

What is the Meaning of Life?

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[0:00] Good morning, everyone. Good morning. It's good to be back today here. We had a bit of a small disruption last week and had to meet over Zoom. That wasn't ideal, but thankful we can still meet to some degree, even not physically during that typhoon. And last week we heard about how some of us scattered, some of us here scattered to share the love of Christ with some youth at Young Life Camp. Some of the youth here are here today, actually. That was a great time, but this past week there was also another camp at the main church. This past week we were, some of us, went to serve younger kids also at the VBS in the main church building next door. And we have people including Auntie Agnes, we have Rocky, some of our youth, Alexis, Josephine, Sophia, helping out. I'm but they decided still to feature me as Cantonese speaking Apostle Paul, right? I bet you haven't heard that part of Acts yet. You didn't read that part of Acts yet. But hey, sometimes serving God means that we have to be challenged to step outside our comfort zones. And that's why I had to do this past week. And there's one more person I have to mention. Big shout out to Deacon Adrienne, who led the charge in planning this whole camp. And so that was the kids' camp. That was VBS this past week.

Now, there's one thing that I notice about kids. Kids like to ask this question of why. They like to ask why. And my parents said I was a pretty curious kid growing up. I asked that a lot growing up and bothered them quite a bit. Why? Why? Why? Right? Like, why is the sky blue? Why do I have to go to bed?

Why do we have belly buttons? Right? Why can't I make McDonald's? Why do we bake cookies yet cook bacon? That's crazy. The world doesn't make sense. This world doesn't make sense. Kids like to ask why. Right? But it's not just kids. We don't outgrow asking this question of why. Those why questions, they stick with us. Right? As a kid, why do I have to go to school? That now becomes, why do I have to wake up every day for this job? Right? Or why do I need to do my homework becomes, why am I working overtime on some dumb slide deck that no one's going to take a second glance at? Right? Or are we there yet? Why is this taking so long? That becomes, why haven't I met my spouse yet? And actually, what does he look like? Is he going to be a finance bro or financially broke? What's it going to be? Right?

We all have questions. Especially when taking a shower sometimes. You guys have shower thoughts? Right? The shower is a place where a lot of people do philosophy. That's where they contemplate life.

In the shower. But maybe even more common is when you're squished in the MTR early Monday morning heading to work. Or waking up with a headache after a late night out. Or after you sent off your kids university and returning to home, that's just a little bit too big now. And that's where we might be asking, why am I doing all this? Why? Why am I here? What is my life about? And that's the question we'll be asking today as we continue on our summer series on apologetics. We've been asking a few questions so far this summer. Why is Jesus relevant? Why trust the Bible? And today we'll be asking this question of why are we here? What is the meaning of life? And now I know it's not even 1130 yet on a Sunday morning. Maybe you haven't had your coffee. It's a bit too early in the day for an existential crisis. That's understandable. Sometimes it's scary to ask this question because we don't know what we'll find. Right? What if we ask what is the meaning of life and there's nothing? Right? What if we ask why am

[4:01] I here and we're met with silence? That's a pretty daunting thought. Or on the other hand, maybe this question hasn't crossed your mind because life's good, you're happy, and there's enough distractions to keep us from asking this question. But what if you're made for more than this? So that's why we're talking about this question today. And to answer this, we'll look to the Bible. We'll look to Isaiah chapter 43 verses 1 to 13. We'll read from that. I'll invite Jasper up to read

for us. I believe the word of God has something to say about why we are here. So we'll read Isaiah 43 verses 1 to 13, focusing on a few verses there. But let's read verses 1 to 13.

Israel's only Savior. But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who... Sorry, let's stand as we usually do as we read the word of God.

All right, let me start again. Israel's only Savior. But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. And through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you. When you walk through fire, you shall not be burned, and the flames shall not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you. Because you are precious in my eyes and honored, and I love you, I give men in return for you, people in exchange for your life.

Fear not, for I am with you. I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west, I will gather you. I will say to the north, give up, and to the south, do not withhold.

Bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the end of the earth. Everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made. Bring out the people who are blind, yet have eyes, who are deaf, yet have ears. All the nations gather together, and the people assemble.

[6:11] Who among them can declare this, and show us the former things? Let them bring their witnesses to prove them right, and let them hear and say, it is true, you are my witnesses, declares the Lord.

