

# [ARM Prison Outreach International](#)

"Ministers' Minute" Volume 8 Number 6

[SERIES: "AN ETERNAL EDUCATION FROM ECCLESIASTES"](#)

or "[Answers to Life's Toughest Questions](#)"

[PART 1 "What is the Point of Life?" -- Ecclesiastes 1](#)

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Editor's Note: This "MM" is the sixth email message of 2009 in a series that ARM is sending as an encouragement to preachers, chaplains, and Christian workers around the world. This issue is the 90th "MM" sent. All are archived -- just [click here](#) to see links to all messages sent since January of 2002.

This month's message is the first of a series of a study in Ecclesiastes. It is my prayer that this message will encourage you and those you teach, lead, and encourage.

May God bless your labors! -- Rod Farthing, Development Director

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["What is the Point of Life?" -- Ecclesiastes 1](#)

**A little boy asked his mother, "Where did I come from?" Mom took a deep sigh and went into a detailed explanation of genes, chromosomes, etc. After about 30 minutes, the bored first grader said, "Oh, really?? That's weird. Jimmy said he came from Detroit."**

**Solomon seems a little depressed until the end. That is because for a long time he didn't know the answer to Q#1 "What is the point of life?"**

**Ecclesiastes 7:23 "I used my wisdom to test all of this. I was determined to be wise, but it was beyond me. 24 How can anyone discover what life means? It is too deep for us, too hard to understand." (TEV)**

**We can learn from God what the point of life is.**

**I. Not knowing the point of life leads to five results. Chap 1**

**1. Life seems useless. 1:2-4,14**

**2 "Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. "Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless."**

**3 What does man gain from all his labor at which he toils under the sun?**

**4 Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever.**

**14 I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless, a chasing after the wind. (NIV)**

**Work your fingers to the bone, what do you get? Bony fingers.**

**Chasing the wind- useless, the wind is Empty like a soap bubble.**

**Why not just sleep in if you don't know why you're here?**

## **2. Life seems wearisome. 1:5-8a**

**5 The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises.**

**6 The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course.**

**7 All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again.**

**8 All things are wearisome, more than one can say (NIV)**

**Rat race- spinning our wheels- Treadmill. Cycle- Put up Xmas lights, then it is time to take them down. Complain about cold in winter, complain about heat in the summer.**

## **3. Life seems un-fulfilling. Eccl 1:8-10**

**8 All things are wearisome, more than one can say. The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing.**

**9 What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.**

**10 Is there anything of which one can say, "Look! This is something new"? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time. (NIV)**

**We are never satisfied, always restless. Remote control- average man will change channels 350,000 times in lifetime. Boredom characterizes our age!**

## **4. Life seems insignificant. Eccl 1:11**

**11 There is no remembrance of men of old, and even those who are yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow (NIV)**

**"The surety of obscurity" Fame is fleeting. Name Miss America two years ago. Who was the Super Bowl winner 3 years ago?**

**College campus buildings bear people's names. Do you think the students care whose name is there or who he was?**

## **5. Life seems uncontrollable. Eccl 1:15**

**15 What is twisted cannot be straightened; what is lacking cannot be counted.**

**So many situations are beyond our control. Ever try to straighten out a messed up relationship? There are some things in life that -- no matter how hard you try -- you just can't fix!**

**So, if you don't know the purpose of life, what can you do?**

## **II. If you don't know the purpose of life, you have three options.**

### **1. You can try to make up some meaning. Lots of people do this.**

**Something needs to be at the center of life. If not God, people serve substitutes. People get addicted to making money, sports, having fun, work, or even family. Simply trying to fill their lives with meaning.**

### **2. You can accept the meaninglessness of life and just try to escape.**

**They may use drugs, alcohol, sex, TV, movies, or something else. Suicide is the ultimate escape and is growing in popularity.**

### **3. You can discover the real meaning of life. Fortunately God has told us! He had a purpose in mind for you before He made you.**

**Eph 1:4-5 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- (NIV)**

**You were created by God to be loved by Him and be adopted into His "forever family". Here are two more verses:**

**Isa 43:6-7 I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth--7 everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."**

**Eph 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good**

works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

**You see life isn't circular, it is linear, it is going somewhere. LIFE IS PREPARATION FOR ETERNITY! You are designed to live forever. Understatement: "God has long range plans for your life!" Not just for 70, 80 or 90 years on this planet. We need an eternal perspective on life! Life is a dress rehearsal for eternity.**

**If the point of this life is to prepare for eternity, how can I do that?**

### **III. Four activities that sum up the point of life on earth.**

#### **1. First Step: Get to know God.**

**How? Same as with anyone else- spend time with Him, listen, talk, learn to enjoy and trust Him. Relationship, NOT Religion. Pledge your life to Him. Commitment! Step over the line. That will lead to ....**

#### **2. Become like Christ.**

**Begin to develop the "family likeness". Christians are in the school of character development.**

**Rom 8:29 For those God foreknew as his own he also decided --in advance -- that they be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.**

**Always been God's goal- Genesis 1:26: "Let us make man in our image"**

**Our history: FORMED, DEFORMED AND NOW REFORMED into the image of Jesus, the perfect One.**

**You say, "Doesn't God want me to be happy?" He is far more interested in your character than in your convenience and comfort!**

**3. Practice serving. Revelation doesn't picture people playing harps and looking bored, they are involved in service. God has plans for you to serve Him in eternity. Satisfying and enjoyable work! Work that is perfectly suited to you.**

**Mark 8:35 -- Lose your life in serving Jesus and people and you will gain it.**

**Matthew 25:21,23 -- Faithful in small things, put you in charge of large things.**

**Does that mean that your service here determines your service there?**

**4. Share life's purpose with other people.**

**It will be better in Heaven: You will know fully as you are known. 1 John 3:2 See Him as He is. You will see Jesus and be like Him. 1 John 3:2 "we shall be like him" You will serve without distraction. BUT....**

**The one thing we can do here, but can't do there is to share life's purpose with other people.**

**John MacArthur airs baptisms on the radio. Thrilling testimonies. Almost always it is the story of a friend or relative who shared life's purpose. I believe if we keep on faithfully with our calling nights and witnessing, we will see great testimonies of those who were won to Christ and buried with Him in Christian baptism because **SOME OF YOU SHARED THE PURPOSE OF LIFE WITH A FRIEND OR RELATIVE!****

**1. To live life without ever knowing the point of it is a tremendous waste.**

**2. And a bigger waste is to know the point of life and still just live for temporary things. Some do. How sad. Don't live for cars, stereos, or a big mutual fund --- invest in something that will last for eternity.**

**3. If you die outside of Christ, He will ask why. "I made you for a purpose and you ignored it. Even came to earth to die for you, but you made your choice. Now you're going to live with that choice for eternity."**

**How sad... and unnecessary. Come to Jesus. He is the key to the purpose of life. Here and hereafter. Prayer**

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Remain faithful unto death .." Rev. 2:10B

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In 2008, ARM donated almost 40,000 FREE Bible courses to prisoners!