

The Battle for Truth?

Part 14 – Life's Purpose

1

INTRODUCTION

The world seems lost. People are looking for purpose and meaning in life, but nothing seems to satisfy. I did a simple survey asking people about the purpose of life. Most answers were about having fun, money, pleasure, a good job, house To that list we could add power, position, and prestige. In the long run all of these things leave one empty.

2

A WORLD'S DEFINITION

A science based online magazine published by Berkley University states this about purpose. “A sense of purpose appears to have evolved in humans so that we can accomplish big things together— which may be why it’s associated with better physical and mental health. Purpose is adaptive, in an evolutionary sense. It helps both individuals and the species to survive.”

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_find_your_purpose_in_life

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A WORLD'S DEFINITION

Mike Brooks Ph.D. blogs for *Psychology Today*. He starts with the disclaimer, “I don't claim that what I say is totally "true," because the truth is elusive in this complicated world. Rather, I'm offering some ideas to help perceive the world and ourselves in a manner that opens pathways for change and growth.” He goes on to state how lucky we are to be here. He starts with the “big bang” and the chance that our ancestors got together to produce us. He then states that the ultimate question for us is “What is the purpose of life?” His conclusion, “ I’m not arrogant enough to claim that I have The Answer. But I don’t think anyone has The Answer for that matter, although many people claim that they do.”

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A WORLD'S DEFINITION

The University of Minnesota defines it this way,

“Your life purpose consists of the central motivating aims of your life—the reasons you get up in the morning. Your life purpose will guide life decisions, influence behavior, shape goals, offer a sense of direction, and create meaning.”

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A WORLD'S DEFINITION

Most worldly resources that I explored regarding the meaning of life declares that everyone has a different purpose. This is based in the idea that different people have different talents and abilities. Though there is an element of truth here, it misses the main point.

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A WORLD'S DESPERATION

For the world, the purpose and meaning of life rotates around "self". It has to do with what brings the individual fulfillment. Psychology states that it is essential that a person discovers their own "purpose for life" in order that their life can have meaning. They agree that this is essential for good mental health. The question remains as to where one finds true purpose in life.

Advertisers try to sell you a host of goods promising that they will give you some sense of fulfillment – they lie!

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A WORLD'S DESPERATION

The world is desperately looking for something to give them this meaning in life and coming up empty. They follow after the things the world promises to satisfy their longings – love, pleasure, excitement, material things... However, in the end they discover that it is all empty and hollow. One of the common themes in suicide letters is that the person cannot find meaning and purpose in life, and just cannot keep living in emptiness.

This is not a new problem...

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A WISEMAN'S QUEST

Though the writer of Ecclesiastes simply calls himself the “preacher”, many scholars believe that it was Solomon. The writer states that he set out to explore finding satisfaction apart from God. The book goes on to describe how he explored, pleasure, accomplishments, labor, religion, wealth, family and more. Each time he states that it is all vanity which means empty and pointless. The bottom line is nothing in this world can truly satisfy and bring the fulfillment people are looking for.

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A WISEMAN'S QUEST

The conclusion of the book of Ecclesiastes is found in the last two verses.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

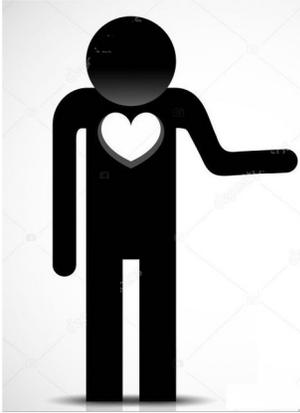
Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all. ¹⁴ For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

Out of all that the world has to offer, nothing brings satisfaction. The only thing that matters is one's relationship with God.

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A MISSING PIECE

We have looked at this before, but one must understand that everyone born into this world is born incomplete.



Man was created to have a relationship with his Creator. This relationship was lost as a result of sin. Therefore, man is born with a sense that something is missing – an emptiness or loss of meaning and purpose. Though man tries to fill in the loss with earthly things, it fails to fill the void. Only Jesus can fill our emptiness and give real purpose.

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A BIBLICAL QUEST FOR PURPOSE

God created man to have a relationship with Him. This was true in Creation, Salvation, and our Eternal State.

Last week we looked at worship. Everything that man does worships something. God's desire is that we worship Him for He alone is worthy of our worship. He created us, died for us, and restored our relationship. He gave us this beautiful creation to live in and meets our spiritual and physical needs. He indeed is worthy of our worship.

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A BIBLICAL QUEST FOR PURPOSE

Worship is more than singing and praying. It is everything we do. God created us with a purpose. The world feels this but does not want to recognize it. Serving God is not some arduous task. True service bring true joy. It is finally finding our true place and purpose in life.

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A BIBLICAL QUEST FOR PURPOSE

The world is right in that each person has unique gifts, talents and abilities. Where the world gets it wrong is at the core of all sin.

The world says a person should find purpose and meaning in life using those abilities to meet their own sense of purpose. God gave us those talents to be used in service for Him. It is in Jesus that we find and fulfill our purpose in life. It is Jesus that gives our life meaning.

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A BIBLICAL QUEST FOR PURPOSE

One might ask, "What about personal satisfaction?"

"Doesn't God want me to be happy?"

God does not promise us that we will always be happy. This life is hard, and we are living in the middle of a spiritual war where the enemy does not fight fair and where there is always the possibility of persecution.

What He does promise is that He will never leave or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). We are not alone.

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A BIBLICAL QUEST FOR PURPOSE

Several surveys have been done asking people what they want out of life. Time and time again, the top three answers are Love, Peace and Joy. Though God does not promise us happiness, He does promise us these and more.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

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A BIBLICAL QUEST FOR PURPOSE

It is a great privilege to serve God in this life. When we stand before Him some day there will be rewards for faithful service.

In heaven we will find the ultimate purpose and meaning in life. As believers, we are “in Christ”. In Heaven we will enter into the love that the Father has for the Son. This will be ultimate fulfillment of all that we are longing for!

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SO WHAT...

To be aware that the things of this world do not give permanent satisfaction sets us free from empty searches. We need to dedicate our lives to knowing Jesus better and serving Him. There is truth in finding purpose in serving others, but we need to do it in service to Jesus.

He has given each of us talents and abilities. Let us commit ourselves to using them for His glory. Here is the true purpose and meaning of life!

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