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# ONE GREAT PURPOSE



*When was a time you asked yourself,  
“What am I doing here?”*

**QUESTION #1**

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## THE POINT

*We were created to glorify God  
and enjoy Him forever.*



## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

What is the meaning of life?

Countless people have discussed that question through the ages. And they've all come up with different answers. Take, for example, the conclusion of one celebrity who endured cancer and 17 months of chemotherapy and radiation. She said: "What I learned is very simple: that your life belongs to you. And it really doesn't matter what you do with it, but it should be what *you* want to do with it. Not what your mother or father or friends or society want. It should be 'I-directed.' And that's the only purpose for being here."<sup>1</sup>

Sadly, I also lived for a long time with a worldly misunderstanding of purpose. I was a very selfish person. My life was "I-directed," and I sought fulfillment in materialism, relationships, and money. These resulted in momentary satisfaction, but the emptiness always returned. I was living my life without real purpose.

Thankfully, I discovered the purpose of my life—of *our* lives—in time. That purpose is made clear in the pages of Scripture.

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## *Isaiah 43:1-2*

**<sup>1</sup> Now this is what the LORD says—the One who created you, Jacob, and the One who formed you, Israel—“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine. <sup>2</sup> I will be with you when you pass through the waters.**

Isaiah 43 addressed God’s relationship with Israel, and it still holds great meaning for us today. Consider what verses 1-2 tell us about God’s connection with His chosen people:

- ▶ God created and formed them.
- ▶ God redeemed them out of bondage in Egypt.
- ▶ God called them by name; they were His possession.

Don’t miss the intimacy and purpose in God’s choice of words: “created,” “formed,” “redeemed,” and “called.” God created you, as well—and He created you to live in relationship with Him. If you have a relationship with the Lord, He is forming you each day to become more like Him, much as a potter forms clay (see Isa. 64:8). If you’re a Christian, God has redeemed you through Jesus Christ. He has set you free from the penalty and the power of sin. He has called you by name and brought you to Himself.

God desires for you to grow beyond mere knowledge *about* Him. He wants you to know Him more and more so that you will grow deeper in your walk and relationship *with* Him. The apostle Paul reflected on this type of growth when speaking about his life goals: “My goal is to know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, assuming that I will somehow reach the resurrection from among the dead” (Phil. 3:10-11).

***How can these verses be seen as both good news and bad news?***

### **QUESTION #2**

We can rest in our relationship with God because of the great promises He has given us. For example, He has promised to always be with us and protect us.

In Isaiah 43, the prophet used word pictures to describe the adversity we face in life: waters and rivers, fire and flame. Yet even in difficult trials and circumstances, God has promised to be with His people. It's encouraging to know the God who redeemed us in the past will protect us from harm in the future, no matter how difficult our situations may be.

*How has God used specific trials in your life to teach you more about Himself?*

**QUESTION #3*****Isaiah 43:3-4***

**<sup>3</sup> For I Yahweh your God, the Holy One of Israel, and your Savior, give Egypt as a ransom for you, Cush and Seba in your place. <sup>4</sup> Because you are precious in My sight and honored, and I love you, I will give people in exchange for you and nations instead of your life.**

God's promises are motivated by His love. His people are so precious in His sight that He would save them at a high price. God promised to bring them back from exile and restore them to their land. Others would experience defeat—Egypt, Cush, and Seba in this case—but the Lord would restore His people.

Not only did God promise His protection and His presence for the Israelites, but also His prosperity. In fact, God has promised prosperity to all who follow Him—but not a materialistic prosperity. We prosper with spiritual blessings: "Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heaven" (Eph. 1:3).

The greatest spiritual blessing of all is to know and enjoy God's love. God created us and called us to be in relationship with Him through redemption in order that we could enjoy His love.

The greatest expression of God's love was displayed at the cross. Jesus willingly went to the cross and died as a substitute for our sin. We did nothing to earn or deserve this act of love. God has extended it to us by grace. Thankfully, just as we can do nothing to earn this loving gift from God, we can do nothing to lose it (see Rom. 8:35-39). Our salvation is eternally secure in Christ.

