

*Why do we exist – Humanity???*

*Life is a training ground for character development and a life of service.*

- *I matter – my life has significance*
- *Where did we come from?*
- *Why are we here?*
- *Does my life matter in this world?*

*“Solomon Gundy – English nursery rhyme  
Born on a Monday  
Christened on a Tuesday  
Married on Wednesday  
Took ill on Thursday  
Grew worse on Friday  
Died on Saturday  
Buried on Sunday  
That was the end,  
Of Solomon Grundy”*

*The most credible source to respond to the question of “Does my life matter?” is **The Bible**.*

*Significance*

- **Purpose** (*Why do we exist?*) and **Meaning** (*Who are we?*)
- *With all this movement in the atmosphere and the heavens – what does it signify?*
- *In the world we live in, we answer these questions with power, fame, and fortune.*
- *The way we answer these questions will determine the level of quality of life we will live.*

*The key to significance is **relationship**.*

- *We come here and we see everything already in motion – so, we wonder - who in the world am I and what am I connected to – well, until we find the connection with our Maker, God – everything else in this world we’ll try to help us find the answers to these questions of significance.*

**Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 NLT** - <sup>1</sup> These are the words of the Teacher, King David’s son, who ruled in Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> “Everything is meaningless,” says the Teacher, “completely meaningless!” <sup>3</sup> What do people get for all their hard work under the sun? <sup>4</sup> Generations come and generations go, but the earth never changes. <sup>5</sup> The sun rises and the sun sets, then hurries around to rise again. <sup>6</sup> The wind blows south, and then turns north. Around and around it goes, blowing in circles. <sup>7</sup> Rivers run into the sea, but the sea is never full. Then the water returns again to the rivers and flows out again to the sea. <sup>8</sup> Everything is wearisome beyond description. No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied. No matter how much we hear, we are not content. <sup>9</sup> History merely repeats itself. It has all been done before. Nothing

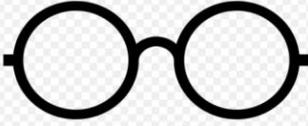
*under the sun is truly new. <sup>10</sup> Sometimes people say, “Here is something new!” But actually it is old; nothing is ever truly new. <sup>11</sup> We don’t remember what happened in the past, and in future generations, no one will remember what we are doing now.*

**Solomon’s look on life – life under the sun**

- Ecclesiastes 1 - Life is vain, vanity, useless
- He was using Lens #1 – seeing life through the lens of pointlessness and worldliness
- He was looking at the temporary nature of life
- Looking at life from the standpoint of no connection to God

**In Ecclesiastes 12, he begins to look upward and bring God into focus**

- He begins to explain the aging process
- Ecclesiastes 12:13-14
- Fear God and Keep His commandments
- This is why we exist – God’s purpose for humanity
- God is majestic – He is the Great One – He deserves our worship and we will do what He says
- All Solomon saw when he was disconnected from God was darkness

<p style="text-align: center;">Lense 1 Unbeliever Pointlessness/ Worldliness</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;">Lense 2 Godly</p> 
<p>1. <u>Vanity</u> – life is empty without God In terms of value In terms of meaning and purpose It’s all empty, vanity</p> <p>2. <u>Under the sun</u> Temporary and worldliness It’s all temporal External and heavenly</p>	<p>We have to believe God and trust in Him</p> <p>Patience – is waiting without worrying</p> <p>Isaiah 40:31- Those who wait</p> <p>We have to have faith to believe, trust, and rely on God</p> <p>We get frustrated because God is taking too long in our minds</p>
<p>Living life like running on a treadmill; running, but going nowhere with no end in mind</p> <p>The “rat race” – is the wrong race; trying to chase the so-called good life</p>	<p>This life is also a race, but it has a finish</p> <p>This life is a “journey”</p> <p>1 Corinthians 9:24-27</p>

**1 John 2:3-11 TLB** - <sup>3</sup> And how can we be sure that we belong to him? By looking within ourselves: are we really trying to do what he wants us to? <sup>4</sup> Someone may say, "I am a Christian; I am on my way to heaven; I belong to Christ." But if he doesn't do what Christ tells him to, he is a liar. <sup>5</sup> But those who do what Christ tells them to will learn to love God more and more. That is the way to know whether or not you are a Christian. <sup>6</sup> Anyone who says he is a Christian should live as Christ did. <sup>7</sup> Dear brothers, I am not writing out a new rule for you to obey, for it is an old one you have always had, right from the start. You have heard it all before. <sup>8</sup> Yet it is always new, and works for you just as it did for Christ; and as we obey this commandment, to love one another, the darkness in our lives disappears and the new light of life in Christ shines in. <sup>9</sup> Anyone who says he is walking in the light of Christ but dislikes his fellow man is still in darkness. <sup>10</sup> But whoever loves his fellow man is "walking in the light" and can see his way without stumbling around in darkness and sin. <sup>11</sup> For he who dislikes his brother is wandering in spiritual darkness and doesn't know where he is going, for the darkness has made him blind so that he cannot see the way.