And my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me, and understand that I am he. Before me, no God was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the Lord. And besides me, there is no Savior. I declare and save and proclaim. When there was no strange God among you, and you are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and I am God. And also, henceforth, I am he. There is none who can deliver from my hand at work, and who can turn it back. This is the word of God. Thank you. Please take a seat. This is the word of the Lord.

And again, today, we're asking this question, what is the meaning of life? It's a question that we probably all have, but it's not a question that's just in our heads that we ask intellectually and impassively, right? It's a question that we ask in our hearts. We want purpose. We all want purpose. We all want meaning. We want to be happy. We want to be fulfilled. And in a way, as we live our lives each day, that's an attempt to answer this question, practically speaking. What we do, it reflects where we find meaning. It's an, or it's an experiment to see whether this thing will make us happy, will satisfy us.

[7:44] We search for meaning when we are kind and helpful to others, or in pursuing your passion as a musician, or building out your career. Or lots of people find meaning in having friends, in family, in community.

For example, even here at the gathering. Or caring for your family, elderly parents, or your children. That's where a lot of people find meaning and purpose in life. And that's all great. Those are all great things.

Those are all great pursuits. They are very, they're meaningful things. But although they're good things, they aren't the ultimate thing. They're not the ultimate reality. So instead, I want to start from there. I want to start from the foundations today, from the one who is ultimate, and the one who is reality and gives us purpose. And the Bible is really clear in Genesis 1. In the beginning, there was God. In the beginning, God. In the beginning, there was only God. And God created the heavens and the earth. God is the only one who is eternal and without beginning. Everything else was created by him. All right, look around in this room. God made everything. These chairs, the people around us, or outside, the harbor, the skies, even the building. God made people with creativity and the raw materials to build those. Right? The person next to you. All of us made by God. God made it all. And that's what we see here in Isaiah 43 in verse 1. Where God says, now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel. He's saying, I am the Lord, and I made you. I formed you. Right? He's the one who made everything. And that's where we begin today. And God did all this with a purpose. God created us for a reason. And so if we're asking, what is the meaning of our lives? It makes sense to look at our creator and ask him, why did you make me? What is your purpose? What's your purpose for creating the world?

What's your purpose for making me? Because if everything exists by God's design, then God's purpose is our purpose. Our lives are about what God made our lives to be about. Right? If you pick

up a pair of shorts here, a pair of pink shorts, they might not mean much to you. But if you ask Joe or Alex, they'll tell you those aren't any ordinary pair of shorts. Those shorts are actually Eden safety blanket. And without them, Eden won't sleep with it. Eden won't be able to sleep. And neither will they. Neither will Joe and Alex. Right? So this mundane thing, this pair of shorts, we don't see the full meaning unless we ask Joe and Alex. And that's the same for us. It's the same for us, for our lives, unless we ask God, why did you make us? And when we ask God, why do you create me? What's your meaning for my life? This is how he responds. This is what he says in verses six to seven. God says, I will say to North, give up into the South. Do not withhold. Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth. Everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made. Everyone whom I created for my glory. That's the reason why God created us, formed us, made us. He says here, it is for my glory, for my glory. And so when we ask, what is our purpose? The answer is what our creator says it is. And God says, you are made for my glory.

Ultimately, that's what our lives are about. And not just our lives, but everything here, everything he created, it's all for the glory of God. That's what Romans 11 says. From him, through him, and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. That's the purpose of everything.

[11 : 29] And this isn't just a passing thought. This doesn't just show up in Isaiah 43. God's glory really is the heartbeat of the book of Isaiah. It runs through this book. God is relentless in repeating it. It reminds me a bit of the construction going on in Sherengwan recently. I don't know if it's still there, but a few months ago, there was this, there was this pile driver. Do you guys know what a pile driver is? But like, it was so loud. There was just this constant thumping noise in Sherengwan whenever you went there, whenever you went to the station, just this pile driver beating into the ground. You would hear it shaking. You'd feel it in your chest. And that's the picture I see when I read the surrounding chapters of Isaiah, that God is relentless in hammering home this point.

He wants to drive home into hearts this message that he is the Lord. There is no other. And he gets the glory. I'll read a few examples in Isaiah. He says, I'm the Lord. That is my name.

My glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols. Let them give glory to God, to the Lord, and declare his praise. That people may know from the rising of the sun and from the west that there is none beside me. I am the Lord and there is no other. To whom will you compare me that I should be like them, says the Holy One. I, I am he who blots out your transgression for my own sake. For my name's sake, I defer my anger. For the sake of my praise, I restrain it for you.

For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it. For how should my name be profaned? My glory, I will not give to another. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken. That's the message that echoes through this book of Isaiah, that God is passionate for his glory. And the point in our passage here today is in verse seven, my sons and my daughters, I created them for my glory. And so when we ask this question, why are we here? The Bible is clear. There's no question about it. We exist for the glory of God.

God is emphatic about that, that for his glory. He is passionate for it. And the question for us is, do we share that same passion for his glory? Do we have that same passion? Now at this point, you might be asking two questions, right? The first question you might have is, well, that's great, but what is the glory of God? What is the glory of God? Because that just sounds like Christian lingo, right? Around church, we always hear this, like praise God, worship God, glory to God. But what does that mean? What is the glory of God? The second question you might have is, actually hearing this doesn't sit right with us, right? One question you might have is, is God selfish? And he's talking a lot about himself. Well, the Bible doesn't ask, doesn't allow us to neglect this truth that God is passionate for his glory. But you might be asking, hey, doesn't that make him selfish? Because we have a word for people who think that the world revolves around them, right? We call such people narcissists, right? We call them self-absorbed, self-centered, egomaniacs, right? If I asked you to praise and glorify me, that'd be messed up, right? That's, you guys know that. You'd call me delusional, right? You'd call me crazy. So what makes God different? How can God be good when he is so passionate for his glory, when he does everything for his glory, even creating all of us? That's one question you might have. That's a good question, but hold on to that thought. We'll come back to it. We'll start with that first question, which is what is the glory of God? What is the glory of God?

[15 : 09] Okay. God's glory is related to the fact that there is no one like him, right? We'll read in verse 10. It says, you are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen,

that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me, no God was formed, nor shall there be any after me.

I, I am the Lord, and besides me, there is no savior. Notice that God doesn't just say, I am the Lord. He makes sure to repeat it. I, I am the Lord, right? That there is only me, and there is no God like me.

I am the Lord, and there is no other. And that's what we mean when we say that God is holy. That's what we mean when we say that God is holy. God's holiness means that God is completely in his own league, that there is no one like him. There's no one like our God. That is his holiness. And we see how God describes himself in verse three, right? I am the Lord, your God, the Holy one of Israel, your savior. There is no one like me. God's holiness means that he is unique, that he's completely other.

But that's not all. Because if you're at a restaurant and your waiter asks you, oh, how's the pasta? And you reply, oh, it's, it's unique. It's, it's different, right? That's not necessarily a good sign. But instead, the holiness of God means that he is uniquely good. He's unique in his majesty. He's unique in perfection, in purity, in righteousness, in his splendor, in his love, in every good thing. [16:41] He is worthy. Exodus 15 says, who is like you, oh Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? He's not just unique. He is uniquely good. That's the holiness of God. And I bring up his holiness when talking about glory, because in Isaiah chapter six, that's where we see how God's holiness and his glory come together. In Isaiah six, God is sitting on his throne with heavenly creatures, the seraphim worshiping him. And in verse three, the seraphim cry out. They say this in verse three, Isaiah six, verse three, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.

The whole earth is full of his glory. And notice this, they say, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. God is holy. The whole earth is full of his, right? If we stop there, how do you expect them to finish that sentence? Holy, holy, holy. They said holy already three times. Why not say it four times? His holiness. The whole earth is full of his holiness, but that's not what they say. They say this, that's not how they complete the sentence. Instead, they say the whole earth is full of his glory. And that's, that's how God's holiness and glory mean. John Piper puts it like this. God's holiness is his infinite worth. God's glory is the display of that worth. While God's holiness is, it's his infinite perfection. It's his beauty on the inside. God's glory is that going public of his holiness. It's the hard launch of his holiness. God's glory is his holiness on display.

It's his, his glory is his infinite beauty and greatness being displayed and treasured and appreciated by the world. And so God didn't create us because he lacked anything for all eternity.

