

**MODEL UNIT  
BAND C  
LEVEL 1**

# THE LIFE SEARCH

**LIFE CONCEPT: GOD CREATES HUMAN BEINGS**

YEAR: ..... SUGGESTED DURATION: 5 weeks (135 minutes per week)

DATE OF USE: ..... FAITH STATEMENTS: ① 2 ③

**UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)**
**1. GOD CREATES AND LOVES ALL PEOPLE**
**1a** investigate the Bible's teaching that human life is a gift from God

**1b** explore the Christian belief that God continues to create through the gift of procreation

**1c** investigate the Christian belief that Jesus is the ultimate expression of God's unconditional love

**2. GOD CREATES EACH PERSON AS A UNIQUE INDIVIDUAL WITH CHARACTERISTICS AND ABILITIES**
**2a** explore the Christian belief that God created people as physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual beings

**2b** explore the Christian belief that the gospel is a primary factor in healthy self-esteem

**2c** explore the Christian understanding that people have a responsibility to use their abilities in love and service

**3. GOD CREATES ALL PEOPLE TO LIVE IN RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM**
**3a** explore the Christian belief that because God made all people in his image, people have a natural desire to be in relationship with God

**3b** explore religion as an expression of people's desire to know God

**STUDENT ASSESSMENT**
**ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES**

Identify examples of people searching for God. (3a)

Record the Bible's teaching about people's spiritual nature. (3a)

List ways people find answers to their searching questions in world religions. (3b)

Record Paul's teaching in the book of Acts about the way in which God has shown his love for people in Jesus. (1c)

**ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES**


observation of group discussion



work sample



work sample



work sample, observation of group discussion

**UNIT SUMMARY**

Students investigate the spiritual nature of all people and the way this is demonstrated in people's searching for answers or fulfilment to life. They explore the way in which followers of two world religions express their desire to be in relationship with God. Finally, students will consider Paul's visit to the religious Athenians and the way in which he spoke to them about their spiritual search.

## UNIT NOTES

This unit can be integrated with the Society and Environment topic *World Religions*. Section Three need not be completed in Christian Studies sessions. During the unit the teacher could read a novel about a person who became a Christian and found fulfilment in their Christian faith, eg *Too Tough for Tears* by Barry Goode or *The Cross and the Switchblade* by David Wilkerson.

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. THE LIFE SEARCH

Try not to be judgmental as the students discuss things people search for and how they think they might find them. Use magazines, especially women's magazines such as *Women's Day*, to draw attention to the number of advertisements for astrologers and fortune-tellers. Also highlight the advertisements that imply people search for success, beauty and wealth.

As a class, make a list of things people search for in life and where people search to find them, eg

- information about the future > astrologers
- happiness in relationships > advice columns
- beauty and youth > gym, treatments.

Skim through a magazine such as *Women's Day*. Study the advertisements of (and articles by) astrologers, fortune-tellers, etc.

- What evidence is there that people are searching for something beyond themselves and their own experience?
- What are people searching for?
- Where do they think they will find it?
- How do the magazines convey a sense of people's lives being incomplete?

Tell students that all of this is not new; people have been searching for centuries. They will be investigating what people are searching for, why people are searching, and where they are searching. Students can continue to gather evidence (in newspapers, magazines, TV guides) about people's search for ultimate answers and spiritual wholeness.

## DEVELOPMENT

### 2. WHY DO PEOPLE SEARCH?

Christians believe God created people to be in relationship with him. The Bible teaches that once people sinned, the relationship

between God and people broke down. People have searched for spiritual wholeness ever since. Some people search for a higher or supreme being or a controlling force in life outside of themselves. People search for answers to questions about life.

Students complete a quiz on their spirituality. See Teacher Resource Sheet (TRS) C1/1.

Tell the students that human beings have a spiritual dimension, an instinctive longing for something greater and more powerful, a sense that there is something beyond what they can see and explain. Discuss the fascination people have with the future and with the supernatural.

Students skim through a TV guide to make a list of the programs that demonstrate people search for something beyond this world, eg *X Files*, *Unsolved Mysteries*.

Students read Genesis 1:26,27; Genesis 2:7,18–25; Psalm 139:1–18 and list what these Bible verses teach about people. Discuss:

- What do you think it means to be made in God's image?
- Why do you think Christians believe all people are spiritual?

Lead students to understand that the Bible teaches that God created people to be in relationship with him. Christians believe that without God people are incomplete and search for things to give them a sense of wholeness.

