The Question of All Questions

SCRIPTURE

"For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." James 4:14 (KJV)

DEVOTIONAL

"What is the meaning of life?" It is the question that has haunted philosophers, poets, and kings for millennia. It is the question that keeps us awake at night when the distractions of the day fade. We live in a world obsessed with how to live—how to eat healthy, how to invest money, how to be successful—but we rarely pause to ask why we are living.

The Bible gives a sobering reality check in James 4:14. Our life is a "vapour"—a mist that appears for a moment and then vanishes. In light of eternity, our 70 or 80 years are less than a blink. If this short existence is all there is, then life is truly absurd. We are born, we struggle, we work, we age, and we die. As Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes, "All is vanity."

But God has set eternity in our hearts (Ecclesiastes 3:11). That nagging sense of emptiness you feel, even when things are going well, is a divine signal. It is a reminder that you were made for something more than just paying bills and seeking pleasure. You were made for a purpose that transcends the grave.

As you begin this week, let this question settle in your heart. Don't push it away with noise or entertainment. Confront the brevity of life. Realize that if your life's meaning is tied only to temporary things—career, money, possessions, or reputation—then everything you are living for will eventually pass away. Anchor your life in the One who is eternal.

PRAYER

Lord, teach me to number my days. I don't want to spend my life chasing vapors. Show me the true substance of my existence. Awakening my heart to the eternal purpose You have for me. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY / ADDITIONAL BIBLE READING

- James 4:13–17
- Psalm 90:10–12
- Luke 12:15–21
- Ecclesiastes 3:11
- Jeremiah 1:4–10

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the brevity of life affect our understanding of purpose?

2. Read James 4:13–17. How does this passage deepen today's understanding of God's work in our lives?

3. What would it look like for you to evaluate how you are using your limited time?

Not An Accident

SCRIPTURE

"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee..." Jeremiah 1:5 (KJV)

DEVOTIONAL

One of the greatest lies of our modern age is that you are a cosmic accident. Secular science tells us we are merely the product of random mutations and time—biological drift-wood floating on a sea of chance. If that is true, then there is no objective meaning to your life. You are just matter in motion.

But the Bible counters this hopelessness with a powerful truth: You were known before you were born. God told Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee." You were an idea in the mind of God before you were a reality on earth. He knit you together in your mother's womb (Psalm 139:13). Your personality, your gifts, and your days were written in His book.

This changes everything. If you are a creation, then you have a Creator. And if you have a Creator, you have a purpose. Just look at the design written into the world around us: trees yield oxygen for our lungs, while our breath feeds their leaves. Rain evaporates, gathers in the clouds, falls to nourish the soil, and runs through rivers to sustain life at every turn. Nothing in creation exists merely for itself; everything is built to serve something else.

You are not an accident or a random collision of cells. You are a deliberate design. The enemy wants you to feel useless and isolated so that you will live carelessly. But God says you are "fearfully and wonderfully made." Your life has profound dignity and direction because it came from the hand of a loving Architect. You were created not to turn inward, but to live out your true purpose: pouring into and serving others.

PRAYER

Creator God, thank You that I am not an accident. Thank You that You have a purpose and meaning for my life. Help me to live according to your purpose. Show me how I can serve and benefit those around me. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY / ADDITIONAL BIBLE READING

- Jeremiah 1:4–10
- Psalm 139:13–16
- Ephesians 2:10
- Psalm 139:13
- James 4:13–17

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does God's knowledge of our lives reveal about our value and responsibility?

2. Consider Jeremiah 1:4–10. What does this passage add to the main lesson of today's devotional?

3. What would it look like for you to thank God for a gift or opportunity and use it to serve?

The Glory of God

SCRIPTURE

"Everyone that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." Isaiah 43:7 (KJV)

DEVOTIONAL

If we were created on purpose, then what is that purpose? Isaiah 43:7 says that we were created for His glory. When Moses saw God's glory He also heard Him pronounce His name. God proceeds to tell Moses His character.