One of the most difficult times in my life was when I lost my dad to cancer. It was gut-wrenching, but God was with me through it all. In fact, I'm closer to God today as a result of what I experienced in that terrible time. What could have overwhelmed me, God used to draw me closer to Himself. His love was with me constantly.

That's an important principle. To enjoy the love of God doesn't mean we face every life situation with a smile on our faces, but it does mean we face every life situation with the assurance of God's presence, protection, and everlasting love. That is true prosperity.

### ***Isaiah 43:5-7***

**<sup>5</sup> Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your descendants from the east, and gather you from the west. <sup>6</sup> I will say to the north: Give them up! and to the south: Do not hold them back! Bring My sons from far away, and My daughters from the ends of the earth— <sup>7</sup> everyone called by My name and created for My glory. I have formed him; indeed, I have made him."**

Because we were created to know and enjoy God's love, we ultimately have nothing to fear. Isaiah prophesied to the nation of Israel that, even though they would face the difficulty of exile, God would bring them back home. He would be with them, and His presence would keep them during their trial.

***What steps can we take to recognize and more fully enjoy God's love?***

#### **QUESTION #4**



God's loving protection applies to "everyone called by My name and created for My glory." That includes us. To be created for God's glory means we are to display His character.

Isaiah 43 highlights three important attributes of God:

- ▶ **God is love (v. 4).** We express God's love by putting others before ourselves. Perhaps the greatest expression of God's love is when we choose to forgive someone we feel is undeserving. After all, that's what God did for us.
- ▶ **God is holy (v. 3).** As Christians, we pursue holiness by living in obedience to God's Word.
- ▶ **God is gracious (v. 7).** He called us by His name and created us for His glory—and we did nothing to deserve this. We can exemplify God's grace by extending grace to others.

When we faithfully display the character of God, our lives point to Him and bring Him glory. The gospel provides us with all the motivation and power we need to pursue this purpose wholeheartedly. God created you, called you, and redeemed you. Through Christ's work on the cross, He did for us what we could not do for ourselves. He brought us back to the place of living for His glory and enjoying Him forever.

What a great purpose for life! But we only experience this purpose when we submit our lives to Christ for salvation. God told His people, "Do not fear, for I am with you." And that's the key: God's presence. Sin keeps us from knowing God personally, but God demonstrated His love for us by sending His Son to die in our place (see Rom. 5:6-8).

I used to be "I-directed," but God pursued me. He called me by name. He redeemed me. He changed my life. He helped me find what I was created for—and He can do the same for you.

***What does it look like to glorify God  
in our everyday lives?***

**QUESTION #5**

## "I AM WITH YOU"

*Use the space below to record what it's like when you experience God's presence. Do so in a way that's comfortable for you—make a list, describe a story, sketch a picture, and so on.*

*What do you enjoy most about spending time with God?*

*"What you are is God's gift to you.  
What you can become is your gift to Him."*

—HENRIETTA C. MEARS

# LIVE IT OUT

You have a purpose. How will that truth influence your actions and attitudes this week? Consider the following options:

- ▶ **Reflect** on the grace of God in your own life. Write down specific things God has done for you. Spend time in prayer thanking and praising Him.
- ▶ **Display** the character of God in your life this week. Look for opportunities to display the character of Jesus toward others. Perhaps you need to offer someone forgiveness. Or you can offer an act of kindness to a stranger in need.
- ▶ **Talk** with someone this week a specific way God has shown His grace to you. Be prepared to share the gospel with them if the conversation moves in that direction.



The true meaning *of* your life—the true purpose—is to glorify God *through* your life. That's a difficult decision to make, and you must make it each day. Thankfully, it's a decision that allows you to enjoy God's presence for all time.

My thoughts

Share with others how you will live out this study: **#BSFLtruth**

1. <http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/news/the-unbreakable-robin-quivers-20131023>.