***On the Stream of Life*, Hugo Simberg (1896)**
***Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67, "Fate": I. Allegro Con Brio,* Ludwig van Beethoven**

I had a little argument with my mom this morning. I acted in way that was very unpleasant--for no apparent reason. I was frustrated with her, but my frustration was more than her actions warranted. I guess sometimes, I am just in a bad mood. I feel bad about it, and the "feeling bad about it" provoked me to ask myself some questions. "What is the truth of our relationship?" "Is a relationship supposed to be "comfortable" all of the time? What is the true meaning of being in relationship?

Our relationship has drama: ups and downs, ebbs and flows, rights and wrongs. Our relationship is *human.* The truth of humanity is drama--the human drama. Our moods, our plans, our projects, our surprises, our violence, our love. Drama. We are alive, and that means nothing stays the same--everything is moving. This does not mean that we should panic! The culmination of our drama lies within the life and person of Christ--who is living now. Look at His life! Look at His death! Look at His presence!

Take a few moments to listen to the piece of music. How does the drama of this piece correspond to your life experience?

Carefully study the painting, *On the Stream of Life.* What strikes you about it? Where is the stream coming from? Where is it going? Who is that on the boat? What are all of those books about? What else do you notice?

Take a few moments and reflect on the following questions:

1. Where did you come from, and where are you going?

2. What is the water like in your "stream of life"? Calm? Turbulent?

3. If God *is* the stream, are you on the boat traveling with Him--following Him? Or, are you on the banks watching? Are you off in the distance?

4. What is your relationship like with Christ? What is the truth of it?

5. Where have you observed the drama of His presence in your life?