

Beginnings – ORIGIN *(Where did we come from?)*

- **Only Two Choices**
- **Realize the Significance**
- **Is it Faith or Science?**
 - LAB - Lookable, Accessible, Breakable
- **Guess at the Evidence**
- **Inspect the Evidence**
 - Universe = "Decay"
 - Age of the Earth = "Can't Say"
 - Origin of Life by Chance = "No Way"
 - Evolution of Species and Man = "Lacks Genes and Tweens"
- **No Compromise**

DON'T - Death, Orders of Creation, Names in genealogies, Ten Commandments refer to seven-day week

Intent of Life – LIFE *(Why are we here?)*

- **Love - GOD and MAN**
- **Increase - GROW**
- **Faithfulness - Time, Talent, Treasure**
- **Eternity – Past, Present, Future**

Authority – POWER *(Who's in charge?)* A God Who is:

- **Personal and Loving**
- **Omnipotent**
- **Wise and All-Knowing**
- **Everywhere and Eternal**
- **Righteous and Reliable**

Standards – RULES *(What are the rules?)* God's rules are:

- **Revealed supernaturally, not derived by reason**
- **Universal and apply to everyone, everywhere, all the time**
- **Loving**
- **Enforced**
- **Steadfast**

Why Are We Here?

Intent - The Purpose of L.I.F.E.

Our second big question asks if there is a reason for our being here. Obviously our answer to the first question (where did we come from?) has a lot to do with our answer to the second:

- If we were created on purpose then we must have a purpose.
- If we are here by accident then logically there can't be a real reason for our lives.

If we are here by chance.....

The origin of much of philosophy is rooted in this “intellectual” dilemma. Let’s say we are secular humanists who reject the Creator and believe that man’s thinking is the highest level of consciousness. This usually goes hand in hand with naturalism and materialism, the idea that everything is the result of natural materialistic processes and that there is no supernatural realm. We’re feeling pretty good about ourselves at first because we can be our own masters without any accountability to a higher power. We’re optimistic that our well-intentioned intellects will eventually solve all of mankind’s problems if we can just root superstition out of people’s thinking. Sure, there are problems in the world, but if we can keep from blowing ourselves up for a few more years then we’re smart enough to figure out how to solve all those problems.

But wait! Just as we’re starting to get excited about the self-exalting vision we’ve built for ourselves, we realize it doesn’t have a foundation. If we are the product of natural evolution, then our prized consciousness is the product of random mutations! How can we trust our thinking? Could our thinking be wrong? Oh no, how could there even be a “wrong” thinking if all thinking is the product of chance?

Honest reflection on the thought that we are nothing but “random accidents” can lead to despair. Existentialism, hedonism, fatalism, and a whole bunch of other “isms” are the logical destination of someone who tries to find a meaningful end from a meaningless beginning. As secular humanists we could have “goals” for our lives that we could try to substitute for a purpose, but **we can’t give real meaning to our lives if we are simply the product of millions of random events and accidents.** Just as with the concept of absolute right and wrong, if there is no purpose to our beginning we can’t insist upon any real significance to the middle or end of our existence.

But, if we were put here for a purpose.....

If the God who created everything out of His own imagination created us for a purpose, then our life is meaningful. Even if we don’t know why! We should try to figure out the why, but at the very least we know there is an answer. No one truly enjoys living without a purpose, and it is comforting to know that there is Someone who cares enough to have created us.

There is only one big downside to the idea of life having a true purpose:

If my life has true meaning, it also means that Someone Else is in charge of my life.

This is a stumbling point for our pride. Satan tempted Adam and Eve with the lie “you can be like God” and we continue to fall for this inviting fruit. I like being self-centered and setting my own course through life..... as long as things are going well. I’m like a little dog who likes to run ahead of my Master and act like I’m leading the way. But when I run into a bigger dog like trials and storms and sickness and tragedy and calamity and death I’m quick to tuck my tail and run back to the Master so He can take care of me.

So if we have a Master who made us for a reason, what’s the reason? ***Why does Someone who has everything need me?***

According to the Bible, God made us for His own glory (Isaiah 43:7; 1 Corinthians 10:31). I’ve always felt a little uncomfortable with this thought because it makes God seem so self-serving. But then I think, if He didn’t make us for *His* glory, for whose glory would he make us? Mine? Yours? Mother Nature’s? We will glorify someone or something with our lives, and it is logical that life will be better and more enjoyable if we seek to bring glory to God rather than to ourselves. He made us, He says He loves us, and He knows us inside out. I’ve lived in my body all my life and I still don’t have a clue how to consciously make my heart beat or my cells reproduce or my lungs take in oxygen. If the One who knows everything says I’m here for His glory I can’t imagine why I would think I could come up with a better reason.

So if we’re here for God’s glory, what are we supposed to do?

Many books have already been written to try to answer this question, so we’re obviously not going to come up with an exhaustive answer in the next few pages. But for our purposes we’re looking for a “big picture” outline that we can memorize. We’ll use the acrostic LIFE to summarize some major elements of God’s purpose for us as we find it in the Bible:

- Love
- Increase
- Faithfulness
- Eternity

Within these topics we can organize enough thoughts to keep us busy for the rest of our lives (and beyond).