This is the center of the target. This is the meaning of life. You were made to reflect the character of God to the universe. Just as the moon has no light of its own but reflects the brilliance of the sun, you were designed to reflect the character of your Creator.

When we live for our own glory—to make a name for ourselves, to be applauded, to be right—we are malfunctioning. We are like a mirror trying to trying to produce its own light; it doesn't work, and it leaves us exhausted and dark. But when we turn our face to Him and say, "Lord, let my life show Your kindness, Your patience, and Your love," we suddenly find our rhythm. We find peace. We find our purpose.

To glorify God means to make Him look good. It means living in such a way that when people look at your marriage, your work ethic, or your reaction to tragedy, they think, "God must be with them." This is why you breathe. This is why you exist.

PRAYER

Father, forgive me for trying to steal Your glory for myself. I often want the credit and the applause. Remind me of my true purpose in life. Let my life reflect Your beauty so clearly that others are drawn to You. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY / ADDITIONAL BIBLE READING

- Matthew 5:16
- 1 Corinthians 10:31
- Jeremiah 1:4–10
- Psalm 139:13–16
- Ephesians 2:10

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to live for God's glory rather than personal recognition?

2. How does Matthew 5:16 help clarify the spiritual principle in today's reading?

3. What would it look like for you to choose an action that honors God without drawing attention to yourself?

To Know Him

SCRIPTURE

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3 (KJV)

DEVOTIONAL

Jesus gives us a definition of "eternal life" that is radically different from what we might expect. He doesn't define it as living forever in a mansion or walking on streets of gold. He defines it as knowing God. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee."

We were created for intimacy with the Infinite. Adam and Eve walked with God in the cool of the day—not as terrified subjects, but as children of God. Sin broke that friendship, and ever since, we have been trying to fill the void with other things: relationships, entertainment, knowledge, substances. But that emptiness inside us can only be filled by God Himself.

To "know" God in the biblical sense is not just intellectual knowledge. You can know all about someone without knowing him. To truly know God is have a deep, personal, experiential knowledge of Him. It is the knowledge of a child for a father, or a bride for a husband.

Is your religion a set of rules, a set of creeds and ceremonies or is it a relationship? Do you talk to Him? do you listen for His voice? Do you enjoy His company? The greatest tragedy is to be busy for God but not know Him. The meaning of your life is found in the quiet moments of communion where you realize, "I am His, and He is mine."

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I want to know You. Not just facts about You, but to truly know Your heart. Draw me into a deeper intimacy. Let me find my satisfaction not in Your gifts, but in Your presence. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY / ADDITIONAL BIBLE READING

- Philippians 3:8–10
- Jeremiah 9:23–24
- Isaiah 43:7
- Matthew 5:16
- 1 Corinthians 10:31

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is knowing God personally central to eternal life?

2. Read Philippians 3:8–10. What connection do you see between this passage and today's Scripture?

3. What would it look like for you to spend unhurried time getting to know Christ through Scripture and prayer?

The Whole Duty of Man

SCRIPTURE

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13 (KJV)

DEVOTIONAL

Solomon had it all. He had more money than he could spend, more wisdom than any scholar, and more pleasure than any hedonist. He tried everything that the world had to offer, yet none of it could satisfy the deepest needs of his heart.

But he didn't end in despair. He ended with a conclusion: "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." The word "duty" is actually supplied by the translators; the Hebrew literally says, "This is the whole man." In other words, this is what makes you complete. This is what makes you fully human.

To "fear God" is not to be afraid of Him, but to stand in awe of His majesty. It is to recognize His rightful place as King. And to "keep His commandments" is the natural response of love to that King. We often view the commandments as restrictions that ruin our fun. But Solomon, who had all the "fun" the world could offer, tells us that true wholeness is found in obedience.

God's laws are the operating instructions for humanity. When we follow them, we function as we were designed. When we ignore them, we break ourselves. The meaning of life is to align your life with the God of the universe, accept His salvation, submit to His authority and sovereignty over your life and let His love flow through you.

