

Text: What is the Purpose of Life?

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"The LORD has made everything for his own purposes." Proverbs 16:4 (NLT)

I. IF I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF LIFE...

... LIFE SEEMS MEANINGLESS

These are the words of the Teacher, King David's son, who ruled in Jerusalem. "Everything is meaningless," says the Teacher, "utterly meaningless!" What do people get for all their hard work? Generations come and go, but nothing really changes." Ecclesiastes 1:2-4 (NLT)

... LIFE SEEMS TIRESOME

"The sun rises and sets and hurries around to rise again. The wind blows south and north, here and there, twisting back and forth, getting nowhere. The rivers run into the sea, but the sea is never full. Then the water returns again to the rivers and flows again to the sea. Everything is so weary and tiresome!" Ecclesiastes 1:4-8 (NLT)

... LIFE SEEMS UNFULFILLING

"No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied. No matter how much we hear, we are not content. History merely repeats itself. It has all been done before. Nothing under the sun is truly new. What can you point to that is new? How do you know it didn't already exist long ago?" Ecclesiastes 1:8-10 (NLT)

... LIFE SEEMS INSIGNIFICANT

We don't remember what happened in those former times. And in future generations, no one will remember what we are doing now." Ecclesiastes 1:11 (NLT)

... LIFE SEEMS UNCONTROLLABLE

I, the Teacher, was king of Israel, and I lived in Jerusalem. I devoted myself to search for understanding and to explore by wisdom everything being done in the world. I soon discovered that God has dealt a tragic existence to the human race. Everything under the sun is meaningless, like chasing the wind. What is wrong cannot be righted. What is missing cannot be recovered." Ecclesiastes 1:12-15 (NLT)

II. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF LIFE?

"Long ago, even before he made the world, God chose us to be his very own through what Christ would do for us... His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by sending Jesus Christ to die for us." Ephesians 1:4-5 (LB)

"This is his purpose: that when the time is ripe he will gather us all together... to be with him in Christ forever." Ephesians 1:10 (LB)

LIFE IS PREPARATION FOR ETERNITY!

"He has planted eternity in the human heart." Eccl. 3:11 (NIV)

III. HOW DO I PREPARE FOR ETERNITY?

1. GET TO KNOW JESUS CHRIST

"But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12 (LB)

2. USE MY TIME IN VIEW OF ETERNITY

"Make the most of your time, because the days are evil." Ephesians 5:16 (NASB)

3. USE MY TALENTS IN VIEW OF ETERNITY

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:31 (NIV)

4. USE MY TREASURES IN VIEW OF ETERNITY

Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give generously to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of real life." 1 Timothy 6:18-19 (NLT)

The Best Investment: LIFE INVESTMENT GUIDE

MY TIME

|-----|
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

MY TALENT

|-----|
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

MY TREASURE

|-----|
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

TIME WITH GOD

Memory Verse: *"We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."* 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

Monday

Look over the message notes from last week. What is a big idea you received that you can put into practices this week?

Please read Matthew 7:24-27. How does your foundation impact your faith?

Are there "words of God" that you are hesitating to put into practice?

What kind of storm(s) are you currently experiencing?

What has that revealed about your spiritual foundation?

Thank God today that you have the Bible and the opportunity to know the "words of God." Talk to Him about the storms you are currently experiencing and the ways your hesitating to put God's Word into practice. Pray that your faith will grow and that God will use you to encourage other people's faith.

Tuesday

Please read 1 Corinthians 13:13 & 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3. Why do you think faith, hope and love are frequently connected in scripture?

What difference does it make to have "work" and "labor" motivated by faith and love instead of duty alone?

How can hope inspire endurance?

In what way do you need that right now?

Thank God today that He has a plan to grow you. Pray that your work and labor will be motivated by faith and love. Ask God to give you a hope that will inspire endurance for the storms as well as the day-to-day demands of life.

Wednesday

Please read 1 Thessalonians 1:4-5a & 2:8-13. Faith alone doesn't get us through troubled times. People have faith in all kinds of things and it turns out to be misplaced faith! Where do these verses tell you to put your faith?

We all struggle with putting our faith in something other than God. Take an honest assessment of where you've placed your faith. What/Who do you trust instead of God? (Maybe it's your own skills, money, effort, another person, your intelligence, your physical strength — it's an endless list!)

What practical step can you take today to move away from misplaced trust to trust in God?

Thank God today for His patience with you. Pray that you'll have the courage to release the things or people you may be trusting and place the full weight of your trust on God.

Thursday

Please read 1 Thessalonians 1:5b-6. According to these verses, how did Paul make such an impact on the Thessalonians church?

Think about someone who has "shared their life" with you. How did that impact you (for better or for worse!)?

Think about those you're sharing your life with right now. What type of impact do you think you're having?

How can you use that opportunity to point people to God and show them faith, love and hope?

Thank God today for the people He has placed in your life who have impacted you for the good. Pray that those you share your life with will see God shining through you. Ask Him to grow your love for Him daily.

Friday

Please read 1 Thessalonians 1:3b, 7-10 & 3:7-9. What key words do you see in these verses that inspired the Thessalonians' vision of the finish line?

How does having a vision of the finish line impact your faith? How does it impact your daily life?

Thank God today that you have a hope and a future. Ask God to increase your vision of the finish and to allow that to impact your daily life. Pray that God will continue to grow your faith in Him and that your life will be beacon of God's grace and hope.

Saturday

Please read Galatians 5:5-6, Colossians 1:4-5 and 1 Peter 1:21-22. How do these verses fit with what we've been reading all week? As you pray today, please pray for the services this weekend. Please pray that our church will be a "model to all believers" when it comes to faith.