

## **BASIC HUMAN QUESTIONS**

Revised from Colin Chapman, *A Case for Christianity*, Eerdmans Publishing Company.

### **THE INDIVIDUAL:** Who or What am I?

We each seek freedom in life, seek to be ourselves, but we are often not allowed this freedom and become mere machines without any real existence.

### **THE MEANING OF LIFE:** What is the point of it all?

Humans seek meaning in life, wondering why we are here and what good one can do. One often finds no real explanation or purpose, only absurdity.

### **VALUES:** How are we to make moral choices?

If there is no higher order that governs value-making, a human being is left alone, with each person making decisions blindly or subjectively.

### **TRUTH:** Is it possible to know the truth about ourselves and the universe?

What is truth? The question arises time and again in the areas of religion, science, and philosophy. All try to come up with their own answers, for their own discipline, making the quest for truth even harder.

### **LOVE:** What is love and where can it be found?

How can we be wanted and cared for? How can we know that our personal existence makes a difference to someone else?

**SUFFERING:** Why is there suffering and how can we live with it? Humans see the world as it is, wanting all to go well. What will we make of the fact that suffering is such a prominent aspect of life?

**DEATH:** How am I to face death? Is there a life after death? Humans look at the unavoidable nature of death, with the questioning fear of WHY and WHAT NEXT? No one knows for sure what will happen.

**FUTURE OF HUMANITY:** What hope is there for the human race? Looking at the past and present conditions of the world, seeing a decline in the quality of life, many look ahead and see only destruction.

**THE SUPERNATURAL:** Is there anything more than the physical world? Materialism and science have led humans away from "God." Yet, there remains a desire and quest for something beyond this world.

**EVIL:** Is there any hope in fighting evil and injustice? Evil is all around and justice seems to be prodding humans to cry out in distress against the injustice of life.

## **CHRISTIAN ANSWERS TO THESE HUMAN QUESTIONS**

(These answers are similar to those that traditional Christians might give to the basic questions.)

**WHO OR WHAT AM I?** Everyone is created in the image of God, having real value to God. God has made us and knows us intimately.

**WHAT IS THE POINT OF IT ALL?** Life is a gift of God and we can enjoy what God has given to us. Meaning is given because God has a purpose for history and the universe.

**HOW ARE WE TO MAKE MORAL CHOICES?** The ultimate standard for right and wrong is found within the character of God Himself. The ten commandments serve as a moral guide and Jesus advocated their use. Though answers have not been given for all questions, the scriptures and the Holy Spirit serve as a guide to living.

**IS IT POSSIBLE TO KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES AND THE UNIVERSE?** God has revealed truth but has not revealed everything. We can be sure that what has not been revealed is not inconsistent with what we can know. The Bible claims that God has revealed to us what He requires of us. Paul says that we see dimly in a mirror what will someday be clear.

**WHAT IS LOVE AND WHERE CAN IT BE FOUND?** God is the source of all love. Love is the framework for marriage. God meant marriage to be a life-long union.

**WHY IS THERE SUFFERING AND HOW CAN WE LIVE WITH IT?** Suffering is an intrusion into God's universe. The universe was made good. Humans disobeyed God and brought about suffering. Suffering is not an integral part of the universe. Sometimes humans are directly responsible, sometimes not. One must see that God knows what He is doing when He allows us to suffer. Jesus dedicated Himself to relieving suffering and is stronger than Satan. He fixes a worse kind of suffering, that of being eternally separated from God. Jesus Himself took completely undeserved suffering and will one day bring all suffering to an end. His way of dealing with suffering says something to those who suffer unjustly.

**HOW AM I TO FACE DEATH? IS THERE A LIFE AFTER DEATH?**

People in the time of the Old Testament era could believe in life after death because they saw the human being as a creature who was made in the image of God. The vague ideas about life, death, and the afterlife were brought into focus with the death and resurrection of Jesus. Death is the fundamental human problem. If death is really final, then there is nothing worthwhile except self-indulgence.

**WHAT HOPE IS THERE FOR THE HUMAN RACE?** Jesus did not predict an improvement in the human condition. The climax of history will come when Christ

returns to this world and begins the age to come. The outcome of world history is assured.

**IS THERE ANYTHING MORE THAN THE PHYSICAL WORLD?** The Bible speaks about a world of spirits. The Old Testament forbids dabbling in magic.

**IS THERE ANY HOPE IN FIGHTING EVIL AND INJUSTICE?** Evil is an intrusion into the world. Satan is behind all evil. Human beings are led to do evil because of a corrupt nature. Jesus defeated the powers of evil.