

2008 CROSSROADS CAREER[®] EXPLORER GUIDE

Now available online with hotlinks to over 150 career tools, exercises, devotionals and network groups

MAXimizing Your CAREER Potential

Your Name _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Provided by Member Churches in the



Helping people at crossroads in their careers to hear and follow God's calling

WELCOME TO THE 2008 CROSSROADS CAREER[®] EXPLORER GUIDE



You are an incredible, one-of-a-kind person. Made for real success at work. Being all you can be. Making the most of every opportunity. Finding your true calling. Not only maximizing your career and income potential, but also your family, personal and faith life!

Is that true of you now? If not, it can be!

Just imagine getting up every day with the conviction that you are on the planet for a purpose. This kind of real success is at work in you – transcending work and permeating your whole life – in balance with your family and personal life – and centered in your faith.

Is it possible? Yes – by hearing and following God’s calling to not just a better place for you – but to be a better you in whatever place you are.

Over the past 20 years, we have helped thousands of people to explore careers, find jobs and discover God’s calling. We learned from their experiences, and we are happy to share what we learned with you in this guide. You are welcome to use this guide on your own – but it’s even better done with others. Here is what you will find in this guide...

Chapter 1: Are You at a Crossroads in Your Career? 1-1 to 1-13

Chapter 2: How to Explore a Crossroads in Your Career

Step 1: Attitude—Accepting Loss and Opportunity 2-1 to 2-10
Step 2: Aptitude—Discovering Your Unique Qualities..... 3-1 to 3-11
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Step 4: Searching—Finding Opportunities 5-1 to 5-11
Step 5: Sorting—Interviewing and Evaluating 6-1 to 6-13
Step 6: Selecting—Walking in Work Prepared for You 7-1 to 7-8

Chapter 3: Hearing and Following God’s Calling..... 8-1 to 8-9

This is your time. This is your opportunity. This is what the Lord says... “Stand at the crossroads and look... ask for the ancient paths... ask where the good way is... and walk in it... and you will find rest for your souls...” Jeremiah 6:16

Brian Ray
Founder
Crossroads Career[®] Network

PREPARATION FOR USING THE GUIDE

ONLINE PREPARATION

The 2008 Crossroads Career® Explorer Guide is now available online with hotlinks to over 150 career tools, exercises, devotionals and network groups with free, easy and confidential registration on www.crossroadscareer.org.

For the Career Explorer with a Church Membership Key:

1. On the Home page, click on the **Career Explorers** button.
2. On Career Explorer page, point to and click on the lower left button, **Free Career Explorer Membership**.
3. Select the church from which you are receiving help, and enter the church membership key which should be available from one of the Crossroads Career® Ministry volunteers.

Church Membership Key _____

Remember your email **Login** _____ **Password** _____

For the Individual Explorers who has already registered:

Remember your email **Login** _____ **Password** _____

4. After completing your registration, you have immediate, free access to all career explorer materials including the 2008 Crossroads Career® Explorer Guide which you can download/print and also use online with hotlinks.

WORKBOOK PREPARATION

1. Purchase 1", 3-Ring View Binder
2. Purchase 8-Tab Dividers and Number the Tabs 1 through 8
3. Place each of the 8 sections of the Explorer Guide behind each tab.
4. Complete the Title Page on the next page with your personal information
5. Insert the Title Page in front binder cover.

MEETING ONE-ON-ONE OR IN A GROUP

Day of week: _____ Time from _____ to _____

Place/Address: _____

Facilitator Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Community and support provided through a Crossroads Career® Network member church. Many Crossroads Career® Ministries hold network meetings, workshops and small group studies. For more information about setting up a Crossroads Career® Ministry in your church, please visit our website – www.crossroadscareer.org – and browse through the Become a Crossroads Career® Network Member Church section.

ARE YOU AT A CROSSROADS IN YOUR CAREER?

If not, maybe you should be!

Crossroads are intersections of life and faith – perfect places for exploring and maximizing your career and income potential – in balance with personal and family life – hearing and following God’s calling.

WHAT IS MAXIMIZING YOUR CAREER POTENTIAL?