### 3. THE SPIRITUAL SEARCH

To build a greater awareness of the universal spiritual searching of people, explore two world religions (Buddhism and Islam in this material). You may choose two other religions represented in your school or community and use the same approach.

You may investigate the religions during Christian Studies and/or Society and Environment time. Conduct the investigation with sensitivity and beware of confirming prejudices or stereotypes. Encourage students to understand that it is natural for people to experience this spiritual search.

In *Christian Studies* lessons, we have been investigating answers to many life questions Christians find in their spiritual search. In these next sessions we will explore answers Muslims and Buddhists find in their spiritual search. Use the suggestions on TRS C1/2 to guide the investigation. Choose from the following activities to explore the world religion.

- Contact the imam (leader of the prayers) at a mosque to invite a Muslim to speak to the class or arrange a visit to a mosque, or
- Contact someone at a Buddhist temple (vihara) or invite a Buddhist to speak to the class.
- View videos about Islam or Buddhism.
- Using print and electronic resources, investigate the beliefs and practices of Islam or Buddhism (see Recommended Resources Menu).

Students record their information on a class chart or display about Islam or Buddhism.

Discuss:

- What are the similarities and differences between Islam and Buddhism?
- Why do you think each religion appeals to the people who follow it?
- What do you understand about Muslims or Buddhists now that you didn't understand before?
- How does each religion answer some of life's questions?

If the question arises: 'How do you know which religion is true?', tell students that all people need to find answers to their searching.

The teacher may give a testimony about how the Christian faith offers them fulfilment, but emphasise that each person needs to find answers themselves. In Christian Studies students are given the opportunity to begin their search and take up the question: How do we know what's true?

Paul faced a similar question in Athens.

#### **4. PAUL'S RESPONSE TO PEOPLE WHO SEARCH**

As you investigate Paul's speech at Athens, point to Paul's acknowledgment of the Athenians' religions. Emphasise that while Christians can witness to their own faith, they should also respect people who hold other beliefs.

Explain that the people Paul met in Athens were searching, just as people today are searching. They demonstrated this need for something more (for help beyond their own power) by creating gods to love and worship.

Use Bible handbooks and encyclopedias to explore the historical context and gather information about the Greek gods.

Read the story of Paul's visit to Athens (Acts 17:16–21) or tell the story from Paul's perspective. Discuss:

- What evidence is there that the people in Athens were searching?
- Where did they hope to find answers?

Ask students to write what they think Paul will say to the people of Athens after he has observed their worship of idols.

Discuss students' responses and then read Acts 17:22–34.

- How does Paul begin his talk to the people of Athens?
- What does Paul say about the Athenians' search for spiritual fulfilment?
- Who does Paul say can bring an end to their search?
- What does Paul say about this God?

Tell the students that Christians believe that the search is over. They believe that through Jesus God has found them; through Jesus God offers people all they need to be complete.

#### **5. MY RESPONSE TO PEOPLE WHO SEARCH**

In this section students prepare a message for people today. Encourage students to be creative. This could be integrated with English Speaking outcomes.

Students use TRS C1/3 and imagine they are Paul or another Christian missionary who has just arrived in their town or city today.

Students work in groups to write a speech that Paul might give to people in their local community. Each group presents their speech.

TRS C1/3 has a number of Bible readings students can use to develop their speech. Students may also use the *Luther's Small Catechism* explanation of the Apostles' Creed.

### **RESPONSE**

#### **5. REFLECTIONS**

Provide time for students to reflect on what they have learnt. See TRS C1/4. The reflections may reveal some burning issues that students would like to research further. The teacher could ask the local pastor to help with the questions.

Use the opportunity to tell the students that some life questions will always be mysteries. However, Christians believe, that when people believe in Jesus, they can experience a wholeness and peace that only God can give. Faith in Jesus also gives Christians the freedom to leave some mysteries unexplained.

## YOU WILL NEED

- ☐ magazines, particularly *Women's Day*
- ☐ Teacher Resource Sheets  
C1/1,1/2,1/3,1/4

- ☐ Bible encyclopedias and handbooks
- ☐ *Luther's Small Catechism*

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## INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

**ENGLISH:** *Literature:* Explain and justify own opinions about texts. Find and cite elements of a text to support a point of view. Participate in directed reading and thinking activities. Plan, draft and revise own writing. *Mass Media:* Consider how the target audience may influence the way information is presented. *Everyday Texts:* Consider the needs of an audience when speaking or writing. Plan, prepare and present short talks. Strategies for gathering, recording and reporting data.

