

What on earth am I here for?

I. THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT KNOWING YOUR PURPOSE

- Without knowing your purpose, life will seem _____.
“The sun still rises and it still goes down...the wind blows...round and round and back again. Every river flows into the sea...[then] the water returns to where the rivers began, and starts all over again. Everything leads to weariness...” Ecclesiastes 1:5-8 (TEV)
- Without knowing your purpose, life will seem _____.
“No matter how much we see, we’re never satisfied; no matter how much we hear, we are not content. History merely repeats itself. Nothing is truly new...” Ecclesiastes 1:8b-9a (LB)
- Without knowing your purpose, life will seem _____.
“You can’t straighten out what is crooked; you can’t count things that aren’t there.” Ecclesiastes 1:15 (TEV)

II. THE BENEFITS OF KNOWING YOUR PURPOSE

*“...I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ Jesus saved me for and wants me to be. No, dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven.”
 Philippians 3:12b-14 (NLT)*

- Knowing the purpose of your life will give your life _____.
“...I am focusing all my energies on this one thing” (v. 13)
- Knowing the purpose of your life will _____ your life.
“...Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead.” (v. 13) “You Lord, give perfect peace to those who keep their purpose firm.” Isaiah 26:3 (TEV)
- Knowing the purpose of your life will increase _____ in your life.
“...I strain to reach the end of the race....” (v. 14) “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ says the Lord. ‘They are plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.’” Jeremiah 29:11 (LB)
- Knowing the purpose of your life will _____.
“...and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven.” (v. 14) “He has...set eternity in the hearts of men....” Ecclesiastes 3:11a (NIV)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you responded to God by praying that simple prayer, congratulations! Others in your church and many around the country are taking the same step to receive Christ. If you did receive Christ today, sign and date your commitment below. Let this page always serve as a reminder of what God did in your life today. Take a risk and share your decision with someone before you leave. They will celebrate your commitment with you. If you would like to read more about the decision you are making to receive Jesus into your life, turn to pg 58 in *The Purpose Driven Life*, and read the last two pages of the chapter.

Today I am committing my life to Christ for the first time.

_____ (Signature) _____ (Date)

2. In Ecclesiastes 1, three consequences of not knowing your purpose were identified:
 - ❖ Life will seem tiresome
 - ❖ Life will seem unfulfilling
 - ❖ Life will seem uncontrollable

With which of these three do you most identify? Why?

3. Paul had a clear understanding of God's purpose for his life. Even though Paul was also a tentmaker, he was able to say, "I am focusing all my energies on this one thing." How would knowing God's purposes help you focus your life? If you could discover God's purpose for your life, how would it help to focus or simplify your life?
4. Ecclesiastes 3:11 says that God "has set eternity in the hearts of men." What do you think that verse means? What are some practical ways we can live life here on earth in preparation for life in eternity?

SHARE

1. God uses other people in specific ways in each of our lives. In whose life does God want to use you? Now is a great time to consider who you might invite to next week's study. What co-worker, neighbor, friend or family member do you know who would enjoy this study? Take a moment and ask God to give you a name or two.
2. Now take a couple of minutes and fill out this next section as a way to identify people you could invite next week, and make a plan to invite them.

RELATIONSHIPS OF LIFE

_____	_____
Family (immediate or extended)	Friends (neighbors, kids sports, school, etc)
_____	_____
Fellowship (church relationships)	Fun (gym, hobbies, hang-outs)
_____	_____
Factory (work, professional areas)	Other

ADDITIONAL STUDY

In our study this week we have looked at the lives of two prominent people: King Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived; and Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ who wrote much of the New Testament. Solomon learned firsthand that all we experience in life is meaningless when we live without an eternal perspective. On the other hand, Paul was clearly focused on eternity from the moment of his calling. Let's consider some of the final words of these two great men of the Bible.

1. Read Ecclesiastes 9:1-6 and 12:13,14. What conclusion did Solomon reach at the end of his life?
2. As Paul neared the end of his life, what was his charge to Timothy which reflected what he had learned from his life in 2 Timothy 4:1-5?
3. According to 2 Timothy 4:6-8, what was Paul's conclusion about his life as he looked back and then forward to his future?
4. What do you learn from Solomon and Paul that could help you in your life?

PREPARATION FOR NEXT TIME

1. In order to get the most from this study, we strongly recommend that you follow the reading plan. You may want to write your responses and reflections for requests to God in a journal.
2. Be sure to invite one of the friends you prayed for in the group this week. Offer him or her a ride, and direct them to the website for the handouts (<http://www.pjteaches.com/Purpose/DrivenLife.htm>).
3. Work on this week's memory verse and be prepared to share it with someone at the next meeting. All of our memory verses are from the New International Version. A simple way to do this is to hand-write the verse 5-8 times on a piece of paper. This simple practice will help grow your confidence in God.