Maximizing is making the most of. It is to increase to the greatest quantity or value attainable – to the highest, greatest, or utmost development. Maximizing is not a quick fix. It is not a goal that once accomplished, it is done. It is not a one-time event, or even a series of events, but rather a continuous process of improving and perfecting – getting better all the time! It takes thought and good decision making.

*Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise,
making the most of your time...
Ephesians 5:15-16*

Your career is the whole of your work life – beginning in our youth with part-time jobs and education – and continuing through the 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s and extending for most of us into our retirement years. Career is a field for or pursuit of consecutive progressive achievement especially in public, professional or business life. It includes your educational and vocational life – whether you are paid for it – or you work as a volunteer.

Potential is the possibility of you being all you can be. It is that something in you that can be developed and become real.

Maximizing your career potential is taking full advantage of God’s unique design of you – your education, experience, abilities, interests, personality and values. It is generating maximum return on investment for your work – not just achievements and income, but also job satisfaction and personal fulfillment. It is also discovering that you are God’s workmanship created by Him for Him for good works. Being all you were made to be is only possible by hearing and following God’s calling.

Wow! What would that be like to accomplish genuinely purposeful work, not only for blessings and benefits in this world, but also for eternal impact and rewards?

Is this really possible? Can you realize such success? You won’t know until you go exploring. Whether you choose a crossroads or it just suddenly appears, do not run through it or run away from it. Instead, stand and look – ask for the good way – and walk in it.

Yes, you will have to invest time and effort, but it is worth it. You can start right now by thinking of yourself as a *Career Explorer*...

Ready for adventure...

Looking forward to what lies ahead...

Finding career direction, the right job and your true calling!

CAREER CROSSING AHEAD?

“Some 400,000 people in the United States lose their jobs every week, and another 600,000 change or leave their jobs voluntarily. Average job tenure for Americans is 6.6 years...” From *The Age of Turbulence* by Alan Greenspan, page 271.

“When it comes to careers, change is a constant,” reported the May 1, 2007 edition of the New York Times. “According to the Labor Department, ‘the average person born in the later years of the baby boom held 10.5 jobs from age 18 to 40.’ In 2006, the most recent year for which there are statistics, 54 million Americans, or 40 percent of the work force, left their jobs.”

If you are thinking about or looking for a new work situation, you are approaching a career crossings ahead – just like the 54% of employees who “felt it was a good time to look for a new, more interesting job with better pay,” according to the 2007 World of Work national study sponsored by Randstad USA Work Solutions.

Let’s take a look at your current career in light of the facts and figures of the American employment situation...

- ❖ Among the estimated 145 million employed workers, the results of a 2005 national survey of 5,000 American households sponsored by The Conference Board found that...
 - Only 14% reported being very satisfied in their work.
 - 86% said somewhat satisfied to very dissatisfied – sometimes called “mis-employed.”
 - Approximately 25% of the American workforce is simply “showing up to collect a paycheck.”
- ❖ A “low unemployment rate” of 5% means over seven million people are out of work.
- ❖ There is one employment situation that is hard to quantify – the number or percentage of people who are called and fulfilled and thereby maximizing their career potential.

To help you identify where you are in your career situation, here are examples we have heard over the years...

Mis-employed because...

- ❖ St-st-st-stress!
- ❖ Bored and/or in a rut
- ❖ Just don’t like what you are doing
- ❖ Working for a boss behaving badly
- ❖ Not really skilled for the job you are in
- ❖ Need or want to work from home
- ❖ Want to be an independent contractor
- ❖ Wondering if you should start your own business
- ❖ Not enough money? Too many hours? Maybe both
- ❖ Spending too much time “on the road again” either commuting or traveling
- ❖ Familiar with the words to this song ...

*“You load 16 tons, and what do you get? Another day older and deeper in debt.
Saint Peter don’t call me ‘cause I can’t go. I owe my soul to the company store.”
(American folk song written by Merle Travis; made popular by Tennessee Ernie Ford)*

Unemployed because...