### **Three Identity Tests:**

**1. 1 John 2:3-4: Obedience – test of faith** (Devoted – reverential fear where we recognize His uniqueness and have an attitude to do what He says and live a life that is pleasing to God)

- Faith in action
- We believe – we rest our hope on the object
- If we're connected with Jesus Christ, we should see you obeying His teachings
- Demonstration that my faith is real

**2. 1 John 2:5-6: Walk like Jesus Christ** (Disciples – followers; learn from Him; wanting to be like Him)

- Absolute obedience to His Daddy
- Obey His teachings
- Loving service to His people

Conversion benefits us – gives us a fiery escape from hell

Discipleship glorifies God because we become more like Him

**3. 1 John 2:7-10: Walking in the Light**

- Leviticus 19:18 – Love your neighbor as you love yourself
- New Barometer – John 13:34-35 – Love your neighbor, as I love you
- No matter our mood, or what we're going through – love as Jesus Christ loves us

Who are we?

- We are children of God through faith in Jesus Christ; not because I was created by God

- **John 1:12** – *I believed in Jesus Christ; I believe He gave me the right to call God, my Father*
  - *Have you accepted the 2<sup>nd</sup> birth? Reborn in Christ Jesus*
- **1 John 3:2** – *what we are, children of God, and what will be in the future, because we will see God as He is*
- **Romans 8:16** – *the Holy Spirit testifies that we are children of God*
- **Ephesians 1:13-14** – *we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise*

*Purpose comes from identity*

- *Not the reverse – identity comes from purpose*
- *When we talk to people, we identify ourselves with what we do – this is wrong...*

*Forgiveness*

- *Within the family, we have family forgiveness*
- *Outside the family, we have judicial forgiveness*

*We have nothing that we can pay for our sins*

- *So if I did not accept Jesus, then I will have to pay my penalty forever*
- *If I accepted Jesus Christ, then my penalty has already been paid – past, present, and future*
  
- *So God doesn't disown His children when we sin – we live in the presence of sin; He took away the power that sin has over us*
- *Everything operates in its nature, so the unsaved, who haven't accepted Christ, have one nature - to sin*
  
- *God didn't cancel the Law of sowing and reaping – so, there are consequences*
- *We are not illegitimate, so He will discipline us – to bend us to make us better*

*Our life is like a coin, we can spend it however we want, but we will have to give account for how we spend it*

*It doesn't matter how long we live, but how well we live*

*Example: Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

**Acts 13:26** – *Wouldn't we like to have this epitaph on our tombstone*

- *When David had served the purpose of God*

**Proverbs 19:21** – *when making our plans, God won't stop us*

- *We should use a pencil when we're writing our plans, give God the eraser – but don't whine and moan when He changes our plan*

*Living our so-called ordinary lives and we never seem to make a difference to others around us*

*We've lived a chaste life, God notices us, but we don't get accolades from men – we pass away and no one remembers – very quietly, our life is making a difference*

*Don't worry someone notices; someone is taking notes*

**Malachi 3:13-16 MSG:** <sup>13</sup> GOD says, "You have spoken hard, rude words to me. "You ask, 'When did we ever do that?' <sup>14-15</sup> "When you said, 'It doesn't pay to serve God. What do we ever get out of it? When we did what he said and went around with long faces, serious about GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies, what difference did it make? Those who take life into their own hands are the lucky ones. They break all the rules and get ahead anyway. They push God to the limit and get by with it.'" <sup>16</sup> Then those whose lives honored GOD got together and talked it over. GOD saw what they were doing and listened in. A book was opened in God's presence and minutes were taken of the meeting, with the names of the GOD-fearers written down, all the names of those who honored GOD's name.

- *What difference does it make to obey God?*
- *Reality – some of us are living month-to-month, paycheck-to-paycheck – reading my bible, obeying God – and the rich seem to be doing nothing and they're arrogant*
- *The Message Bible – minutes were taken and their names were written down*
  - *I take minutes, I remember*
  - *God sees everything*

### **Proverbs 15:3**

- *God sees the life we live*
- *He sees the struggle*
- *He's living through us as we remain in Him*
- *We are in His book of remembrance*
- *That day of accounting, He will reward us*
- *There will be a difference on Judgement Day between those who serve God and those who don't*

### **Galatians 6:9**

- *Don't get weary – keep doing good*

### 3 levels of how we operate

- *God level – when we do good for evil (This is where we, God's children, need to operate)*
- *Tit-for-tat level – when we do good for good or evil for evil*
- *Demonic level – when we do evil for good*