

GOD,

**I HAVE A
QUESTION**



...OR TWO



BY RANDY ELROD
CELEBRATING THE
COURAGE TO BE WHO
YOU REALLY ARE

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MULTIDISCIPLINARY PANEL

A special thanks to these eight amazing people from diverse and extraordinary walks of life who gave their time to help us wrestle with these questions. Their transparency and candid honesty is testimony to the depths of who they are.



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After finishing his studies in Philosophy and Film at Baylor and St. Andrews, Jordan continued his travels around the world as a freelance filmmaker. He has worked primarily within developing countries to visualize the stories of numerous non-profits in both documentary and narrative form. He believes that story-sharing helps motivate our empathy and attentiveness towards others. Jordan is now based in Nashville where he operates as the Co-Creator of WELD, a collaborative workspace for fellow creators.

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Several years ago Christopher Pilny took a job as a cashier at Victoria's Secret. Essays and interviews about his experience have since been published on *Salon*, *AskMen*, *Business Insider* and *British GQ*. He is currently a staff writer for [SmallBusiness.com](https://www.SmallBusiness.com) and co-produces a funny, female storytelling show called "That Time of the Month." You can read more of his writing at www.ChristopherPilny.com.

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Vaishali grew up in several cities, from Long Beach to Memphis, ending up in Nashville, TN. After graduating college from the University of Georgia, she earned her Doctor of Medicine in Dentistry from the University of Alabama in Birmingham. Following the completion of a General Practice Residency from the Veterans Affairs Hospital in Brooklyn, NY, she accepted a position at a Health Department, primarily treating children and adolescents with a variety of dental needs.



FOREWORD

The most dangerous secrets are those we keep from ourselves. It's so ironic that many of these secrets only come out later in life after intense suffering and expensive psychotherapy.

It takes a wise and experienced guide to help us break the chains of institutional lies. The lies we've been told as truth by those we trust can be dangerous and volatile.

Those dirty little lies turn into dirty little secrets. Especially if they are spoken by those we have been taught to give unquestioning respect: our teachers, our preachers, our culture, and yes, even our family.

They don't intend to lie to us, but they do. Heck, they've been lied to as well. It's an endless tangle of rusty chains that hold us back from who we really are.

Why? Because they have told us the wrong answers? No, it's not the answers. It's because they have not allowed us to ask questions. To question things.

You see, asking questions can free us from the lies of control.

And so often it takes devastating suffering to provide the courage and wisdom to ask the questions we have unconsciously labeled taboo.



What if I told you that asking God these eight simple—but very, very hard questions—might spare you some of the suffering life inevitably brings?

What if you could be who YOU want to be and not that person your teachers, church, culture and family told you that you had to be.

And what if I said that these questions might help introduce you to yourself?

In fact, they just might give you freedom from the chains of your past and help you choose who YOU want to become!

Psychologist James Hollis says it this way: "The goal of life is not happiness, but meaning. It is precisely where we encounter the "gravitas" of life that we also uncover its purpose, its dignity and its deepest meaning.

INTRODUCTION

The philosopher Voltaire said, *"Judge a man by his questions rather than his answers."*

If you've always been afraid to ask questions because you were told by your family, "Children are to be seen and not heard," you were told at school that "Curiosity killed the cat," you were told by religion, "The answer is NO—about everything," and you are told daily by society, "It is what it is," then I've got something VERY important to tell you...

Manage the fear and the anxiety FIRST and the questions won't be an issue. It's true. And it's really the ONLY way to discover EVERYTHING YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK.

My name is Randy Elrod, and as an ordained minister, for twenty-nine years I served as Pastor of the Arts at two of the most influential mega-churches in the world. I'm also a painter, musician, entrepreneur, speaker, and mentor. I've authored five books, two of which hit #1 on the Amazon Best-Seller list, and also created and sold two very successful companies, one during the height of the NASDAQ boom.