The father, the son and Holy spirit were together in perfect love, perfect joy, perfect unity. God wasn't missing anything in the Trinity, but he made us out of abundance, out of fullness to share with us who he is to share with us his holiness, his glory. John one says from his fullness, we have all received grace upon grace. Our cup overflows because God's cup overflows and the glory of God is his beauty on displayed and shared with us, shared with us people that he created. That's the glory of God. And now it's about time we visited that other question from earlier. That is God egotistical for demanding our praise or put more bluntly as Christians, do we worship a narcissist? Is that what God, is that who God is? That's a question that a guy named C.S. Lewis had. So C.S. Lewis, the author of Chronicles of Narnia, Lion, Witch and Wardrobe, there's this talking line. Well, [19:37] C.S. Lewis said that when he was starting to believe in God, when he was first starting to believe in God, he hit a stumbling block when he was reading the book of Psalms. The reason why was he felt uncomfortable about all the commands in the Psalms that ask us to praise God. Right? For example, Psalm 22 says, you who fear the Lord, praise him, glorify him and stand in awe of him. Psalm 29 says, ascribe to the Lord the glory due to his name, worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness.

Psalm 96, declare his glory among the nations. Psalm 117, praise the Lord, all nations. Psalm 150, let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Right? There's these constant, the Psalms just full of commands to praise God and worship him. And C.S. Lewis, he looked at the Psalms and thought, how can I worship a God like this? Right? A God who craves our worship like a vain woman wanting compliments. That's what C.S. Lewis wrote. Like, how could I worship a God that cares so much about being praised? That was one objection he had. That was a stumbling block he had. But later he realized, hey, actually in our lives, we worship things all the time. We actually worship things all the time.

And he wrote, the world rings with praise. Lovers praising their, their mistresses. Readers, their favorite poets. Walkers praising the countrysides. He's saying that we worship and praise things that we love all the time. We praise things that we enjoy. Right? Have you ever met an Australian, someone from Melbourne, talk about coffee? Right? That, that is worship. Someone from Melbourne talking about coffee. Or that question, like, who's the goat? Who's the greatest of all time?

Jordan, LeBron. There's others in the discussion. But that's, that's never a calm, civil discussion. Right? That's always a debate that's filled with passion because people care so much about this. Or think about how crazy people get about celebrities, like BTS or Mirror or Taylor Swift, paying like any amount for concerts, memorizing lyrics like scripture. You know, all their songs by heart. Fans are passionate for the glory of their idols. Right? You don't have to ask people to worship. You don't have to ask people to worship. We naturally worship and praise and glorify the things that we love all the time. That's just, that's just something written in our hearts.

Right? Do you know how loud it gets in a, in a Man U versus Liverpool game? You don't have to tell fans to cheer. Right? They'll chant, they'll cheer, they'll yell at each other.

[22:15] They'll yell with their hands in the air. Why? Because they love their team. They love their team. And they just do this naturally. And C.S. Lewis reflected. He said this, I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses, but completes the enjoyment. The praise doesn't just merely express, but it completes the enjoyment.

What he's saying is that cheering for a team doesn't just mean we enjoy our team. We love our team. It actually adds to the enjoyment. It adds to our enjoyment of the game. Right? We're happier when we cheer. It's more fun to watch a game cheering with a crowd in a stadium than to be sitting on your couch at home watching in silence. It's more fun to cheer. And that's why it's from that perspective, that's why God made us for glory. And that's why God asked us to worship him. He wants our joy. He wants our enjoyment to be complete. He isn't insecure and fishing for compliments. God doesn't need anything. God is overflowing. He's overflowing in love, in goodness, in joy. And he just wants to share that with all of us. That's why he made us. That's why he created us. He wants to share for us to have joy in glorifying him and praising him, enjoying him in the same way that we have joy when he prays for a sports team. And that's why the Psalms don't just command us to worship.

They're not just saying, praise God, right? Like we're slaves and we have to bow down before him and worship him and glorifying him against our wishes. They don't do that. They command us to have joy.

Psalms 32 says, be glad in the Lord and rejoice. Psalm 95 says, oh, come let us sing to the Lord. Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Psalm 37 says, delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. Psalm 34 says, taste and see that the Lord is good. That's the way that we glorify God. When we taste and see the Lord, that the Lord is good, that he's better than anything else this world has to offer. And then we come to him with joy.

