

Discussion Questions for *Journey to the Center of the City*

1. Has there ever been a time in your life when you were asking major questions about your purpose and direction? Describe it.
2. What kinds of things might “flying upside down”—that is, choosing a radical alternative to the wider secular culture—entail for the circumstances of your life? Give an example of how you might live differently from how others expect you to, out of love for God.
3. Does God care where we live? To what extent does where we live reflect values central to who we are?
4. Where did you get your ideas about what a “Christian family” should look like?
5. In the family you are building (or would like to build), what role might a common mission play in defining what you become together? What are some examples of this from your experience of the lives of people you know?
6. In what ways might the city help you develop your relationship with God? How are these different from what you might experience in the midst of a “mountain retreat”?
7. What aspects of your character seem most inconsistent with what you perceive to be necessary for success (or survival) in the city? What are some ways you could imagine God working through those traits?
8. What barriers exist in your life that might prevent you from seeking a crosscultural friendship—or that might rule out living in a part of town where most people are ethnically different from you?
9. If “partnering with the poor” sounds intimidating, what one step might you or your group take to simply increase your contact or involvement with people who are poor?
10. How are things like courage, leadership, an alive faith, the ability to confront, models of healthy relationships and so on developed in children?
11. What criteria can you use to discern God’s call on the life of your family?
12. Today’s urban problems are complex and interwoven. In what ways might this indicate why purely political solutions or the infusion of funds into today’s cities seems not to work?

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13. Some of the best literary creations in history are beautiful precisely for their sadness. Consider the book of Lamentations in the Old Testament. What kind of song might God himself be singing when he looks at the state of the inner city today?

14. What part might you sing if you were to join the chorus of people across the country who are singing a new song for the city?

15. Where are you practicing neighbor love in your life? What does it look like?

16. If you could draw something to symbolize what you want your life or your family's life to stand for, what would you draw?

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