

Foundations for Life

Student Guide

FOCUS

Vision for Life

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Vision Statement:

FOCUS, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, is a national collegiate outreach that meets college students where they are and invites them to examine the meaning and purpose of their lives. Through large group outreach, Bible studies and one on one mentoring, FOCUS missionaries are equipped to introduce college students to the Person of Jesus Christ and the Catholic faith, empowering them to share His love with the world.

Note: This material is a work in progress. We submit all information in good faith to the teachings of the Catholic Church and the ordinary magisterial authority. If anything is found to be in doctrinal error, we humbly retract. If you have any comment about this work, please contact FOCUS at info@focusonline.org.



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Welcome

Foundations for Life is one of FOCUS' introductory Scripture studies. In these chapters, we're going to seek the answers to some important questions about God, the Bible, and human relationships. Some of the material may sound very familiar, or all of it might be completely new to you. We hope that your sincere participation in this study — regardless of your starting point or background — helps you to examine the truth-claims of Scripture and grow in your ability to share them with others.

The small group setting is a great opportunity for growth. To follow the discussion effectively, you'll need this book, a Bible (your group-leader can recommend a translation if you don't have one), the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC), and a notebook and pen. As you and your group work through the questions, think of this as a team sport: everyone has a part to play in achieving the goal. Your questions might never have occurred to the others in the group, or theirs to you — so never be afraid to ask questions and discuss your thoughts.



Chapter 1

Who Are We and Where Are We Going?

First Questions

We all know that some questions have greater consequences than others.

As an exercise, rank the following in order of importance (1 as least important, 4 as most important):

- What should my major be?
- What's my favorite color?
- What should I have for breakfast tomorrow?
- What's the purpose of life?

The way we answer certain questions can change everything. Quite obviously, the answer to “What's my favorite color?” doesn't have as great an impact on the way we think and act as does the answer to “What's the purpose of life?”.

These are the fundamental questions we want to begin to answer in this study:

- Who am I?
- Why am I here?
- Can I know God?

The Bible claims to provide us with the all-important answers. Let's take a look...

Who is God?

Read 1 John 4:16 and Jeremiah 29:11

How do you understand the statement “God is love”?

What is the connection between God’s *love* for you and His *plan* for you?

Read 2 Timothy 3:15-17

What is the role of Scripture in helping to achieve God’s plan for your life?

Who am I?

Growing in self-knowledge is a lifelong journey. To begin to understand where we’re going (or where we should go) and why, we need to understand ourselves better. And to do that, it is helpful to explore our origins.

Read Genesis 1:26

In light of our answers to “Who is God?”, how does this passage help us answer the question “Who am I?”

These questions — “Who is God?” and “Who am I?” — have haunted the heart of man from time immemorial. The answers are revealed through the two basic themes played out in the Scriptures: God’s love and His plan for humanity.

If we are indeed created in God’s image and likeness, how do I experience God’s love or know His plan for me?

The Fall

When God created Adam and Eve, our first parents, they were in right relationship with Him and with each other. This state of “rightness” is called “original holiness and justice” (CCC 404). God made us inherently good, and Adam and Eve’s original state of holiness was meant for all of His children since we all are part of one family. But just like an instruction manual is for the good of a car, God also gave a command to Adam and Eve for their own good—so that they could be truly happy and free. It was not an arbitrary law to restrict them, or a rule to make their lives boring; it was a blueprint for their happiness if they chose to obey. Unfortunately, Adam and Eve did not follow God’s command.