

One day a 7-year-old boy asked his mom: “Where did I come from?” His mom had been nervously waiting for the day when he would ask “The” question. She wanted to be honest with him, so she took a deep breath and began to explain the whole birds and the bees thing. 10 minutes into her talk, this bored little boy interrupted his mom to ask: “Mom, where did I come from? Jimmy said he came from Ohio.”

“Where did I come from?” Can be a difficult question to answer, but an even more challenging one is: “Why am I here?”

Have you ever asked yourself: “Why am I here?” Why did God permit me to wake up this morning? Why is my heart still beating and my lungs still breathing? If you haven’t, you need to.

There are several very good reasons why God has permitted you and me to be here. Finding out those reasons is vital. If you don’t, there can be all kinds of negative outcomes. In the book of Ecclesiastes, King Solomon tells us what happens when we don’t know why we are here. When we don’t know our purpose in life.

Does Solomon’s writing seem discouraging? If anyone, King Solomon, would be the last person to be depressed and unsure of why he was here. He had it all. He had riches - more than he could ever spend. He had possessions - more than he could ever enjoy. He had wives - more than he could ever please. He had wisdom – more than he could ever use. He had it all. Yet he didn’t know his purpose in life.

The first chapter of Ecclesiastes gives us some of the negative feedback when you have a life without purpose: “**Meaningless! Meaningless! Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.**” Have you ever felt that way? Without some guiding purpose, life doesn’t make much sense. When you don’t know your purpose, you say things like Solomon did in v.4,5,6: **Generations come and generations go ... The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises ... The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes.** Life is like a merry-go-round. You go around and around, but never get anywhere. Solomon adds this thought

in v. 8: **All things are wearisome, more than one can say.** Life was wearing Solomon out.

When you don’t know your purpose in life, you’ll never really be satisfied either, v.8: **The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing.** We always want more. We’ve gone from 10" black and white picture tubes to giant 4D flat screens; from HiFi and stereo sound to WiFi and surround sound. But we’re still searching for more. Put a 150-channel remote control in our hands and we want 200 channels. Our satisfaction won’t last. We soon want something else.

A life without purpose also makes you feel insignificant, v.11: **“No one remembers the former generations, and even those yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow them.**

If you went to college you probably attended classes in a building that was named after some person. Did you know who that person was? Did you even care? Probably not! It was just a building named after someone who did something before you got there. It was all ancient history to you. You were concerned about your education right now.

Don’t feel bad, Solomon says future generations won’t remember us, either. We work like crazy to accomplish things that future generations could care less about. A Christian counselor noted this somber reality: “*If you ever starting feeling all proud, just remember this: Soon after your body has been lowered into the ground, your family and friends will be eating sandwiches and potato salad, telling jokes and stories and you’ll be history.*”

Wow, that’s depressing, and we’ve just scratched the surface of the life that is described as meaningless, empty and insignificant.

If you feel that’s what your life is like, God’s wants you to know about the amazing purpose he has for your life. In Jeremiah the Lord declares: “**I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.**”

Long before God laid the earth’s foundations, he had you in mind. You would be the focus of his loving

purpose. You would be his adopted family. You would become his sons and daughters because of his Son Jesus. God really enjoyed planning all of this out for you. Can you picture the sparkle in his eyes as he makes his plans for the day you will be with him for all eternity?

Living with God forever means that you're going to live a whole lot longer on the other side of death than you lived on this side of it.

Have you figured out God's purpose for your life? It's to prepare you for eternity with him. This life is your time to get ready. You may live 60, 70, 80 years or more here. But that's just a tiny mark on the yardstick of life. God wants you to live with him forever. So, the reason you're alive, the reason God has left you here is to get you ready for eternity.

If that's why you exist, then God has some things for you to do in your life. How many years he chooses to give you here.

Why am I here? To know him. God wants you to get to know him. That makes sense, doesn't it? How do you get to know somebody? You spend time with them. You listen to them. You talk with them. The Bible teaches that you get to know God by getting to know his Son as your Lord and Savior by faith: **"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father."** By following Jesus, you are following God.

Am I faithfully spending time with God? Do I listen to him talk to me through his Word? Am I talking to him in prayer? Then I'm ready for my eternal home. Lord, take me home. So why am I still here?

Why am I here? To be like him. Why hasn't God taken you yet? He wants you to be like Christ. That makes sense too, doesn't it? If I'm a member of his family. If Jesus is my brother. If God is my Father. Then, I ought to take on his family characteristics. Just as my sons have some of my traits because we're family, so I should demonstrate some of Jesus' traits because we're family.

The best Christ-like model you'll find in the Bible is Jesus wrapping the towel around his waist and washing his disciples' feet in the upper room. As we serve others, we let them see Jesus in our actions.

Everyday God is busy molding and shaping your character to be like Jesus. That's what makes Roman 8:28 so special: **"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to his purpose."** Your life has purpose in Jesus.

Why am I here? To share him. Why does God keep you around? To share your purpose in life with others. That makes sense too, doesn't it? The only plan God has for telling others about his purpose is for those who have found their purpose in Jesus to share it.

The Bible says: **"God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, and he has committed to us the message of reconciliation."** God doesn't have a backup plan. When you understand that life is preparation for eternity, God wants you to tell as many as you can.

Getting back to Solomon. Why was he in this position of writing Ecclesiastes? When God made Solomon king of Israel, he told him he would give him anything he wanted. Solomon chose wisdom. He began his reign as a humble servant of the Lord. Later on his heart wandered away from the Lord and he tried to fill the hole in his life with possessions, pleasures and power. Nothing worked because he had forgotten what was most important in his life – the Lord.

From personal experience Solomon would tell you that everything is meaningless, except for one thing! **"Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stay awake in vain."** Can you guess who wrote those words? You got it! Solomon wrote Psalm 127.

Why am I here? To know him. To be like him. To share him.