

Life's Four Vital QUESTIONS

To think is human. Thinking is related to the asking of questions. **What are life's vital questions?** First of all, we can rule out questions that are temporal. After all, what difference is there in name, fame or fortune, when I'm dead? Death is the great leveller (*1Tim 6:7; Ecc 5:15*). What, then, are life's most important questions?

The 1st question is: "Where did I come from?" It has to do with origins. What makes me different from every other form of life and from every other person as well?

The 2nd question is: "Who am I?" It is the identity question, the question of personhood.

The 3rd question is: "What is the purpose of life?" If life has no purpose, then existence is meaningless. If it does, what is the purpose? (*Ps 39:4-6; 90:3-6, 9-10*).

The 4th question is: "What happens to me when I die?" This has to do with our final destiny after death.

To be human is to hold to some sort of belief, ie a world-view or religious view or presupposition or theory or philosophical bias. We may be largely unaware of the beliefs that are at the root of much of our thinking pattern but they are there just the same influencing us. *Let's consider a few of the major views:*

The Agnostic Answers the above questions by saying "*I don't know.*" To say one is ignorant of the answers is different from saying that one can *never know*- that is to mean that the answers to these questions *cannot be known; and you can't find it.* If that be true, then it is useless to search for that which you can never find. Some religions fall into the agnostic category in the sense that they claim that ultimate truth cannot be expressed in words or understood. Yet they do precisely this; describe the indescribable in propositional teaching. The most a scientist can say is that he hasn't found the answers and from his investigations he is doubtful that answers will be forthcoming. But what they cannot say is this, "*There is no answer.*" The moment he does that he has ceased to be a scientist and has become a philosopher and they are quite different kinds of approaches (*Rm 1:18-22, 25-32*).

The Naturalist or Secularist or Humanist View begins with humans not God, nature not its Creator. It is their assumption that the human species came into being from natural evolutionary forces. Morals are individual decisions in an ever changing situation, needing no approval from God or from anyone. Man has the right to do whatever, as his right. In short, man is an animal, he is part of nature, there is no real purpose for him in life, and there is no life after death (*Ps 14:1-3; Pr 3:7*).

The Atheistic Existentialists however, carry the humanistic answer to its very logical conclusion. For them, there is no God, life makes no sense and has no meaning. Man is caught up in a wilderness from which there is no escape, and there is no hope. He simply must reach out in the midst of this cosmic joke and do the best he can, even though there is no best that he can do or measure with. If indeed life has no meaning, then whatever anyone does makes no difference. If this view is correct, then death is preferable to life since neither death nor life makes any difference (*Jer 29:13, 14a*).

The Relativist first principle is that *there are no absolutes or morals that remain forever the same and true.* If this is true, then he starts with an absolute principle and the relativist has become an absolutist with a basic inconsistency, and he has contradicted himself. In this view, what one thinks to be true today may be untrue tomorrow. What is right or wrong is determined by the consensus of the community. In other words, morals are not God given but based upon whatever man decides is right or wrong. If you decide what is right, and I decide that what you claim to be right is wrong, who determines which one of us is right? And why should your *right* be more acceptable than my *wrong*? And if the laws of the community are based on the opinions of men, how can there be any acceptable system without forcing someone's convictions on someone else, since nobody's convictions are authoritative? (*Job 28:12-28; 4:1; Pro 14:12*).

Clearly all these views are not viable options for thinking, inquiring person because the answers to the four vital questions are beyond the mind of man.

Now Consider the Answers from the Bible

The BIBLE simply starts with the great affirmation that God exists and that anyone who seeks Him must first believe He exists. It also declares that *God's self revelation* is seen in the amazing order and intelligent design observed **in nature** and by the universal laws that governs the universe. Design demands a designer and laws a law-giver (*Heb 11:6; Rm 1:18-20*). **Our conscience** also testifies of a higher holy Being before whom we must one day stand to be judged hence the fear of death. Guilt and shame is also the product of conscience (*Rm 2:14, 15; Gen 3:8*). We also have **a sense of eternity** - that one exists beyond this earthly life (*Ecc 3:11*). While the above reveals God's existence, only **the BIBLE** reveals in its inspired record, God's specific attributes, His character and personality (*Heb 1:1-3; 2Pet 1:16-21; 2 Tim 3:16*). Unless the Creator makes Himself known to us and of our origin, identity, purpose of life and destiny after death, we can never know the answers to life's vital questions. **The Christian faith stands or falls, on the reliability of the BIBLE, as God's unique, special revelation of Himself to man.** The BIBLE presents itself to be the only trustworthy source of such knowledge and the key for understanding this world and life on earth.

So Where Did I Come From? The Bible reveals that *God is the creator of all things*, from the microcosm to the macrocosm, the visible and the invisible and from the inanimate matter to intelligent man, whether or not we already understand them scientifically. The entire universe and all life on earth originated at God's command to come into being according to its own kind (*Gen 1&2; Jn 1:1, 3*). Therefore, all things are utterly dependent upon Him for everything. God is the absolute owner of His creation as its Creator. He sets the standard of right and wrong and God's perfect standard measures all our attitudes and actions (*Ps 33:6; 104:24; Jer 12:12; Prov 3:9; Col 2:3, 15-17; Ac 17:24-28a, 30; Gen 1:26; Rev 4:11; Heb 11:3*).

