

Life
measured based on what you do with it

Why are there so many variations (for both Believers & unbelievers) on how their lives turn out? For example:

- Some born rich, some poor
- Some healthy, some with handicaps
- Some in safe lands, some in dangerous lands
- Some who are successful, some who fail
- Some who have good relationship, some who don't
- Some who live long lives, others who do not

***We must stop looking at God through life and start looking at life through God**

God makes it very clear that he does not show favoritism - Acts 10:34-35 - 34 Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35 but accepts men from every nation WHO FEAR HIM and DO WHAT IS RIGHT.

God created all men giving them their race, locations, and times, all with the same purpose...to SEEK HIM- Acts 17:26-28 - 26 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. 27 **GOD DID THIS SO THAT MEN WOULD SEEK HIM AND PERHAPS REACH OUT FOR HIM AND FIND HIM**, though he is not far from each one of us. 28 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

God gives all men the opportunity to choose if they are used by God or not - 2 Tim 2:20-21 - 20 In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. 21 **IF A MAN CLEANSSES HIMSELF FROM THE LATTER**, he **WILL BE an instrument for noble purposes**, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work. **(Cleansed by obeying the Word – (John 15:3-4))**

The life God gives to each man is given for each man to use his GOD GIVEN abilities to live his life as God commands- Matt 25:14-18 - 14 "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted HIS PROPERTY to them. 15 To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each ACCORDING TO HIS ABILITY. Then he went on his journey. 16 The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. 17 So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. 18 But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

Those who do it will be rewarded - Matt 25:21 "His master replied, '**WELL DONE, GOOD and FAITHFUL** servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

Those who do nothing are punished eternally

Matt 25:24-26 - 24 "Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.' 26 "His master replied, 'You WICKED, LAZY servant! So YOU KNEW that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed?'

Matt 25:29-30 - 29 For everyone WHO HAS will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever DOES NOT HAVE, even what he has will be taken from him. 30 And **throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

Do not mistake the "what you have" with your worldly possessions - Luke 12:15 Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life DOES NOT CONSIST in the abundance of his possessions."

We will be judged on what we did with what we have - Luke 16:10-12 - 10 "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest* with very little will also be dishonest with much. 11 So if you have not been trustworthy in handling WORLDLY WEALTH, who will trust you with **TRUE RICHES?** 12 And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?

* **dishonest** - adikos (ad'-ee-kos); unjust, wicked, treacherous; heathen, unrighteous.

It's hard for us to accept, but we must realize It is God that gives both the desirable AND undesirable –

Ex 4:11 The Lord said to him, "**WHO** gave man his mouth? **WHO** makes him deaf or mute? **WHO** gives him sight or makes him blind? **IS IT NOT I, THE LORD?**

Eccl 7:14 When times are good, be happy; BUT when times are bad, CONSIDER: God has made the one as well as the other. THEREFORE, a man cannot discover anything about his future.

If not Spiritually minded, we're misled by sight, instead of having the clarity from faith

They will seem poor but be rich (Smyrna) - Rev 2:9 -10 - 9 **I KNOW YOUR AFFLICTIONS AND YOUR POVERTY — YET YOU ARE RICH!** I know the slander of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. →

→ 10 Do not be afraid of what you are ABOUT TO SUFFER. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

They will seem rich, while they are really poor (Laodicea) - Rev 3:15-18- 15 I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! 16 So, because you are lukewarm — neither hot nor cold — I AM ABOUT TO SPIT YOU OUT OF MY MOUTH. 17 YOU SAY, 'I AM RICH; I HAVE ACQUIRED WEALTH AND DO NOT NEED A THING.' But **YOU DO NOT REALIZE** that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. 18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.

In a nutshell, life itself is meaningless - Eccl 1:14 I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; **ALL OF THEM ARE MEANINGLESS**, a chasing after the wind.