One of my friends, a Type-A wild man who worked for years in the commodity pit in Chicago, says I have a golden horseshoe stuffed up my rear end.

But I have a confession.

Eight years ago I felt like a total fraud. My life felt like it had been torn into a thousand pieces and I was tired and miserable and felt like giving up.

Thankfully I finally discovered a way to live FREE and CLEAR.

It's about breaking the chains of family, education, religion, and society, and finally asking life's most important questions.

Turns out there's a real universal human need underneath these unasked questions.

This video series and self-coaching guide are designed to give you the confidence to craft your life questions and discover the answers you deserve.

USING THIS GUIDE

(Information to Help You Have a Great Self-Coaching Experience)

1. Notice there are three sections for each question: (1) Sessions; (2) Reflect; and (3) Respond. It will be helpful to familiarize yourself with these sections before you get started.

2. Decide the rhythm you will use for "God, I Have a Question...or Two." The self-coaching guide is designed to work through one question per week, i.e., there are five daily readings for each question. But remember, this is a **self**-coaching guide. So work at a pace that is comfortable for you.

3. Use this workbook as a guide, but be sure to put your personal and specific needs first. If you think of a better question than the next one in the guide, ask it. If you sense it is important to spend extra time in a particular section, do it. Don't measure success by how much material you cover; instead, simply seek to connect with yourself and find out what these questions are asking of the deepest parts of you.

Now check out the outline for each session on the following page to understand how the sessions will flow.



OUTLINE FOR EACH SESSION

It can be easy to struggle with the very basic question: “Can I dare ask questions of God?” That is why we have tried to provide more than enough information and questions to guide you. Inside this self-coaching guide you will find sample questions, discussion, a place for notes, and even additional material for you to explore on your own during the week.

A TYPICAL SESSION FOR GOD, I HAVE A QUESTION...OR TWO INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:

GETTING STARTED. If you don’t learn to ask yourself honest questions, you won’t make it very long with this series! That’s why each session is designed to begin with the video, to give you courage and “guidance” for your own questions. The video will serve as the initial guide. You can “break the ice” by asking yourself the question(s) that Randy and the panel bring up in the video, which should then help you reflect and respond to some of your own questions, or experiences.

VIDEO. The *God, I Have A Question...or Two* video teachings serve as an important companion to the self-coaching guide. The DVD or digital files contain brief segments from Randy Elrod and members of the multidisciplinary panel that accompany each question. Watching them will prepare you for a time of meaningful contemplation, questions, and growth.

REFLECT. During the Reflect section, you will begin to process the information you watched. We want you to go beyond simply consuming the thoughts presented and instead consider: “What is this asking of me? What deeper questions is this prompting?” We want to help you have the courage to ask honest and candid questions of yourself, as well as others, and of God.

RESPOND. This section is about practically applying the questions you are reflecting upon. During Respond, you should go beyond asking, “What is this question(s) asking of me?” to another, equally important question: “What am I going to do about it?” We know that it is not simply enough to see, hear, and ask—we must take these questions and use them as a pathway to deeper meaning. But what does that look like? How can you do it? In this section, you’ll have an opportunity to go beyond good questions to the *right* questions for you. You will consider further questions that are designed to help you think through the implications of what you are asking. These sessions should lead to a time for your personal response to these questions, seeking to keep this crucial discipline of internal consciousness active at all times.

GOING DEEPER. If you have time and want to dig deeper into additional readings about each question, we’ve provided additional material and websites. If you find yourself asking more questions and desiring more guidance each week, the Daily Readings section will provide you with plenty to discuss with yourself, others, and God. This section enables you to expand your study, if you wish.

DAILY READINGS. Each week on the Daily Readings pages we provide additional information to read and upon which to reflect between your videos. We suggest you use this section to discover deeper questions on your own throughout the week. This time should begin and end with contemplation. Don’t rush; take enough time to hear your soul’s questions.