And actually what else should God command us to do? If we think God is selfish, what else would we command? What else should God tell us to do? If he's the greatest good, there's nothing better to offer than himself. And he's better than Taylor Swift. He's better than LeBron. He's better than Melbourne coffee. So if God pointed us to anything else, he'd be depriving us of the best thing in the world. He'd be holding back the best thing in the world. So when God asks us to worship him, he's not being selfish. He's being self-forgiving. He wants to share with us the greatest joy that there is in the universe. And that's himself. Him asking us to glorify him is actually the greatest act of love. And John Piper puts it like this. He says, the reason God seeks our praise is not because he won't be complete until he gets it. He is seeking our praise because we won't be happy until we give it. This is not arrogance. It is love. It's love because there's nothing better to do than to know him and enjoy him. That's what we're made to do, to glorify God by enjoying him. That's the meaning of life. But for us, where are we looking for meaning in life? What is it that we're clinging to, that we're looking for to fulfill us? People have different answers. One very common one in Hong Kong we have. Hong Kong people love money, right? We're told that we should study hard so that we can get a good job, so that we can make money, so that we can live a comfortable life, so that we can send our kids to a good school, so that they can make more money and the cycle repeats.

[26:14] We're told that if we have enough money, if we have enough money, we'll be comfortable, we'll be happy. But what we find out is that once we have it, it's never enough. There's

always this want for more.

You guys know this actor, Jim Carrey? He's a famous actor, famous comedian, loved by many, made hundreds of millions of dollars, and he's made it in life by most standards.

And he's a comedian. He should be happy, right? But this is what he says. He said this, I think everybody should get rich and famous and do everything they ever dreamed of so that they can see that it's not the answer. He's rich and famous. He's made it in life, but he realized, actually, that isn't enough. What about chasing our passions, chasing accomplishments?

You guys know Michael Phelps? Michael Phelps, most decorated Olympian of all time, 28 medals, Olympic swimmer, greatest of all time. But he said after every Olympic Games, he felt lost, even depressed. And he said this, you work so hard for four years to get to that point.

You're at the top of the mountain. But once you achieve that, once he accomplished everything he set out to accomplish, then he said this, you're like, what am I supposed to do? Where am I supposed to go? Who am I? Accomplishments won't satisfy us. Once we make it to the top, it's a long walk down from that mountain. We can also look for happiness in friends and family. But we all know people will disappoint us. People always disappoint us. They will always fail us because they were never meant to bear the full weight of all our hopes and dreams, all our expectations. Your friends, your boyfriend, your wife, they can't be the only source of your joy. That would be suffocating for them. They can't bear that pressure. Or your children. They can't achieve all the dreams that you wanted to achieve. That pressure will crush them. It's good to love our friends and family. That's a good thing God gave us.

[28:27] But they will disappoint us. They can't fulfill us completely because they were never meant to. And so if we look in life and we find that all these things that we put our hope in, they'll disappoint us. Maybe it's because there is a better way. C.S. Lewis also wrote, if I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world. And do you find yourself in the same boat?

If you're searching for meaning, if you're searching for joy and wanting more, you're wanting more than this. Maybe it's because there's more to life than that. All the things that God made for us, money, achievements, family, anything else, those are all good things. They're good things that we can enjoy. They're good gifts from him, but they can't fully satisfy us because they were never meant to.

They're all gifts from God that were meant to lead us to point to God. They were meant to point us to God so that we can enjoy him, enjoy his glory. That's what we were made to do. But that's the problem.

There's a problem though. It's that we don't do this. We don't always, we don't naturally have this heart. That's the problem in Isaiah 43. The context in this chapter is that the people of Israel, they're captured and exiled. The holy city of Jerusalem, where the temple was, was conquered and destroyed. The temple was burned to the ground. Their lives are in chaos. Everything's upside down.

