

# What is the Meaning of Life?: The Search to Understand Who We Are, Where We Came From, and Where We're Going

Stephen Tvedten

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There is ancient Zen proverb that says "Before enlightenment, chop wood, carry water. After enlightenment, chop wood, carry water." This simply means that no matter how much you will ever understand and/or will never understand about the meaning of life, you still have to do all of the various mundane tasks required by your simply livingyour life in the NOW. Even the enlightened Buddha had to wash his own hands and do his own dishes.

So that said, what is the real meaning of life? This simple question is one of the most frequently asked questions by many, manydoctors, professors, scientists, philosophers, theologians, poets, writers and ordinary people ever since the world began. The question of the meaning of life may be asked in many different ways: "What is the purpose of my life? Or does my life have any purpose? "What should I be doing?", "Why am I here?" "What is my life all about?" "What is the purpose of my existence?" "Does life really exist or have any purpose at all?" Is it true that "Life's a bitch and then you die"? Or can you really be happy and not worry and/or even succeed? Your life is simply one incident and/or experience following after another and when you experience all of these various incidents and/or experiences, you must daily and carefully choose how you will react to them. You will believe only what you choose to believe. Everyone believes – some choose to believe that the glass is half full - others choose to believe that the glass is half empty. Some choose to believe in G-d others choose to beLIEve there is no god. Some choose to believe in the truth and others choose to beLIEve in lies. You must carefully choose how and what you will believe or not believe!

Do you ever wonder why you are exactly you? Why you are not taller, thinner, happier, richer, stronger, healthier, wiser, more tolerant and/or more handsome/beautiful/attractive? Whydo you even bother to ask? ALL of these questions are simply the result of your current choice of concentrating on troubling demonic thoughts.In Matthew 6:25-34Jesus said: "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if G-d so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? Or, what shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of G-d, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

It really matters very little what your friends, competitors, cohorts, neighbors, teachers, parents, boss, workers, spouse, criticsand/or what anyone else accuses, thinks or believes about you. Because like Popeye who said: "I am what I am." You are truly who youare and it is only your personal evaluation and/or opinion

of youis what really matters in the end. You do not need the validation, forgiveness, approval, love, permission, acceptance and/or the accreditation of anyone else. But you do need yourown total forgiveness, permission, acceptance, approval, accreditation, love and/or validation of yourself



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