WEEKLY TASK. For each session of *God, I Have A Question...or Two* we have provided a task emphasizing an important truth from the session. Facing the task, no matter how difficult, will help you grow. We encourage you to give this discipline a try.



WHY QUESTIONS?

**BECAUSE GOOD QUESTIONS LEAD TO FREEDOM
AND THE RIGHT QUESTIONS LEAD TO MEANING**

Psychologist Dr. James Hollis, Sociologist Joseph Campbell, and Anthropologist Donald Brown have spent their lives identifying behaviors common to human beings throughout history. By identifying these "universal" traits, stages of life, and what Hollis calls "Swamplands," we are able to pinpoint questions of meaning that are a part of the wallpaper of our lives. Questions that we ALL ask. Questions that lead to meaning.



THE TASK:

It's about breaking the chains of family, education, religion, and society, and finally asking life's most important questions.

.....

TURNS OUT THERE'S A REAL UNIVERSAL HUMAN NEED UNDERNEATH THESE UNASKED QUESTIONS.

GOD, I HAVE A QUESTION...OR TWO



The goal for this video series and self-coaching guide is twofold.

First: To provide a foundation of understanding about these eight questions that every one of us deal with throughout our lives. These eight universal topics are not “dragons” to be slain—they are dragons to be tamed—to be understood and managed.

Second: To help you become comfortable asking questions of God, of others, and most importantly, of yourself. We have been trained by the institutions of life not to ask questions—we would like to champion and celebrate your courage to ask candid and honest questions.

BEGIN YOUR QUEST

USE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES TO GET STARTED.



QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

1. What are you hoping to get out of this video series? What prompted you to do this?

2. What do you love most about yourself? What is one thing you wish you could change about yourself?

3. Whether the habit of asking questions is new or ongoing, it's always important to reflect and review your motivations. We recommend that you choose one or two big goals—ones you haven't previously focused on or ones you particularly identify with—to emphasize during this study. Choose ones that will take you to the next stage of intimacy and health with yourself, with others, and...with God.

GOD I HAVE A QUESTION...OR TWO

FEW THINGS CAN SHAPE US MORE THAN THE RIGHT QUESTIONS.





"REAL-LIFE QUESTIONS PROVIDE REVELATION,
GLIMMERS OF EUREKA."
-RANDY ELROD

REFLECT

*It is exhilarating to be FREE and CLEAR. To be allowed to ask any question. ANY. Question.
If you could really ask ANY question without worry of censure from your religion, family, or friends...
what would it be?*

MAYBE QUESTIONS ARE THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH.

1. In the video, we heard the question posed by the inimitable Satchel Paige, "If you didn't know how old you are how old would you be?" To get "warmed up" answer that universal question below.

2. Do you really believe that if God is big enough to be God—he could probably handle a few hard questions from you?

3. British educator Sir Ken Robinson says, "Education is driven by the idea of one answer and this idea of divergent thinking (of questioning things) becomes stifled." Why do you think the institutions of life spank out, church out, comb out, and educate out our questions?

4. In the video "The Value of Right Questions," Randy identifies a pivotal question from each decade of his life that changed him forever. Identify and list a question from each decade of your life that has shaped who you are now.

RESPOND NOTES

Now that you have spent some time reflecting on the importance of asking the right questions, let's consider how you will apply the wisdom you have learned from the video and during your reflection time. Then think about practical steps to take in the coming week to live out what you have learned.



ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS

Do you ever feel like you've grown out of asking questions? What do you think that means?

