



## LOST IN TERRA INCOGNITA

It is strange but true that we live most of our lives in an unknown territory. We spend our lives searching for something that would satisfy a great need inside us. We never find it because our great need is really unknown to us. All we know is something is wrong both within our world and within our self.

We wish that we were better than we are, but we're not. And that realization brings shame and a desire to hide, to avoid real contact, to present to others only that part of us we think will be well received. We want to hide the rest of our true self; not because we desire to avoid offending others with our ugly side, but because we fear their rejection. So we live for the purpose of self-protection, clinging to whatever brings us happiness and security. We have accepted a dividing distance between our self and the people we long to be close to. As we journey on in *Terra Incognita*, the quality of our life continues to diminish.

The human race got off to a bad start when Adam and Eve yielded to Satan's lie that more satisfaction was available in a life outside of God's revealed will. Their waywardness infected humanity with the disease of self-management (**Rom. 5:19**). Now, no one seeks after God in order to find life. The most natural thing we do is to develop strategies for living a life that is dependent upon our own resources.

All of us are born with a nature that is both thirsty and foolish (**Rom. 1:22**). We refuse to trust God to quench our thirst. Instead we insist on looking for our own spot to dig a well, searching for a fulfillment we can generate. So we end up drinking from the broken cisterns of the world (**Jer. 2:13**). We buy into what the world offers. In our search for self-identity, we seek fame, basing our self-identity on the admiration of other people. We desire fortune, thinking that our worth is based on money and material things. We long for power, believing that our value is based on position and control. We crave for sex, basing our fulfillment on physical pleasure. And most of all, we're captivated by religion, accepting the myth that spirituality is based on faith in something mystical.

Our true great need is based on how our Creator designed us to live. God intended that we warmly respond to the loving strength of another and to deeply desire what we were built to enjoy. His plan really is quite simple. Adam and Eve were to turn to God as the strong one on whom they could depend and then to each other to both enjoy what the other uniquely provided and to give of themselves to enhance each other's pleasure.

Ever since God expelled Adam and Eve from the garden, we have lived in an unnatural environment, a world in which we were not designed to live. We were built to enjoy a garden without weeds,

relationships without friction, fellowship without distance.

God created man to have inner needs that can only be met by two divine gifts. Adam was created to live in a **loving relationship** – to have Someone love him totally and unconditionally. He was made to fulfill a **significant purpose** – to do something that matters: to rule God's earth kingdom.

I want someone to be involved with me who is strong enough to handle everything about me without retreating or feeling threatened. Most of us are terrified to be open with each other, not because we're afraid of hurting or discouraging people, but because we fear that others will retreat from us. We hate to admit that the people that we depend on are simply too weak to stay deeply involved once they face all that we are. We don't want to accept the fact that, since the Fall, no human being has the capacity to love us completely.

I was created to matter, to have impact. I long to know that one sees something in me that's valuable – my existence is important because I'm capable of making a difference. And I want to be treated with respect not just when I do well, but also when I stumble.

Try as we may, we cannot rid our self of the desire to have what no other human being can really give. We are dependent by nature. We require resources outside our self if we're to enjoy either physical or personal life. We literally and absolutely need someone stronger than we are to look after us and to provide us with what we were designed to enjoy.

We long for both respect and involvement, impact and relationship. We are thirsty for what our soul thrives on. In the desert of a fallen world, our soul is parched. In our wanderings in *Terra Incognita*, we receive neither respect nor involvement to the degree we deeply crave.

Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink." (**John 7:37**) What we need only He can provide. We were built for infinite love from Someone who needs nothing in return and for eternal impact through Someone whose purposes are supremely important.

We cannot live without God, because we were created to enjoy only what God provides. Our longings are at the very center of our dependency. We find what we're truly searching for when we find Someone who loves us completely and gives significance and purpose to our lives.