For those that live through faith, there is one job required to do - John 6:27-29 - 27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." 28 Then they asked him, "**WHAT MUST WE DO TO DO THE WORKS GOD REQUIRES?**" 29 Jesus answered, "**THE WORK OF GOD IS THIS: to BELIEVE in the one he has sent.**" (**Belief is living by Faith – (James 2:22-24))**)

Each of our lives has different experiences all for the same purpose

We must FIRST get to know the rules of the game of life and THEN live to win - 1 Cor 9:24-27 - 24 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? **RUN IN SUCH A WAY AS TO GET THE PRIZE.** 25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but **we do it to get a crown that will last forever.** 26 Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. 27 No, **I BEAT MY BODY AND MAKE IT MY SLAVE** so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

God takes into account our position in life - Luke 12:47-48 - 47 "That servant WHO KNOWS his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. 48 But the one **WHO DOES NOT KNOW** and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

Those that seem more blessed because of worldly wealth actually have responsibility to God - 1 Tim 6:17-19 - 17 **COMMAND those who are rich** in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 **COMMAND them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.** 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, **so that they may TAKE HOLD OF THE LIFE THAT IS TRULY LIFE.**

Major warning for those who choose to live with their worldly wealth based on self - James 5:1-6 - **Now listen, you rich people,** weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you. 2 Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. 3 Your gold and silver are corroded. THEIR CORROSION WILL TESTIFY AGAINST YOU and eat your flesh like fire. **You have hoarded wealth in the last days.** 4 Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. 5 You have **LIVED ON EARTH IN LUXURY AND SELF-INDULGENCE.** You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and murdered innocent men, who were not opposing you.

The Rich man is our example –

Luke 16:19 "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury EVERY DAY

Luke 16:25 "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received YOUR GOOD THINGS, while **Lazarus received bad things**, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony.

Those with challenging lives must not allow the challenges to dictate the purpose - Gal 6:9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest IF we do not give up

God gives us control NOT to live troubled - John 14:1 "**DO NOT LET** your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.

Worldly importance is meaningless to God - Gal 2:6 **As for those who SEEMED to be important** — whatever they were makes no difference to me; GOD DOES NOT JUDGE BY EXTERNAL APPEARANCE — those men added nothing to my message.

Let God define what is important- James 1:9-10 - 9 But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; 10 and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. NASU

God will allow us to deal with more than we can bear because we are supposed to TOTALLY rely on HIM - 2 Cor 1:8-9 - 8 We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, **FAR BEYOND OUR ABILITY TO ENDURE**, so that we despaired even of life. 9 Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But **THIS HAPPENED THAT WE MIGHT NOT RELY ON OURSELVES BUT ON GOD**, who raises the dead.

We can't allow anything down here to be the purpose - 1 Cor 7:29-31 - 29 What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; 30 those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; 31 those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. **For this world in its present form is passing away.**

Recognizing and choosing the right path

There is only one right choice between two purposes; God or not God - Gal 6:7-8 - 7 **DO NOT BE DECEIVED**: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. 8 **THE ONE WHO SOWS TO PLEASE** his sinful nature, from that nature WILL REAP destruction; **THE ONE WHO SOWS TO PLEASE** the Spirit, from the Spirit WILL REAP eternal life.

No matter our place in life or situation, judgement will be based on our PURPOSE - Rom 2:5-8 - 5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. 6 **GOD "WILL GIVE TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO WHAT HE HAS DONE."** 7 To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. 8 But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.

We must be Spiritually focused in our everyday life... (great example) - Luke 10:38-42 - 38 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. 39 She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. 40 But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" 41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "**you are worried and upset about many things**, 42 but **ONLY ONE THING IS NEEDED**. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

To recognize what is needed, we must purify our value system - Matt 6:19-21 - 19 "**DO NOT STORE UP** for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But **STORE UP** for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart WILL BE also.

Considering everything that has been heard, we must avoid BEING DISTRACTED. Our status in life and the situations we face MUST NOT influence our purpose of life. - 1 Cor 7:17-24 - 17 Nevertheless, **each one should retain the PLACE IN LIFE that the Lord assigned to him** and to which God has called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches. 18 Was a man already circumcised when he was called? He should not become uncircumcised. Was a man uncircumcised when he was called? He should not be circumcised. 19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. **KEEPING GOD'S COMMANDS IS WHAT COUNTS**. 20 **Each one should remain in the SITUATION which he was in when God called him**. 21 Were you a slave when you were called? **DON'T LET IT TROUBLE YOU** — although if you can gain your freedom, do so. 22 For he who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lord's freedman; similarly, he who was a free man when he was called is Christ's slave. 23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. 24 Brothers, **each man, AS RESPONSIBLE TO GOD**, should remain in the situation God called him to.