**THE ARTS:** *Drama:* Improvise and experiment in structured drama. Sustain a dramatic role. Shape own drama for particular audiences or purposes.

**SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT:** *Investigate, Communicate, Participate:* Gather, organise and interpret information. Draw conclusions. Consider appropriate ways of presentation. *Culture: Belief Systems:* Investigate the role and importance of religion, points of view and comparison.

from the National Statements and Profiles

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## UNIT EVALUATION

Which activities worked well in this unit?

Which resources were useful in the implementation of this unit?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes towards people's search for God?

How did I respond to the range of students' understanding of the spiritual aspect of all people?

What would I do differently if I was teaching this unit again?

How will I use and build on knowledge, understandings, skills, attitudes, and values students have developed in this unit?

# Spiritual Me?

Complete the following quiz to find out about your own spiritual nature.  
Circle the answer that best reflects your position.

1. Do you believe that there is a force controlling the universe? .....YES NOT SURE NO
2. Do you read your stars? .....YES NOT SURE NO
3. Do you believe that miracles can occur? .....YES NOT SURE NO
4. Do you believe in God? .....YES NOT SURE NO
5. Do you sometimes experience a feeling of being incomplete? .....YES NOT SURE NO
6. Do you believe that the force of good will overcome evil? .....YES NOT SURE NO
7. Do you like to meditate or spend quiet time alone? .....YES NOT SURE NO
8. Do you like to see beautiful things? .....YES NOT SURE NO
9. Do you believe in love? .....YES NOT SURE NO

**RATE YOURSELF**  
If you answered 'yes'  
to 5 or more questions, it is quite likely  
you are a very spiritual person.

*Think about it . . .*

What are you searching for in life?.....

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Where do you look for it? .....

.....

How will you know when you find it or it finds you?.....

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MUSLIM HINDU BUDDHIST ANIMIST JEWISH BAHAI CHRISTIAN SIKH TAOIST CONFUCIAN

## How do people see different religions answering their search for spiritual fulfilment?

### INVESTIGATING A WORLD RELIGION

We will be investigating two major religions  
of the world.

We will explore the way in which people see the  
different religions answering their search for spiritual  
fulfilment.

You will need to gather the following information:

- Who is the founder of the religion?
- What do the followers of the religion believe about God?
- What is their sacred writing or book?
- What are their places of worship?  
Draw what they look like.
- What does this religion offer to its followers?
- What does being a follower of this religion involve?
- What do the followers believe is the way to find happiness and fulfilment?

MUSLIM HINDU BUDDHIST ANIMIST JEWISH BAHAI CHRISTIAN SIKH TAOIST CONFUCIAN

# If Paul came to \_\_\_\_\_

(your town or city)

*Imagine you are the apostle Paul arriving in your town or city for the first time.*

What would you observe? \_\_\_\_\_

What evidence is there in your town or city that people are searching for something they can really put all their trust in? \_\_\_\_\_

What would you say to the people in your town?

- How would you begin to gain their attention?

- What would you tell them about the God who can end their search?

Your group will present a short talk to the class in which you pretend to be Paul speaking to people in your town. You will need to consider carefully what you will say and how you will say it. Your aim is to convince people that God is what they have been searching for.

These Bible passages about God and people provide information you can use in your talk:

## **Paul's speech to the people at Athens**

Acts 17:22–31

## **God created the universe**

Psalms 104; Job 12:7–10; Job 38:2–12; Job 42:2,3

## **God created people**

Psalms 139:13–18; Genesis 2:7,18–25

## **God loves people**

Isaiah 43:1,2; Romans 3:22–24; Romans 8:31–39; 1 John 3:1; 1 John 4:7–10

## **Jesus demonstrates God's love**

John 14:6; Romans 5:6–8; Ephesians 3:17–19

## **God guides people**

Psalms 23:3,4; Psalm 63:1–8; Proverbs 3:5; Ecclesiastes 12:12,13; Matthew 6: 25–34; Matthew 10: 26–31; Matthew 22:37–39; John 14:27; Colossians 3:12–15

# REFLECTIONS

## The Life Search

**Think about this unit of work . . .**

What have you learnt about people? .....

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What have you learnt about Islam and Buddhism? .....

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What have you learnt about the Bible's message about ways people can find fulfilment? .....

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What have you learnt about God? .....

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What have you enjoyed most? .....

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What would you like to investigate further? .....

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Has the unit changed your understanding of people's search?

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If so, how? .....

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