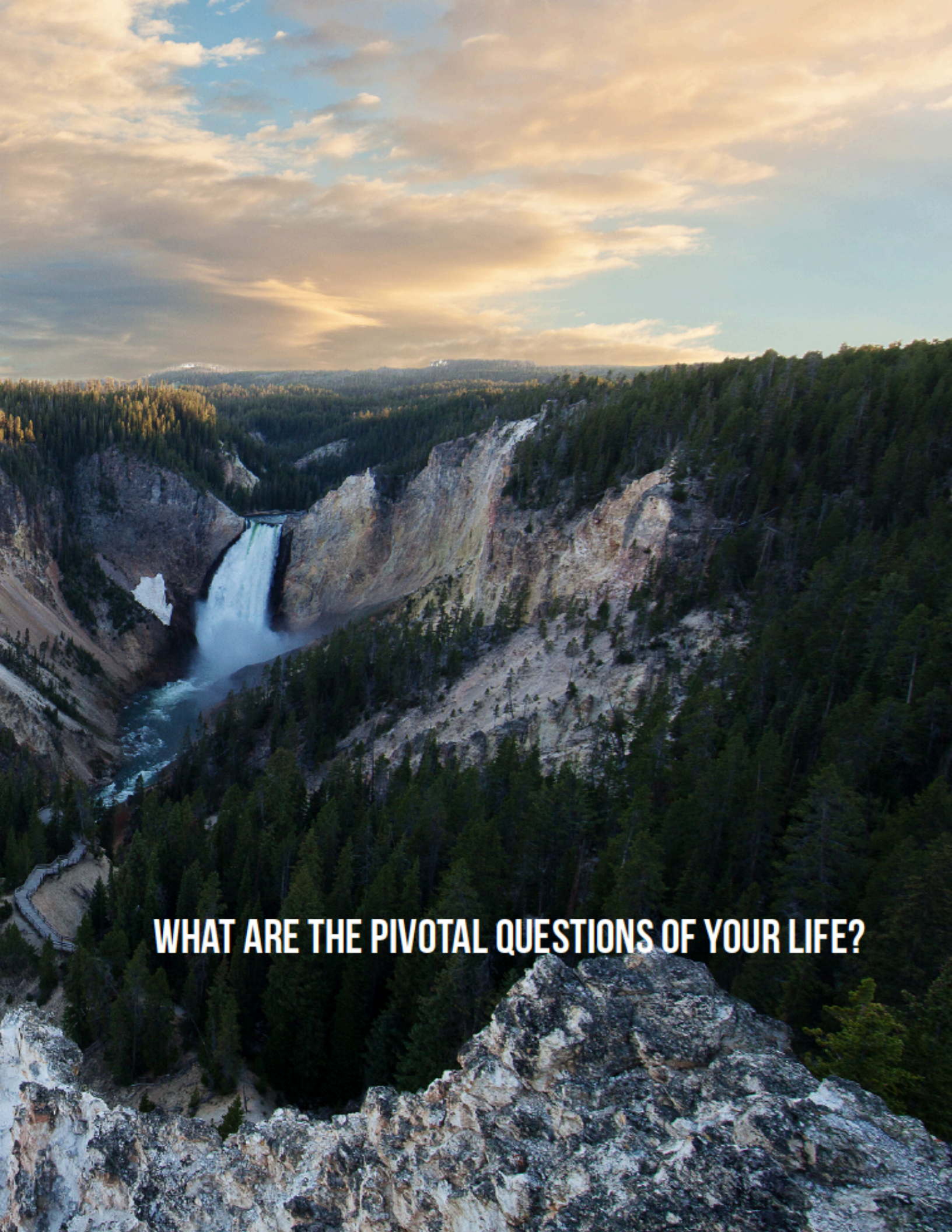
Why does asking the right questions matter to you? Was there ever a time they didn't matter to you? What changed?

ACTION STEPS

Answer this question: "How can I be more honest this week with myself, with others, and with God?"

This week, how will you nurture your connections with yourself? Can you commit to spending time in reading or reflection (Use the Daily Readings section to guide you.) Write below how you plan to respond this week, and then, at your next session, evaluate your progress and challenges.

AN HONEST QUESTION IS NOT DISRESPECTFUL.



WHAT ARE THE PIVOTAL QUESTIONS OF YOUR LIFE?

