Living With The Questions That Trouble Us

Life 1: A Series of Questions and Answers

1. Philip and the Ethiopian
   "How can I understand under someone guide me?"

2. God's Call to Moses
   "What about your people?"
   "What about you?"

3. In the Life of Jesus
   "Are you the one who is to come?"
   "Are you the one who is to inherit eternal life?"

4. The Dialogues of the Cross
   The Man and God's Response
   "Are you the expected one?"

5. Much of Life Is A Dialogue of Questions and Answers
   "Are you the one who is to inherit eternal life?"

6. The Life of a Family
   How Often Does Someone Have to Answer All Those Questions
   "Are you the expected one?"
   "Are you the one who is to inherit eternal life?"
   "Are you the expected one?"
   "Are you the one who is to inherit eternal life?"
   "Are you the one who is to inherit eternal life?"
The Questions of Our Young People

1. The Way in Which They Live
   - The Urging, Defiance, and Challenging of Authenticity.

2. The Books They Read
   - Why Comics or Rats or Movies, Magazine.

3. The Kind of Music
   - Jazz or Rock n' Roll.

4. Their Hobbies
   - The Hating of the Conformity.

5. Often These Are Our Questions
   - Who Am I?
   - What is the Purpose of it All?
Why the Big Front?

1. What about the gap between Belief and Action, the Pitch and Production?
   - Belief in God but no difference in life, stuff.
   - A revolutionary kingdom but pretty tame.
   - Followers of Jesus, but living on our own way.
   - Young people tell us:
     - 84,690 are Current Members.
     - 18,760 believe in the message.
     - 7,3 say the Bible is completely true.
     - What difference does it make?
     - Perhaps they have learned from us.
     - A thousand white lies or keeping up with the people in our belief.

"My father says they're Christian. Then why do they act like they do?"

2. The Brain and the Institutionalism of In All Read
   - J. D. Salinger and The Catcher in the Rye
   - The Valorization of the Word of Holden C.
   - The Brain in Radio City Music Hall
- Why the Big Deal?

The success complex

The hiding in organization

Turned in our own way.
Will you tell us the Faith?

- Holden Caulfield's question
  "Where do the Angels go when Central High Freeze Up?"
  The discerning students at S.F.C. who saw that.

1. The Mystery of Life
   - Jacob wrestling "What is your name?"
   - "Who are You?"
   - "Isn't it Our Own?"

2. What About God?
   - "In an Exploding Space Age!"
   - "In the Beginning God..."

3. Does Christ Truly Died?
   - The question of the Devil's Pigs
   - Is Jesus the Son of God? What difference does it make?

4. What About Me?
   - Who Am I and What Am I Here for?
   - Can I Control Myself?
   - Will Am I love Me?
Why Are You So Dead?

1. Young People Live in A World of Dynamic Action
   - Jerry's Experience
     - Faggy at the Philharmonic
     - The hydraulic window lifts on the red Cadillac
     - Hurrying to the Church for "He Comes"
     - One Foundation

2. The Christian Life Seems So Nice and Empty
   - Raw and Bored
   - A Place of Negativity and Moralism

3. Yet the White Christian Made Of It
   - Like a Wedding Feast
   - Like a Banquet
   - Starving and Weeping over Lost Sinners
1. Have You Really Given Yourself to Anything?
   - Catcher in the Rye
     - Holden asks, "You really don't like anything do you?"
     - Then the Ducks
     - People coming home from Clunes
     - The boy singing, "If a body catches a body"
     - Then the food comes to him
       - Catching boys and girls running over the cliff.

2. For Anything Become Central to All?
   - Jesus said, "No man can serve two Masters."
     - The heart of great virtue
     - Treasure in a field
     - Sing in response to one's invitation
   - Paul said, "His own things I do forgetting all else."
   - Kierkegaard: "Shut up heart in to one thing."

3. Love friends at Westinger.
"I come in when the goddamn stage show was on. The Rockettes were kicking their heads off, the way they do when they're in lime with their arms around each other's waist. The audience applauded like mad, and some guy behind me kept saying to his wife, 'You know what that is? That's precision.' He killed me. Then, after the Rockettes, a guy came out in a tuxedo and roller skates on, and started skating under a bunch of little tables and telling jokes while he did it. He was a very good skater and all, but I couldn't enjoy it much because I kept picturing him practicing to be a guy that rollerskates on the stage. It seemed so stupid. Then, after him, they had this Christmas thing they have at Radio City every year. All these angels start coming out of the boxes and everywhere, guys carrying crucifixes and stuff all over the place and the whole bunch of them -- thousands of them -- singing "Come All Ye Faithful!" like mad. Big deal. It's supposed to be religious as hell, I know, and very pretty and all, but I can't see anything religious or pretty about a bunch of actors carrying crucifixes all over the stage. When they were all finished and started going out the boxes again, you could tell they could hardly wait to get a cigarett or something. I saw it with old Sally Hayes the year before, and she kept saying how beautiful it was, the costumes and all. I said old Jesus probably would've puked if he could see it -- all those fancy costumes and all. Sally said I was a sacrilegious atheist. I probably am. The thing Jesus really would've liked would be the guy that plays the kettle drums in the orchestra."

You see, many kinds are convinced we've got a big deal, a good thing but it is all turned inward on itself. Somehow they almost seem to know instinctively that the church was not meant to be big and successful, that there is something about its life which is supposed to be real when everything else becomes a sham. When we lose our integrity because we reflect the spirit and mood of our age our sharpest critics become those who hate sham. Whatever else we can say about this generation of young Americans is they hate sham. If we assume, therefore, that we can build a program for young people by changing the time of the meeting or arranging a new room, we have only added to the superficiality which young people feel is already there. The real tough question we have to ask ourselves now is "Where is the redemptive center of the church?" I am personally convinced we will not find it by doing more and more, bigger and better than we have ever done it before. The fiercest, toughest conversations that I have been