

What is the meaning of life? (part 2)

Last week we looked at the first half of the question, "What is the meaning of life?"

We saw that

- philosophers have suggested a meaning to life - some suggesting there is no meaning
- the Bible message is that only our Creator can give the true meaning
- Solomon, a man given unique wisdom by God, tried all the things that give meaning to life
- his conclusion was that "Only a life with God has any meaning"
- the Bible message is that Jesus opened the way to eternal life
- eternal life is to get to know God and the Lord Jesus - to have a relationship with them.
- we each have a choice between the broad way which leads to destruction and the narrow way that Jesus said leads to eternal life in God's kingdom.



We are now going to look at what the Bible says about three questions which will help us see a little more of what the Bible has to say about the meaning of life:

Where did we come from?

Why are we here?

Where are we going?

Where did we come from?

We were put here by a power greater than ourselves

The Bible tells of the power, greater than ourselves, that created our world and keeps it going:

God, who made the world and everything in it, ... He gives to all life, breath, and all things"

Acts 17 v 24 and 25



... the LORD ... who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited.

Isaiah 45 v 18

Why are we here?

We are here so that we can “find” God:

From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. Acts 17v 26 and 27

We can “seek” and “reach out” for God by looking at the evidence for His existence and examining the message He has left us in the Bible. We hope these presentations will help you “find” God.

The Bible shows that our Creator is concerned about us



Our Creator's care for us is seen all through the Bible.

He assures us that the natural cycles which support our lives will continue:

As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease. Genesis 8 v 22

God wants us to reflect His care

The apostle John told us that we should show God's love to others:

And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also. 1 John 4 v 21



God cares about our future

God has a plan to offer us life after death. The plan involves the work of God's Son, Jesus Christ:

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3 v 16

Where are we going?

Having a caring Creator gives us confidence for the future



Because we have seen that our Creator cares about us and has arranged a plan to enable us to have life after death. This must give us a real hope for the future, despite our present problems. So what is God's plan? Where are we going?

We can have life after death

Here is one quote from Daniel:

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Daniel 12 v 2

Notice what it says. *Many* who sleep in the dust shall awake. That isn't everyone. We aren't to think that the Bible says *everybody* without exception will be saved.

Jesus made a promise:

For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6 v 40

So it is only those who believe in Jesus who will be raised from the dead and given endless life.



Only those who respect God have any hope for the future



The book of Proverbs warns us not to rely on our own ideas:

There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.

Proverbs 16 v 25

Those people who do not believe in Jesus and trust in their own ways in the end will simply die. They won't be raised. It is only those who respect God and believe in Jesus who have any hope for the future

Resurrection will be at the return of Jesus



The Bible is quite clear that the resurrection hasn't happened yet, but will happen at the return of Jesus:

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.
1 Thessalonians 4 v 16

God's plan is for a worldwide peaceful kingdom

The Bible says that Jesus is not simply going to raise the dead but will also establish a worldwide peaceful kingdom.

Many Bible verses talk of a future world order different from today's. Here is an example:

*Give the king Your judgments, O God,
And Your righteousness to the king's Son.
He will judge Your people with righteousness,
And Your poor with justice...
In His days the righteous shall flourish,
And abundance of peace...
There will be an abundance of grain in the earth,
On the top of the mountains...*

Psalms 72 v 1, 2, 7 and 16



God plans to fill the earth with those who respect Him

We can be involved in this peaceful worldwide kingdom on earth:

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection ... they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Revelation 20 v 6

We can have the wonderful hope of being involved in this peaceful, worldwide, kingdom on earth.

We should demonstrate our belief



A young man about
to be baptized

It is those who believe and have faith in what God has told us who will be involved in His plan.

Paul explains what we should do to demonstrate our belief, once we understand and have faith in God's plan:

For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Galatians 3 v 27 to 29

By being baptized, people from all nations can be involved in the promises that God made to Abraham and his descendants the Jews.

Our destiny

The final piece in our jigsaw of understanding life's meaning is provided, not by Jesus, but by his most famous disciple – Peter. Writing to the first-century followers of Jesus, he summarizes what we have said about the meaning of life, and the awesome potential we have thanks to the grace and mercy of God:

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. *2 Peter 1 v 3*

We can see that:

- God has given us everything we need for life
- He has also given us the potential for godliness
- We attain godliness and life through knowing God and Jesus

Peter continues:

Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. *2 Peter 1 v 4*

- God has made amazing promises to His followers
- The greatest of these is to share in God's nature in the kingdom

Peter then tells us that if we want to be part of God's plan we must show His qualities:

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith...

goodness...

knowledge...

self-control...

perseverance...

godliness...

brotherly kindness...

love

2 Peter 1 v 5, 6 & 7

He shows us that true followers are engaged in a process of continuous improvement.

Knowledge has to drive actions:

For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ

2 Peter 1 v 8

The grand climax of his argument is that **our reward is certain... if we demonstrate God's values in our lives:**

*Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, **you will never fall**, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

2 Peter 1 v 10

Summary of the meaning of life:

- We were put here by a power greater than ourselves
- We are here so that we can "find" God
- Our Creator:
 - is concerned about us and our future
 - wants us to reflect that care
- Knowing that we have a caring God gives us confidence in His promise of a future life
- There is no life after death for us if we don't respect God
- If we die respecting God's Word, we will be raised from the grave when Jesus Christ returns to the earth
- We will then be involved in a peaceful worldwide kingdom on earth
- We can be involved in God's wonderful plan if we demonstrate God's values in our lives now