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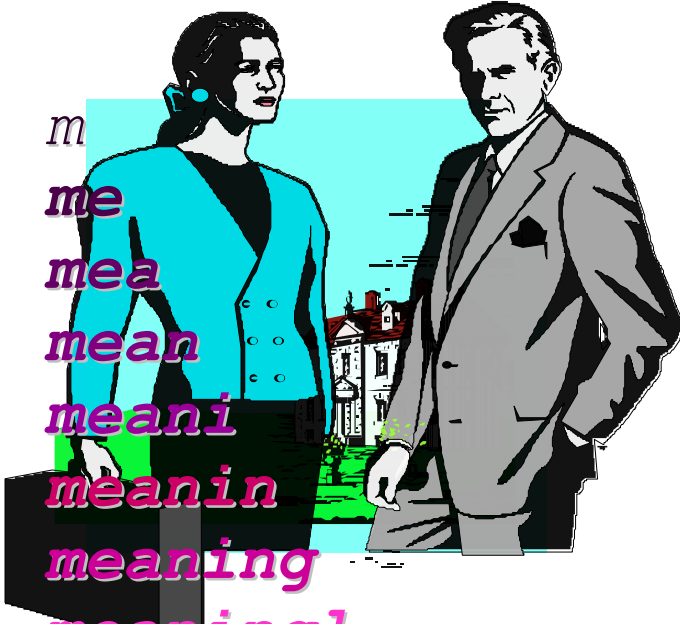
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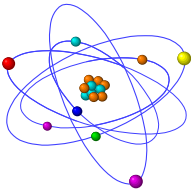
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If you were given the opportunity to sum up life in a few words, what would they be?

Philosophers have tried to find the meaning of life. The results are depressing. Bertrand Russell said,

"Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; his origin and growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and beliefs are but the outcome of accidental collocations (arrangements) of atoms."

That is a rather philosophical way of saying, "We've come from nowhere, we are going nowhere, and in between our life is nothing." So what does this say about the future? He added his gloomy conclusion, *"When I die, I rot."*



So there it is! Philosophy has an answer! When its starting point is atheism it ends up in a vortex of emptiness. By saying there is no God, and therefore no meaning to life, it leads to the position many have reached; despair. Atheism's conclusions are recorded in one of the books of the Bible, a book called Ecclesiastes, (which means "The Preacher").

Have you chosen your own few words to summarise life: life, that is, without God? The Preacher gives us the only logical conclusion, *"Meaningless, meaningless, all is meaningless."* 5 words with three repeats! "Once God is excluded," he states, "everything is futile and a frustration to the spirit."

Atheism has nothing to say to a living man to give life any meaning other than that which is purely subjective. Man, whether living or dying, laughing or crying is no better or worse off than an animal. God, speaking through The Preacher of the Old Testament books, forces the atheist to be a realist about his view of life.

But today's sceptics and atheists are inconsistent. Something within them tells them they have come to the wrong conclusions.

Here are their confused statements. *"That God does not exist, I cannot deny: that my whole being cries out for God I cannot forget."* (Jean-Paul Sartre), and *"Man is by his constitution a religious animal."*

Edmund Burk

There are four voices that speak out and deny atheism.

□ **The voice of creation**, which speaks conclusively that there is one Creator, who is invisible, eternal and all-powerful.

□ **The voice of conscience**, which, though man tries to suppress it by insisting, "There is no God", responds with it's firm and quiet response, "Oh yes there is."

□ **The voice of Scripture**, which is the written word of God, revealing all that we need to know to come back to God.

□ **And the Lord Jesus Christ**, who came to live and die for sinners that we might be forgiven and have a right relationship with God.



A 'simple' cell – 20,000 trillion trillion atoms in a perfect living harmony of complex molecules – containing the most complex and condensed information coded system in the known universe. Chance could not possibly have 'created' it.

Voltaire claimed to have had his conscience under his control, almost until the last, but died screaming, "*Let me die in peace.*" Sheridan, the Irish dramatist, has recorded as his last words, "*I am absolutely undone.*"

It was left to Alduous Huxley to disclose the dishonesty of his atheism, "*I had reasons for not wanting the world to have meaning: consequently I assumed it had none.*" He had a reason that led him to draw his conclusion. He did not draw his conclusions from the evidence, but rather despite the evidence. Within human nature there is a bias to reject God; to want to go our own way and to be our own master. Even those who accept the existence of God live as what might be called "practical atheists". They live their lives without any reference to the God who made them.

Life without God is futile.

It mocks us. It assumes no reason for anything. Achievements are futile,

failures are futile. Money, society, and family are futile. Love is as empty as hatred. Kindness is as useless as murder. Joys and grief mean nothing. Giving is utterly meaningless, and so is stealing. Laws do not matter because nothing matters. Everything is without purpose.

The Preacher of the book of Ecclesiastes compels us to see this, in order that we should turn back to God. We are made by Him and for Him. Our sin against Him needs to be forgiven by Him. The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, not only to pay the punishment for sin on the cross, but also to open the eyes of our understanding. The Philosophers, whose influence has been so profound in permeating our thinking, are wrong. They



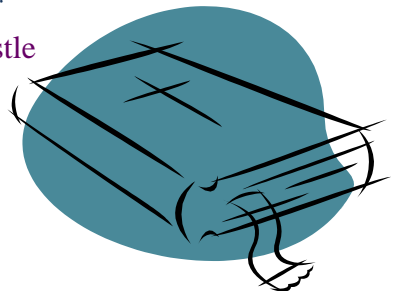
delve into failed philosophies that ignore or deny God as Creator and Lord.



In contrast to the turmoil of their hopeless and dark conclusions there is a place of peace to be found in the greatest philosopher who lived before Christ, The Preacher. He points thinking people back to God. His book is one of 66 in the Holy Bible that form a single signpost to the Lord Jesus Christ as the only one who can bring us

back to God; and to the right reason for our life.

"In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," writes the Apostle Paul. Atheistic philosophers have searched their minds for meaning to life without God. Compare their conclusions with the confident and comforting assertions of Christ.



Here is the contrast.

First, **the Philosopher**, Bertrand Russell viewing life as if there is no God, brings us his dreary conclusion.

"When I die, I rot."

Then, **the Physician of souls**, the Lord Jesus, who gives hope to sinners.

"I am the bread of life: he that comes to me shall never hunger; and he that believes on me shall never thirst."

"I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

"I am the door: by me if any man enters in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep."

"I am the resurrection, and the life:"

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by me."

"I am the vine, you are the branches: He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing."

The choice is set out. As for me, I have confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ. He has died for sinners, and come back from the dead to tell us there is a heaven to be gained and a hell to be feared. No one is ever simply dead and done for.

Now is the time to think again: to turn to God and pray, asking that you might know both Him and the forgiveness of sin. The result will be the joy and purpose that knowing your Creator brings.

David Harding