- ❖ Quit, laid off or fired from your job
- ❖ Nearly and newly graduates from college or high school
- ❖ Going back to work after raising your children
- ❖ Recently divorced and need to earn money
- ❖ Just relocated and seeking new job

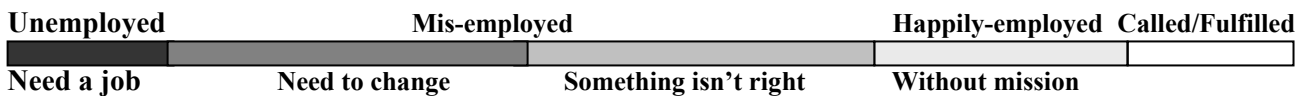
Happily employed, but...

- ❖ Successful and prosperous, but lacking a sense of greater purpose and mission
- ❖ Half-way through your career and wondering about your “second half”?
- ❖ Just finished reading a book about your purpose in life?
- ❖ Happy in work, but...

Fulfilled and called...

- ❖ Using God-given abilities, interests, personality and values
- ❖ Living and working with a sense of purpose, mission and fulfillment
- ❖ Hearing and following God’s calling
- ❖ Maximizing career potential

If we layout the range of employment situations on a scale like this, where are you?



Circle the words that best describe where you are.

Now think about where you want to be. Perhaps for your situation and aspirations, the next level up is moving from mis-employed or unemployed to being happily-employed, called and fulfilled. Let’s consider the two ways to make it happen...

- ❖ Maximizing your career – without changing jobs
- ❖ Exploring a crossroads in your career

MAXIMIZING POTENTIAL – WITHOUT CHANGING JOBS

If you’re not finding fulfillment in your current work, *you* might be contributing to the problem without even realizing it. If you’re doing anything less than your very best in your work, no matter what the circumstances, you could be short-changing yourself. If you have a bad attitude about your work, your boss, your co-workers, or any other aspect of your work, that attitude could be spilling over into your performance and relationships. You could be reaping bad fruit from seeds you sowed.

To maximize your career potential in your current job, consider the following:

*Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything;
and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor,
but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.*

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,
since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.
It is the Lord Christ you are serving.
Colossians 3:22-24*

Does this describe you and how you work? Are you being obedient to your boss in all things? (Not of course if what you're being asked to do is illegal or immoral.) Are you working heartily and with sincerity of heart? Are you serving God in your job? If not, how would your situation be different if you *did* work that way?

Maybe you're thinking, "Yeah, but you don't know my boss." You're right, but read what the Bible has to say about how you should respond to a boss who is behaving badly. This was written during the Roman Empire when masters treated their servants/slaves (employees) as though they were animals.

*Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect,
not only to those who are good and considerate,
but also to those who are harsh.
1 Peter 2:18*

The word *unreasonable* has also been translated *crooked* or *perverse*. If this describes your boss, it's especially important to take your attitude and performance to their highest levels, working as for the Lord Himself. You may discover that your work situation changes, maybe even dramatically for the better, because you have changed *how* you are working.

If you know you have to go, then work heartily and finish well!

CAREER EXPLORATION

While you are doing your best in your current job, you can still, and maybe should explore other jobs, career direction and your calling. That's why we think of you as a career explorer. It is perfectly okay to walk through a crossroads in your career and wind up in the same job, but with the conviction that it's the best place to be at this time. Now let's look at how to walk through a career crossing.

EXPLORING A CROSSROADS IN YOUR CAREER™

Over 15 years ago more than a hundred people went through a series of Crossroads Career® small group meetings. As they talked about their experiences, we discovered that most of them encountered the following six steps in their walk through their career crossroads.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. ATTITUDE | Accepting loss and opportunity |
| 2. APTITUDE | Discovering your unique qualities |
| 3. ALTITUDE | Focusing on the marketplace |
| 4. SEARCHING | Finding opportunities |
| 5. SORTING | Interviewing and evaluating |
| 6. SELECTING | Walking in the work God has prepared for you |

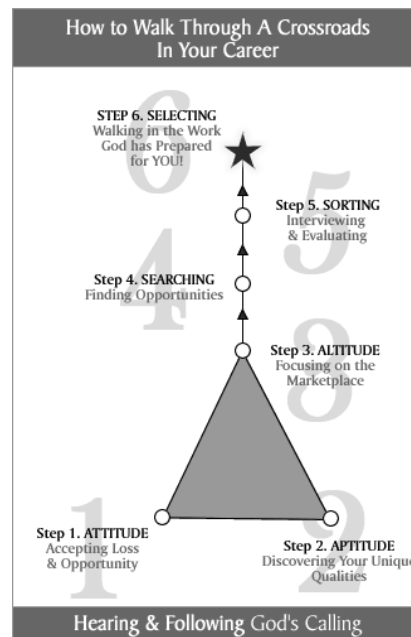
Chapter 1: Are you at a Crossroads in Your Career?

