

## Why AM I Here?

One of the main questions a person eventually asks himself or herself is “What is my purpose here on this earth?” I don’t mean one’s occupation, although sometimes determining a person’s job often leads him/her to the answer to the deeper question of “purpose.” What I mean is: “What is it that God expects of me while I’m here?” After a near-death experience, people often reflect and say, “I guess it wasn’t my time. God has something left for me to do.”

The philosophers call it “fate.” Fate is defined as “something that unavoidably befalls a person; their fortune; their lot in life. You are put on a path at birth and nothing can be done to avoid the inevitable end result. Although you have free will to do as you please, all of your life experiences lead you to your pre-determined fate.

To Christians, nothing could be further from the truth. That kind of “predestination” is foreign to the loving and merciful God we all have. We have been given free will and can do wrong OR right. If we do right, our reward is guaranteed. If we do wrong, we can still repent and receive the reward promised to those who spend their lives doing right. Remember the parable of the workers who were hired with only one hour left in the workday? They received the same payment as those who signed on in the first hour. (see **Matthew 20:1-16**)

Solomon was a man who had many and varied life experiences. He was the wealthiest man in the world during his life. He was given great wisdom to rule Israel wisely. He had 300 wives and 700 concubines (now, THAT’s an experience!) and often made decisions that were not pleasing to God. In **Ecclesiastes**, he reflects on all of these experiences and determined them to be “**meaningless**” and “**an attempt to catch the wind.**” His experiences didn’t validate his purpose. That’s why he wrote in **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**:

**“Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.”**

The answer to the question, “What is my purpose?” or “Why am I here?” is summed up in Solomon’s simple statement. We are here to revere God and do what He tells us to do. In our decision-making process, we go to our knowledge of God’s word to find out what He would have us do. Then we do THAT. We “**keep His commandments.**” Our “fate” according to Solomon after all our life experiences have led us to the end of our life? Judgment, in which God will reward the righteous and punish those who are evil.