Everything is in chaos. And let's see how this passage describes it. Verse eight says, bring out the people who are blind yet have ears, who are deaf. Bring out the people who are blind yet have eyes, who are deaf yet have ears. Blindness and deafness. That's how Isaiah 43 describes the problem. It's the same thought in the previous chapter, chapter 42 verses 19 and 20, which says this, who is blind but my servant or deaf as my messenger whom I send? Who is blind as my dedicated one or blind as a servant of the Lord? He sees many things, but does not observe them. His ears are open, but he does not hear. And it's because of this reason in verse 22, it says, this is a people plundered and looted. They are all of them trapped in holes and hidden in prisons. They have become plunder with none to rescue, spoiled, none to say rescue. It's describing, we are blind and deaf, that they are blind and deaf and their lives are in chaos as a result. That's the problem described in

[31:05] Isaiah 43. And we're not just talking about a physical blindness, a physical deafness. That's not what it's talking about. Here, God is referring to a spiritual blindness, a blindness to seeing him, a blindness to seeing who God is, his glory. We were made to enjoy the glory of God and blindness to that fact is one aspect of what it means to sin. Sin, there's many perspectives on it, disobedience to God, breaking his law. But another one here that we see is sin is this devaluing of God and settling for less, that we were made to enjoy the glory of God, but we choose to settle for less. We'd rather stress about, stress out about money than to look to the God who made

everything, who was sovereign over all the earth and everything in it. We'd rather look for cheap intimacy than a relationship, intimacy with the God who made you, that you can rejoice in him. And that's what sin is. It's like if a three-star

Michelin chef, he offers to cook you a nice meal and you say, now I'd rather have McDonald's instead. That one offends him and dishonors his glory. And that's one reason why God punishes sin. That's why God punishes sin. It's offense of his glory. At the same time, think of how dumb that is. Sin is just foolishness.

Sin hurts us. Sin leaves us empty and wanting because it's a lie. It's a mirage. It's second best, second, third, fourth best. We were made for more. We were made to enjoy more and sin is simply settling for less. And that's why it's comforting to hear what God says in verses one to three.

He says this, fear not for I have redeemed you. I've called you by name. You are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. And through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. God is saying, fear not. Even though you've turned away from me, even though you've rejected me, you settled for less, you're still mine. And even though there's trials, even though there's consequences that come with this, even though there's high waters and you pass through the fire, even when you face the sting of sin, he says, I won't leave you. I've called you by name.

You are mine and I will save you. And he says in verse four, because you are precious in my eyes and honored and I love you. I give men in return for you people in exchange for your life. And ultimately, the way that God shows that we're precious in his eyes, the way that he shows that he loves us is by sending his own son in exchange for our lives. And the reason for that, the reason why God did this in verse six, verses six and seven is so that he can redeem for himself a people for his glory.

[34:04] That's what he says in verse six and seven. I will say to the North, give up into the South. Do not withhold. Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth. Everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made. That's what, why Jesus, why God sent Jesus to the cross. That's what Jesus did on the cross for us. He died for the forgiveness of our sins.

But more than that, he rose on the third day that we have new life. The good news of the gospel isn't just that we're forgiven. That's it. That we, we won't have to pay the penalty for our sins.

That's it. The good news of the gospel is that we get to know and enjoy God. We are reconciled with God. We have peace with God. We can love him now. And it's this pursuit of the glory of God. That's what motivates us to keep obeying him, pressing on to obey God in the Christian life. I don't know what your impression is of Christianity or of sin. Some people see Christianity as a religion of rules. Right? The Bible has a list of do's and don'ts. Right? Don't drink. Don't have sex. Don't you dare have fun. Right? But do all these boring things. You have to pray, read the Bible, go to church, give away your money. Right? That God is such a killjoy. The Bible is just a list of do's and don'ts. Have you ever thought that way? I remember when I was in high school, I grew up going to church, church, the good Christian kid. And I'd see my friends, um, having fun, doing other things, but I couldn't add my Bible. I knew what God's law was, what's right and wrong. I saw his commands.

[35:43] I remember thinking to myself, man, I wish, I wish I wasn't born in the church. Then I could just, I could have fun like them. I could have fun like what they're doing. And then later I would just go believe in Jesus. Then I'd repent. I'd be forgiven. He'll forgive all my sins, but I could still enjoy that and then come to Jesus. I can have both. Right? Have you ever thought that way that I want Jesus's forgiveness? I want all his blessings, but there's this part of my life that I'm not ready to surrender yet. There's a sin that I still want to hold onto. Or some people ask, why do I need to do all this stuff and follow Jesus now? Like, why can't I just believe him, him later? Right when, right before I die?