The first three steps are planning the work—**ATTITUDE**, **APTITUDE**, and **ALTITUDE**.

The final three steps are working the plan—**SEARCHING**, **SORTING**, and **SELECTING**.

Join the thousands who have explored these six steps. You may learn things in the last three action steps that will cause you to change the plans you made in the first three steps. For example, you may learn more about your unique qualities during the searching phase and, therefore, make changes in your focus on the marketplace. Whether this career crossing takes one day, one year, or more, you can know where you are in the process and what the next step should be.

Surrounding all six steps in your career crossing, God is calling you to hear and follow Him, maximize your career potential and experience real success at work in all of your life.



INVEST IN YOURSELF

Have you ever asked yourself: “Is there a better way to make a living...and a life?” May I propose that when you decide to invest in yourself, the answer is absolutely “yes”.

Invest Time

If you are employed, then lack of time is a challenge you’ll have to overcome. If you are unemployed, then make this career crossing your number one priority. Either way, weekly planning and follow-up are critical. Get up every morning with a plan of things to do, places to go, and people to see.

How long to find a job? That’s a tough question to answer, because it depends on your urgency, how many hours you invest, what you are looking for, the market, your search plan and how well you execute it. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that 2005 unemployment averaged 19.8 weeks!

- ❖ Over 1/3 got a job within 5 weeks
- ❖ Almost 1/3 got a job between 5 and 14 weeks
- ❖ For more than 1/3, getting a job took 15 weeks or more

If you are unemployed, start as soon as possible with a 15- to 45-day plan:

- ❖ Spend the first 5-15 days on Steps 1, 2, and 3
- ❖ Spend the next 5-15 days on Step 4
- ❖ Spend the last 5-15 days on Steps 5 and 6 while continuing Step 4

If you are employed, it is obviously more difficult to invest much time per week. Consider a 90-day plan:

- ❖ Spend the first 30 days on Steps 1, 2, and 3
- ❖ Spend the next 30 days on Step 4
- ❖ Spend the last 30 days on Steps 5 and 6 while continue Step 4

If you are unemployed and need to earn money immediately, consider cutting your expenses, using some of your savings, and/or taking a temporary “bridge” job with flexibility to look for a more permanent position.

How long to change careers? It may take a few weeks, or maybe a few years. You may need further education. If no additional education is required, consider a 90-day plan of exploration like the one above.

How long will it take to discover your calling? It takes all of your life! Hearing and following God’s calling is a journey, not a destination. God knows exactly who and where you are and what’s next.

Invest Money

You might ask, “How much will I have to spend on resumes, career assessments, travel, and other things to find the right job?” A better question to ask is, “How much am I willing to invest?” – especially in light of how much you want to earn. You may incur some of these expenses and should consider each one when you set up a budget.

- ❖ Career assessments and perhaps coaching
- ❖ Career books, directories, magazines, and newspapers
- ❖ Trade and professional association memberships and meetings
- ❖ Extra phone and phone lines and charges; email and internet access
- ❖ Resumes, business cards, and stationery; postage and shipping
- ❖ Local or perhaps long distance travel and meals
- ❖ New clothes and grooming

Be willing to spend the money required to find the right job for you. Whatever amount you decide, set aside the money and invest it wisely. Keep good records of what you spend. Many costs of searching for a job can qualify as tax deductions. Check with the IRS, your tax preparer, or an accountant.

Invest Effort

Personal commitment to your future is critical—in time, in money, and especially in effort.

Exploring a crossroads in your career can be hard work. You have to do things that you may or may not feel comfortable doing. For some, having to telephone people you don’t know to be able to network is very difficult. For others, taking the time to complete assessments is no fun. Because this process calls for such a variety of skills and abilities, no one is fully competent in all areas. When you hit one of those areas that are hard for you, seek help and persevere. Remember your goal.

