- Does it make you wonder 'why am I here?'
- What would your friends who don't go to church say when faced with this question?

Read through Luke 11:11-32 together. This is a very familiar passage so you may want to challenge your Hub to listen for anything new that stands out to them, or you may want to find a creative way of reading through this together in order to look at the story with fresh eyes. Philip then explained how this story walks us through a fairly universal faith journey of fun to faith to destiny.

FUN

Firstly, the younger son searches for meaning in life in fun. He asks his father to 'give me' his inheritance. He wants possessions and to be able to enjoy the best of life. Then he uses this wealth for wild living.

- Have you experienced searching for meaning in life in 'fun'? Where did it leave you?
- Do you recognise this in your friends? What does it look like for them?
- Why does the search or meaning in 'fun' leave us short?
- How can we challenge the way that our friends search for meaning in their lifestyle whilst still being loving and gracious?

FAITH

This lifestyle eventually leaves the son in a bad way - he is hit by poverty and ends up doing the demeaning job of feeding pigs just to get by. Then the story says he 'came to his senses' and realised how bad things had become. Philip explained that it's almost like he was sleepwalking around previously and then was woken up, and that actually this is what modern life does to us - it keeps us drowsy and we sleepwalk towards looking for meaning in the wrong places.

- Do you agree with this idea? What does Philip mean by 'sleepwalking' in this instance? What is it about modern life that reinforces this?
- Have you had experiences where you've suddenly realised how far you've slipped away from where you are meant to be? What was it like to 'come to your senses'? How did that happen?

Philip then explained that as soon as we come to our senses we start to grow faith. We see the son act on this as he says 'I will set out' and return to his dad. Philip said that: "Faith is an acknowledgement that there is more to life than this and a calculated risk to do something about it."

- Do you agree with this statement?
- Does it change the way you think about your friends who seem distant from God? Would you agree that if they have realised there is something missing and want to do something about it then they are on a faith journey?

- Philip explained that this 'doing something about it' doesn't always mean exploring Jesus. What else do we see people around us looking to to fill that sense that 'there is more to life than this'?

You may want to reread verse 20 together and spend some time meditating on it. This is an incredibly powerful verse and one worth spending some time on!

Philip described the love of the Father - in this story it is called 'compassion' - which runs to the son and overwhelms him with unconditional love. Philip then said that this is the meaning of life: love, and to understand the love the Father has for us.

- What does it actually mean for love to be the meaning of life?
- What difference would it make to our lives if we really understood that?
- What would your friends who don't go to church say to this idea? Do they think of God as loving?
- How does this compassion of the Father effect how we love our friends?

DESTINY

The Father puts a ring on his sons finger, a robe on his back and sandals on his feet. Philip explained that each of these have a symbolic meaning: the ring is an affirmation of the sons identity, the robe is a sign of the Fathers' love for him and the sandals show that he is to run forward into his destiny.

- Do you think of yourself as still on a spiritual journey, even though you've found faith in Jesus? Do you feel like you've got the sandals on?
- What things stop us from living out of our identity as God's ring bearers and heirs?
- How can we open ourselves up more to God's love for us and embrace our royal robes as His beloved children?

Take time as a Hub to pray for one another. Pray for your friends, flat mates and colleagues. Who can you invite to the Dangerous Faith series or the upcoming Alpha Course? Pray for wisdom, boldness and opportunities.