I'd still be forgiven anyways. Right? I think that's just missing the whole point of the gospel. It's missing the whole point. It's like asking, it's like saying, oh, Disneyland closes at 9 p.m.

Why can't I just show up at 8.59? Right? Wow. I get a free upgrade to first class. That's so annoying. Why do I have to change seats? I already sat down here. Right? That's, that's, that's kind of what that question, that's what we're asking. Like, why would we want to continue in our old ways when God offers us so much more? Those things that we're looking to, those sins, they won't satisfy us. They're just a lie. Why would we want to keep settling for less when God has so much

more to offer? Jesus said to us, the thief comes only to steal, steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. Jesus came to give us life. That's why we obey him. That's why we follow him.

Not as an obligation, but just to take full advantage of the new life that we have in Jesus. How can we do that? How can we live for the glory of God? And more than just actions, it's, it's a change of heart. It's not just a list of do's and don'ts, but what we are after is a change of heart above and beyond anything to do. The goal is to have a heart to want more of God, to know that he's better than anything else in this world. And here's some ways that we can express and cultivate that heart. A love for the glory of God changes us to want to look for reminders of him, to look for reminders of his glory. Because we're so prone to forgetting. We're so forgetful as people.

We're so forgetful. And we need reminders. One way to remind ourself is through spiritual disciplines, seeking him out that way. When we pray, when we read the word, confess our sins, solitude. Those are ways that we can experience God. And some days we don't feel it. Some days we don't. The spiritual disciplines are just discipline. We just want to check off your Bible reading plan.

[38:33] Just want to be a good Christian and come to church. There are some of those days, but even then fight for joy. Look at this, knowing that, Hey, this, these aren't just things to do to be a good Christian, but God wants us to taste and see that he is good. That's why he asked us to do those things.

And so we can pray in faith. Even when I don't feel it, help me to rejoice in you. I want more of you. Love for the glory of God also makes us grateful, makes us thankful, knowing that every good thing is a gift from God. And when we receive it with Thanksgiving, that glorifies him.

That's also another way to be reminded of him constantly throughout the day. Thank him for the good things that we experience. Thank you for my coffee, for this meal. Thank you for my hobbies, for basketball, right? When I, when the things that we do that we enjoy, those are all good gifts from him. And those are all ways to remind us to seek him of his glory. A love for the glory of God also makes us humble, keeps us humble, right? When people praise us, when we feel accomplished, remember it's God who made us. It's his breath in our lungs. He gave us skills and talents. He gave us all this, these things. It's, it's his, my life belongs to him. And so the glory belongs to him.

And actually in remembering that our identity is in being a child of God, that frees us. Like there's no pressure to perform. I'm not defined by my grades. I'm not defined by how much money I make.

This frees us from the pressure to perform and earn our place in the world.

We seek the glory of God and give him the glory. A love for the glory of God also helps us rejoice in suffering in tough times in life, not just in the good times in life, enjoying the good gifts, but also in suffering. When work is super busy, you're working overtime, 12 hours a day. When you're disappointed in failing an exam or job interview, we glorify God by saying, you're enough for me. Despite the circumstances, you say, I will never leave you or forsake you. And so we say, Lord is my helper. I will not fear what can man do to me. That's how we glorify God in suffering.

[40:51] A love for the glory of God also makes us want to obey him. We fight against sin by remembering what sin promises, that joy that sin promises, that satisfaction that sin promises. From going to that place, from changing the number on this report, from talking to that lady, we remember that this is all a lie, that the joy that sin promises, it's a lie, that God is better. His way is better. I want to follow him. That's how we glorify God.

A love for the glory of God also makes us passionate to scatter. We talked about this a lot in the past few weeks, but we scatter on the one hand because we have love and compassion for the world, for people on the fringe, for those on the fringe. That's one great reason to scatter. But another one, another reason to scatter is because we love the glory of God. It's because God is good. He deserves our worship. He deserves the worship and every knee will bow to him in heaven and earth and under the earth. And we scatter. That's one reason we can scatter. That's what motivates us because God deserves the glory. And those are just some examples, but really what we're after is to have this heart in Psalm 27 that says, one thing I've asked of the Lord that I will seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in the, in his temple. That's the heart that glorifies God. That the one thing I've asked, the one thing I want, the one thing I'm looking for in life that's better than anything else in the world. That's God.