OVERVIEW OF THE CROSSROADS CAREER® EXPLORER GUIDE

The Crossroads Career® Explorer Guide can be used in several ways:

- ❖ Self-paced; on your own
- ❖ One-on-one with a coach or mentor
- ❖ As a study course in a small group with a facilitator
- ❖ In workshops with a leader

You will use the following resources:

- ❖ This Crossroads Career® Explorer Guide
- ❖ Crossroads Career® website: <http://www.crossroadscareer.org>
- ❖ Pen/pencil and notepad/journal
- ❖ A good study Bible

You might consider purchasing a good study Bible in a contemporary translation if you don't already have one. Study Bibles can help you better understand the Scriptures presented in this guide. Scripture in this guide is from the New International Version (NIV)

If you are considering non-traditional employment such as starting or buying a business, working as an independent contractor, or being self-employed, the process offered here can be very helpful for you too.

Each topic in the Crossroads Career® Explorer Guide is made up of these building blocks, or assignments:

INSTRUCTION: Each chapter begins with brief readings to prepare you for action



EXERCISE: Practical actions to help you make progress in your search



GO ONLINE: Career Tools available on the Crossroads Career® website www.crossroadscareer.org

DEVOTIONALS: Short read-and-write devotionals to further stimulate your thinking



SESSION: Preparation for your session with your coach or group.



PRAYER JOURNAL: Take notes about your specific prayer requests or insights.

Chapter 1: Are you at a Crossroads in Your Career?

If you're taking the course with a mentor/coach, small group, or in a workshop, you'll have a scheduled "session" at the end of your assignments for each topic. Please have your assignments ready

The overall flow for the Crossroads Career® Explorer Guide looks like this:

<i>Assignments (on your own)</i>	<i>Sessions (with mentor , small group or workshop)</i>
Chapter 1: Are You at a Crossroads in Your Career?	Session 1: Orientation meeting
Chapter 2: How to Explore a Crossroads in Your Career™	
Step 1: Attitude—Accepting Loss and Opportunity	Session 2: Step 1 – Attitude
Step 2: Aptitude—Discovering Your Unique Qualities	Session 3: Step 2 – Aptitude
Step 3: Altitude—Focusing on the Marketplace	Session 4: Step 3 – Altitude
Step 4: Searching—Finding Opportunities	Session 5: Step 4 - Searching
Step 5: Sorting—Interviewing and Evaluating	Session 6 Step 5 – Sorting
Step 6: Selecting—Walking in the Work Prepared for You	Session 7: Step 6 - Selecting
Chapter 3: Hearing and Following God's Calling	Session 8: Reaching Forward to What Lies Ahead

Tips for maximizing sessions with mentor, small group or workshop...

1. Plan to attend all the sessions.
2. Arrive early so the session can begin and end on time.
3. Please pay attention to the facilitator(s), as well as to your fellow career explorers.
4. Confidentiality about class members' careers and personal lives is important; therefore, what is said in the group should stay in the group.
5. If you have questions, concerns, or critiques, please share them with your facilitator(s).
6. Always bring your Crossroads Career® Explorer Guide Workbook and *Bible* to every meeting.
7. Maximize use of this guide with hundreds of online career tools with free, easy and confidential registration on www.crossroadscareer.org.

For the Career Explorer with a Church Membership Key:

- On the Home page, click on the **Career Explorers** button.
- On the Career Explorer page, point to and click on the lower left button, **Free Career Explorer Membership**.
- Select the church from which you are receiving help, and enter the church membership key which should be available from one of the Crossroads Career® Ministry volunteers.

Church Membership Key _____

Remember your email **Login** _____ **Password** _____

WHAT IS THE CROSSROADS CAREER® NETWORK?