Satan tries to distract us, through the world, by using what we want, what we could have, and what we are to entice us - 1 John 2:15-17 - 15 **DO NOT LOVE THE WORLD OR ANYTHING IN THE WORLD**. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For **EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD** — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its desires pass away, but the **MAN WHO DOES THE WILL OF GOD LIVES FOREVER**.

Don't let worldly success have you chasing after the temporary and missing the eternal - Mark 8:36-37 - 36 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet **forfeit his soul**? 37 Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?

Don't let Loving your life misdirect the path you MUST take - John 12:25-26 - 25 The man who loves his life WILL lose it, while the man who hates his life IN THIS WORLD will keep it for eternal life. 26 Whoever serves me MUST FOLLOW ME; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

God gives the answer to the path we must take - Matt 7:13-14 - 13 "**Enter through the narrow gate**. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and **MANY ENTER THROUGH IT**. 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and **ONLY A FEW FIND IT**.

The difference between those that Truly succeed and those that fail is TRUE Humility - Luke 18:10-14 - 10 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men — robbers, evildoers, adulterers — or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' 13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance. **He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'GOD, HAVE MERCY ON ME, A SINNER.'** 14 "I tell you that **THIS MAN, RATHER THAN THE OTHER, WENT HOME JUSTIFIED BEFORE GOD.** For EVERYONE who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

We must be untainted in order to get and stay on the right path - Titus 1:15-16 - 15 To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, **both their minds and consciences are corrupted**. 16 They claim to know God, but **BY THEIR ACTIONS** they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.

True purification is Obeying God's Word - 1 Peter 1:22-23 - 22 Now that you have purified yourselves by OBEYING THE TRUTH so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. 23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

THE ANSWER TO LIFE

We must first realize, our life is not completely, perfectly created for us...we are reverently created for life
life is not what it seems - Eccl 9:11-12 - 11 I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favor to the learned; but **TIME AND CHANCE HAPPEN TO THEM ALL**. 12 Moreover, **no man knows when his hour will come**: As fish are caught in a cruel net, or birds are taken in a snare, **so men are trapped by evil times that fall unexpectedly upon them**.

God made us purposefully - Ps 139:14 I praise you because **I am FEARFULLY and WONDERFULLY made**; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

We must next accept, God is clearly seen by all... we just choose not to see Him - Rom 1:18-20 - 18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who **suppress the truth by their wickedness**, 19 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because **God has made it plain to them**. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — HAVE BEEN CLEARLY SEEN, being understood from what has been made, so that **MEN ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE**.

We have access to all we need to live the CORRECT life - 2 Peter 1:3-4 - 3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness THROUGH OUR KNOWLEDGE OF HIM who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and **ESCAPE THE CORRUPTION IN THE WORLD** caused by evil desires.

We are to live always focusing on Jesus - Heb 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfector of our faith, who **for the joy set before him** endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God

We must stop succumbing to our flesh and deal with our flesh - 1 Peter 4:1-2 - Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, ARM YOURSELVES ALSO WITH THE SAME ATTITUDE, because **he who has suffered in his body is done with sin**. 2 **AS A RESULT**, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil **HUMAN DESIRES**, but rather for the WILL OF GOD.

***Suffer in the body means we deny the flesh in order to obey the Spirit (God)**

True life is us dying and Christ living in us - Gal 2:20-21 - 20 I have been crucified with Christ and **I NO LONGER LIVE**, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, **I LIVE BY FAITH IN THE SON OF GOD**, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 **I DO NOT SET ASIDE THE GRACE OF GOD**, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

All together, we are to live our lives revering God and doing what HE says - Eccl 12:13-14 - 13 Now all has been heard; **here is the conclusion of the matter: FEAR GOD and KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS**, for this is the whole [duty] of man. 14 For **God WILL BRING** every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.

Everything we do MUST display God - 1 Cor 10:31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, DO IT ALL FOR THE GLORY OF GOD.

We must not become a part of this world, instead; live representing where we are from - 1 Peter 1:17-19 - 17 Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, **LIVE YOUR LIVES AS STRANGERS HERE IN REVERENT FEAR**. 18 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, 19 but with **the precious blood of Christ**, a lamb without blemish or defect.