PRAYER

God of Wisdom, save me from the empty pursuit of things "under the sun." Help me to find my wholeness in reverencing You and walking in Your ways. Teach me that obedience is not a burden, but the path to true life. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY / ADDITIONAL BIBLE READING

- Ecclesiastes 12:13–14
- Matthew 22:37–40
- John 14:15
- John 17:3
- Philippians 3:8–10

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do reverence for God and loving obedience express life's purpose?

2. What encouragement or instruction does Ecclesiastes 12:13–14 offer in light of today's devotional?

3. What would it look like for you to align one practical choice with God's commandments?

Created for Good Works

SCRIPTURE

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10 (KJV)

DEVOTIONAL

We are saved by grace, but we are saved for good works. Paul tells us that we are God's "workmanship", created specifically for a set of good works that God prepared beforehand for us to do.

This adds a dynamic layer to the meaning of life: Service. You are not just here to "be spiritual"; you are here to be useful. God has a specific mission for you. There are people only you can reach. There are kindnesses only you can show. There is a part of the vineyard that only you can tend.

When we live selfishly, asking "What's in it for me?", our world and our purpose shrinks. Our world becomes narrow and suffocating. But when we ask, "Lord, what good works have You prepared for me today?", our world expands. Our opportunities to fulfill life's meaning become greater. We become partners with God in the redemption of the world.

Whether it is feeding the hungry, comforting the grieving, or simply doing your job with excellence and integrity, these works matter. You find your life by losing it in service to others. We are not saved by our own works. We are saved from our selfish destructive nature. The inevitable result of salvation is love towards others. That is not a feeling. It is a principle of action. Today, look for the "prepared works" God has placed in your path.

PRAYER

Master, I am ready for duty. Show me the good works You have ordained for me today. Let me be Your hands and feet to a hurting world. Help me to find my joy in serving others. Amen.

FURTHER STUDY / ADDITIONAL BIBLE READING

- Ephesians 2:8–10
- Titus 3:8
- Matthew 25:34–40
- Ecclesiastes 12:13–14
- Matthew 22:37–40

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do good works follow grace rather than earn salvation?

2. How does Ephesians 2:8–10 support or expand the lesson we have considered today?

3. What would it look like for you to perform one useful act of service in response to God's grace?

Sabbath Summary & Reflection

SCRIPTURE

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." — Philippians 1:21 (KJV)

SABBATH REFLECTION

This week, we have tackled the biggest question of all: The Meaning of Life. We journeyed from the realization that life is a "vapour" to the solid ground of being known by God. We discovered that our purpose is to glorify Him, to know Him intimately, to fear Him, and to walk in the good works He prepared. The Apostle Paul summarizes it all in one sentence: "To me to live is Christ." For Paul, life wasn't about a career, a reputation, or even a ministry. Life was a Person. Christ was the source, the sustenance, and the goal of his existence. Because of this, even death was not a loss, but a "gain"—merely a promotion to closer intimacy. Sabbath Reflection: As you rest today, look back on your week. • Reflect: Did you live this week as if it were a vapour, or did you live as if this world is all there is? • Evaluate: In your daily choices, did you seek to "glorify God" (make Him look good) or glorify yourself? Did you find time to "know" Him in prayer, or just know about Him? • The Invitation: As you enter a new week, the call is to Center on Christ. Practical Application: Next week, when you wake up, before you reach for your phone or begin your daily tasks, spend time in God's Word and commit your day to Him. Let every decision flow from the purpose He has given you.

PRAYER

Father, thank You for giving my life meaning. I don't want to waste my vapour. I want to spend it on You. Be the center of my existence. Let me say with Paul, "To me to live is Christ." In Jesus' name, Amen.

FURTHER STUDY / ADDITIONAL BIBLE READING

- Philippians 1:20–21
- Galatians 2:20
- Colossians 3:17
- Ephesians 2:8–10
- Titus 3:8

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How would the purpose of living for Christ change your priorities next week?

2. How does Philippians 1:20–21 bring together the spiritual lessons of this week?

3. What would it look like for you to dedicate a specific area of daily life to Christ's service?