The Crossroads Career® Network is a membership of churches with volunteer-led career ministries to help people explore career crossroads – hearing and following God’s calling. Churches can offer a variety of resources including:

1. Crossroads Career® Explorer Guide. This study guide is most powerful when it is used in small groups and workshops.
2. Crossroads Career® Web-Portal at www.crossroadscareer.org. Following the same steps in this Guide, this “one-stop” online resource helps you in your career search with access to hundreds of links, articles, and industry research tools.
3. Community and support provided through Crossroads Career® Network Churches. Many Crossroads Career® Ministries hold network meetings, workshops and small group studies. For more information about setting up a Crossroads Career® Ministry in your church, please visit our website – www.crossroadscareer.org – and browse through the Become a Crossroads Career® Network Church.

MINISTRY OVERVIEW

Crossroads Career® Services, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation and is the support organization for Crossroads Career® Network. that equips, and supports local churches to have their own Crossroads Career® Ministries. Each church sponsors and supports its own ministry led by volunteers, who are called to be involved with career explorers in the church and the community.

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Financial Policy

Crossroads Career® Network does not endorse, recommend, or sell any career counseling or placement services. The Crossroads Career® Explorer Guide and Course does not give specific career advice. No individual may use his/her affiliation with Crossroads Career® Network to promote the sale of any products or services, including career products or services, or use his/her affiliation as a platform for providing professional career advice or for soliciting clients.

CAREER EXPLORER QUESTIONNAIRE  EXERCISE

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP Code _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Email _____

Complete this questionnaire. Make a copy and bring it to the first session if you're in a group, and give it to your facilitator. It will be kept in complete confidence.

Are you currently employed? Yes No

If you are currently employed, are you: *(check all that apply)*

- Thinking about leaving?
- Concerned that you are going to be let go?
- Wanting to go somewhere else?
- Considering an offer to go somewhere else?

If you are currently employed, how do you feel about your job? *(check only one)*

- I am fully employed—called and content.
- I love my job, but something is missing.
- I like my job.
- I tolerate my job.
- I dislike my job.
- I hate my job.

If you hate, dislike, or tolerate your job, what's the problem?

Are you currently: *(check only one)*

- Actively seeking a job?
- Thinking about looking for a job?
- Not thinking about looking for a job, but wondering what's out there?

If you are looking for a job, how soon do you have to have a new job of some kind? *(check only one)*

- 3 months or more
- 2 months
- 1 month
- Less than 1 month
- Immediately

READ & WRITE DEVOTIONAL



CAREER + CALLING = MAXIMIZING POTENTIAL

Career, according to *Webster's Dictionary*, means, among many things, “a course, a passage; a profession for which one undergoes special training and which is undertaken as a permanent calling; an occupation or profession engaged in as a life work.”

Calling comes from the Greek **KALEO**, which means “to call anyone, invite, summon.” It refers primarily to a divine call as it relates to a vocation or redemption.

Considering these definitions and their sources, think about the differences between career and calling. Write Down Your Thoughts.

<u>Career</u>	<u>Calling</u>

Pray these verses for God to enlighten the eyes of your heart so you may know the hope of His calling.

*I pray also that the eyes of [my] heart may be enlightened
in order that [I] may know the hope to which he has called [me],
the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,
and his incomparably great power for us who believe.
That power is like the working of his mighty strength . . .
Ephesians 1:18-19*



SESSION

For the Next Session: Step 1 – Attitude

Read and complete instructions, exercises and the devotional. Be ready to talk about what you learned. Make sure you've gone online to read articles and browse sites relevant to you.

1. Register NOW on www.crossroadscareer.org. See GO ONLINE instructions below.
2. Complete the Career Explorer Questionnaire and bring it to the next session to share with your facilitator. It will be treated confidentially.
3. Read and complete the Read & Write Devotional to prepare for Session 2: Step 1 - Attitude.



GO ONLINE

Log in and on the Career Explorer landing page, point to and select Career Tools – Introduction

If you have not yet registered to maximize use of this guide with hundreds of online career tools with free, easy and confidential registration on www.crossroadscareer.org.

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- On Career Explorer page, point to and click on the lower left button, **Free Career Explorer Membership**.
- Select the church from which you are receiving help, and enter the church membership key which should be available from one of the Crossroads Career® Ministry volunteers.

Church Membership Key _____

Remember your email **Login** _____ **Password** _____



PRAYER JOURNAL

Use the space below—or your own journal—to take some notes about your specific prayer requests or insights that you have at this point for yourself or others in your group.