And Who Am I? We are not evolved animals but God created mankind as unique beings to reflect His own characteristics, hence our derived significance and identity as a person. Man was endowed with dignity, free-will, conscience, creative potential and with great responsibilities. As free moral beings man was assigned dominion over the natural world (*Gen 1:27, 28*). Unlike animals we alone among the living creatures are equipped for relationship with our Creator, hence our manic quest for answers to our origin and purpose for our existence.

What Then Is The Purpose Of Life? God being the sovereign Creator, created the universe and us for His pleasure. Our life began in the first man and woman (Adam and Eve). As God intended, we were created to live life fully in His presence under His loving care and authority, developing our full potential. Adam and Eve represented us as God intended them to be. (*Gen 1:26-28; Jn 4:23-24; Ps 8:3-9; Acts 17:24-34; Ecc 12:13*). They were given extensive freedom to manage the earth. Being rational creatures, God desired them to love, honour, and obey Him by their own free choice. God's test being that He knows best and that they trust and obey His rule unconditionally. He also warned them of the damning consequences of disobedience (*Gen 2:7-9, 15-18*). But our fore-parents chose independence from God. **This rejection of God's rule is the beginning of SIN** (*Gen 3:6-19*).

Since then everyone inherits the sinful nature. Every time we do wrong in thought or deed, we confirm our solidarity with the sin of disobedience of Adam and Eve (*Rm 5:12; 3:23; Ps 51:5*). **The most grievous sin is man's blasphemy of His Maker, by being an authority unto himself, wise in his own eyes.** Humanity has fallen from its splendour and glory and its divine purpose and destiny. Sin is the root cause of all human problems on earth today – physical and psychological maladies (*Gen 3:6-10*); socio-cultural degeneration (*Gen 4:8*); moral decadence and ecological disharmony (*Gen 3:17-19; Rm 8:20-23*).

Sin has separated man from a Holy God and most people are oblivious to their sinful condition, excusing their accusing guilty conscience. Others continue to reject their Creator by inventing their own “gods” or atheistic ideologies further compounding their rebellion (*Rm 1:18-2:1-16; 2Cor 4:4*). Sin has invaded man's mind, motives, will, affections and conscience. The root problem of man is not what you do but what you are, a debased, defiled, defiant sinner before a holy Creator. “There is none righteous, no, not one;... There is none who seeks after God;... There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (*Rm 3:10, 11, 18*).

Our inability to save ourselves from this diseased sinful nature is our predicament. “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing” (*Job 14:4*).

So What Happens To Me When I Die? The Bible reveals that the penalty of sin is death but after death is judgement (*Gen 2:17; Rm 6:23; Heb 9:27*). Sin made us enemies of God who is absolutely pure. Therefore God's righteous and just anger is upon sinful humanity. And He has established the unavoidable judgement and punishment for sin as DEATH (*Rm 5:10; 1:18*). The Bible describes death as a **three-fold death**: We are born **spiritually dead**. This refers to our alienation from God (*Eph 2:1; Mt 8:22*). Another effect of sin is the **physical death** (*Gen 3:19; Rm 5:12*). However, existence does not terminate at that point. It is followed by **eternal death**, the everlasting wretched life in HELL. God will reject those who reject Him in this life. He only confirms their choice (*Mt 25:41, 46; Lk 16:19-31; Rev 11:15*). **We are hopelessly trapped in sin by nature and by act with no way out.**

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, demonstrated His own love toward us by providing a substitute to be punished for our sin (*Eph 2:4, 5; Rm 5:8*). Sin, being an infinite offence against God, required divine satisfaction equally infinite. It was necessary that the infinite God Himself should take the place of man. As part of an amazing rescue plan **God sent His only begotten 'SON', JESUS**, born of a virgin, born without sin, to take the place of sinners and suffer God's judgement and the punishment for our sin in His death on the cross - the righteous for the unrighteous (*1Pe 3:18; Jn 3:16-18*).

Jesus was buried, and on the third day He bodily arose from the dead, conquering sin and death, setting us free from the curse of sin (*1Cor 15:3-8, 14-22*). His sinless blood shed on the cross for us sinners, satisfied the just anger of God (*Isa 53:5; 2Cor 5:21; Rm 5:6-12, 18-21; 1Pe 2:21-24*). His life of perfect obedience and sacrifice, on behalf of sinners is now accepted by God. **Forgiveness and everlasting life is freely offered to whoever will receive JESUS in true repentance.** “God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already... He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” (*Jn 3:17, 18, 36*).

Life's Four Great Answers Confronts You:

Why not make that all-important decision which will transform your life and bring you into a right relationship with God? (*2 Cor 5:17-18*). Are you willing to settle the matter of your eternal destiny? **“If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved”** (*Rm 10:9-10*).

You can be saved, by faith, believing in your heart, and telling God in a simple prayer like this:

Dear loving, holy God,

I know I'm a guilty sinner and I have lived a life of sin. I am not worthy to stand before You on judgement day. I do believe that JESUS died in my place for my sins, and that He arose again the third day setting me free from sin, death and condemnation. I truly repent of my sins and receive Him right now as my SAVIOR and LORD over my life. Help me to turn from my sinful ways and follow Him. Dear God, thank You for saving me as You promised in the Bible.

In the name of the Lord JESUS I pray. Amen.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (*Eph 2:8, 9*).

JESUS said, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgement, but has passed from death into life”** (*Jn 5:24*).

*If you have made this prayer,
please contact us soon for further help.*