That's the heart that glorifies God. And so, and so today we asked this question, what is the meaning of life? What's the meaning of life? And actually it turns out we've, for the past two years, funny enough, we've been reading out the answer to this every week. We've been reading out the answer to this every week. We've been reading it out in our mission statement. Right? The first one, we are a simple gathering in a complex time and we seek to walk daily in the way of Jesus so that we may know him and enjoy him until the day he returns for good. To know him and enjoy him. And the only thing I'd add to that is to know him and enjoy him to the glory of God. That's really in the nutshell, what we're made for. That's, that's the meaning of a life. That's how we glorify God to know him and enjoy him.

That's the life we're made for. But truth is every morning when we wake up, we'll be presented with a different choice. The world offers us a life built on performance, on income, on relationship status, on accomplishments. The world presents us all these good gifts and asks us to look to that rather than the giver of these gifts to God himself. And we heard what that leads to. It leads to a dead end, an empty feeling, and a scary question. Is this it? Is there, is that, is this what life is about?

Is this it? But God offers us a different path. Not a path of rules, but a path to himself, right? Not a path of performance, but a path of joy. And he made the way through Jesus. He doesn't just call you to obey him, but he invites you to enjoy him, to find in him a satisfaction that is so deep that everything else is revealed as just cheap imitations. Right? So for the question for us is what will we choose?

[44 : 23] Are we going to be choosing the counterfeits or will we choose to pursue the one thing that our soul was made for? Refuse to settle for less. Let's not settle for less. Let's walk in the way of Jesus.

Let's choose to know him and enjoy him. Right? Let's walk in the way of Jesus until the day he returns for good. And when he does, we have this hope. We have this hope when he returns, that's when we will know him and enjoy him forever in his presence forever. That's the goal. Let's pray. Father, we just praise you. You made us, you formed us from you, through you, to you are all things, to you be the glory forever. And Lord, we just want to have this heart. One thing I've asked for the Lord, one thing that I will seek after is to know you, to dwell in your house forever, to sit in your temple, in your gates. We just want fellowship with you. We want relationship with you. We, we say there's nothing in this world that will satisfy. There's nothing that's better than knowing you. And Lord, we confess that our hearts don't always, we don't always feel this way. We fall short. We look to things that are second, fourth, tenth, hundredth best. But Lord, we, today, we come to you and ask you, just give us more of yourself. Show us your glory. You are worthy. You are the one who can satisfy our soul. As a deer pants for streams of water, so my soul longs for you. That's what I want. And you're the only one that can satisfy this thirst.

[46 : 30] Turn our eyes from looking at worthless things. Give us life in your ways. We want you. And not to us, not to us, but to your name be the glory for the sake of your steadfast love and faithfulness. Lord, we pray that today you would just remind us of who you are, that you are everything, that there is no God. You are the Lord. There is none beside you.

Just help us to love you. We have this hope in Jesus. It's in his name we pray. Amen. Amen. So let's make that our goal, to say, no, Christ is enough. Christ is enough for me.

And what Jesus has done on the cross, everything that God has done for me, I have in him. I have in Jesus. What's better than God sending his son, laying down his life for me, to reconcile me, to bring me back home to him.

I don't need to wander anymore. I don't need to look anywhere else. Christ is enough. Let's make that our goal. And hey, what are some ways that we can remind ourselves of this as we live our lives?

Because I know when you're working on a busy day, 9, 10, 11 hours a day, sitting at your desk, it's easy to go the whole way, the whole day not thinking about God.

[48 : 04] How can we remind ourselves that there's more to life than this? We were made for more. How can we find ways to rejoice in God? Take a think about that. Discuss with people around you as we go off to lunch.

It could be as simple as, I'm just going to put a sticky note on my screen at work. That's one way. And maybe, hey, on the topic of scattering, that's one way to strike up conversations.

But have a think, what is it that we need to do? What are some ways that we can be reminding ourselves what we're made for? That there's more to life than this. It's about the glory of God. And

that Christ is enough for me.