Our responsibility to the world is to point towards God - Matt 5:13-16 - 13 **"YOU ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH.** But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. 14 **"YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.** A city on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, **let your light shine before men, that they may see your GOOD DEEDS and PRAISE YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN.**

Despite our place in life and situations we must Live for God!

Our lives are to be lived for God, through God, depending on God -Col 1:9-12 - 9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. 10 And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: **bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,** 11 **being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might SO THAT you may have great endurance and patience,** and **joyfully 12 giving thanks to the Father,** who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

We must live for God using focused examples - 2 Tim 2:3-7 - 3 Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 **No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs — HE WANTS TO PLEASE HIS COMMANDING OFFICER.** 5 Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown UNLESS HE COMPETES ACCORDING TO THE RULES. 6 The **HARDWORKING FARMER should be the first to receive a share of the crops.** 7 Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this.

We must be Holy - 1 Peter 1:16 for it is written: **"BE HOLY, because I am holy."**

Living with a Godly agenda - Eph 5:15-17 - 15 **BE very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise,** 16 **making the most of every opportunity,** because **THE DAYS ARE EVIL.** 17 Therefore **DO NOT BE FOOLISH,** but understand what the Lord's will is.

Recognizing that everything works purposefully for Christians - Rom 8:28 And **WE KNOW** that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Understanding true happiness in life (Eccl 2:1-11)

True happiness in life is a gift from God not from life itself - Eccl 3:12-14 - 12 I know that there is nothing better for men than to BE happy and do good while they live. 13 That everyone may eat and drink, and FIND SATISFACTION IN ALL HIS TOIL — THIS IS THE GIFT OF GOD. 14 I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. **God does it so that men will revere him.**

We are to BE GLAD despite the life we have - Eccl 8:15 So I commend the enjoyment of life, because NOTHING IS BETTER FOR A MAN UNDER THE SUN than to eat and drink and be glad. **THEN joy will accompany him in his work all the days of the life God has given him under the sun.**

Finding true enjoyment in life will be ONLY for those that live by faith - Eccl 2:24-26 - 24 **A MAN CAN DO NOTHING BETTER THAN to eat and drink and FIND satisfaction in his work.** This too, I see, is from the hand of God, 25 for **WITHOUT HIM, WHO CAN EAT OR FIND ENJOYMENT?** 26 **TO THE MAN WHO PLEASES HIM, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness,** but **TO THE SINNER he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God.** This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind.

***Only those that live by Faith please God!** - Heb 11:6

Some Biblical examples of living for Christ despite our lives

Live Godly towards everyone - Titus 3:1-2

Careful in our partnerships - 2 Cor 6:14

Training and living in Godliness - 1 Tim 4:7-8

Always living in contentment - Phil 4:11-13

living with God as our sole provider - Matt 6:31-33

Truly giving our frustrations and concerns to God the right way - Phil 4:6-7

No matter what, our focus MUST be heavenly NOT earthly - Col 3:2-4 - 2 **SET YOUR MINDS on things above, NOT ON earthly things.** 3 For **YOU DIED,** and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When **CHRIST, WHO IS YOUR LIFE,** appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

The answer to life and access to life is Christ only - John 10:7-10 - 7 So Jesus said to them again, **"TRULY, TRULY, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.** 8 **"All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.** 9 **"I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.** 10 **"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that THEY MAY HAVE LIFE, and HAVE IT ABUNDANTLY.** NASU

Question: (Life)

Name: _____

1. Who is God's favorite?
2. If God is the one who allows people to see, who is it that makes people blind?
3. In the Parable of the Talents, what does the Talents represent?
4. Only those that do evil are doomed for Hell. (True or false) -
5. How does our life situation describe where we are at with God?
6. Why does God allow us to go through trials that are too much for us to bear?
7. What did Mary choose that was better than what Martha chose?
8. What three things does Satan use in the world to distract us from Godly living?
9. In Luke 18:10-14, what did the Tax collector realize that the Pharisee most likely did not?

10. What is the “Attitude” we need to arm ourselves with that Jesus armed himself with?
11. Explain the Christians purpose to the world.
12. Why is there really not a favorable “place in life” and “situations you are in”?
13. Explain the examples in 2 Tim 2:3-7?
14. What does Jesus offer and what does the thief offer?
15. What makes contentment such an effective good act?
16. What is the key to True happiness in life?
17. When it comes down to it, who are the only ones that have access to TRUE HAPPINESS in life?