

WEEK 1

Why am I here?

February 21



Hey Creek Fam!

My name is Emerson and I'm the Life Group Minister here at our church. I wanted to share with you some thoughts, some wrestling, and some resources pertaining to the question we just talked through together as a church.

It seems as if in life there are fundamental questions we all entertain, either consciously or subconsciously, to make sense of our world. Questions like...

- Is there a God?
- Do we have free will?
- What's wrong with the world?
- What is the "good life" and how do I live it?
- Is there life after death?

And whether we're aware of it or not, we all operate with some sort of answer to those questions.

One of life's most important questions I've had to wrestle with personally is a question pertaining to my existence.

I remember when I was growing up asking my parents *why* I should go to college, get a job, and work until retirement when it wasn't even my choice to be born. It didn't make sense to me. Suffice it to say, my parents were unimpressed with my philosophical musings.

"Because we say so," they'd reply. And I suppose that was that.

Only...that *wasn't* just that.

It didn't make sense to me. Why was I being held responsible for an existence that I didn't even choose to have? Maybe as a teenager I just had a bout of laziness. Maybe I wanted to just forego any responsibility in my life.

But even today, if I'm being honest, there are days when I struggle with whether or not my life has any meaning. Nihilism - the rejection of all religious and moral principles, in the belief that life is meaningless - is one of the hardest forces I wrestle with. Other than fueling my physical body with the food and water it needs to keep going, it is sometimes hard to find a reason to roll out of bed each and every morning. I will oftentimes feel chaff-like and fickle, as if I'm sitting on an existential tree branch while my incessant questions about life, purpose, and existence slowly begin sawing away at the only thing I'm sitting on.

And front and center of that existential fragility for me was the question, ***"Why am I here?"***

A question like that conjures up all kinds of thoughts, does it not? Questions of purpose, questions of meaning, and questions of identity will swirl around in my brain endlessly.

Normally, we provide five daily devotions to engage with the weekend message to help you take it into your week. For this series, we're doing something a bit different. We wanted you to hear from others who might struggle with similar questions and then offer some resources and practices to help you process with God how we can grow in our faith, even in the midst of unanswered questions.

It's always helpful for me to externalize my thoughts when I'm unsure of my answer to those kinds of questions. It is always helpful for me to really ponder what I think my answer is to a question like, "Why am I here?" This week (or even right now), I'd invite you to really prayerfully consider your own answer to that question. Maybe ask yourself questions like...

- What are my thoughts about the question, "Why am I here?"
- How does thinking about that question make me feel?
- Have I wrestled with it before? When?
- How would I answer that question if someone asked me?
- How does my answer to that question impact my everyday living?

Write your thoughts out. Figure out your answer, even if your answer is a little scary to think about. That's okay. God isn't surprised by your answer. He knows you better than you know yourself.

Even though I still wrestle with the feelings of meaninglessness, I now know that my questions as a kid were unsound. If I believe in a Creator God, who through His sovereignty and providence, is working all things out for the good of those who love Him (**Romans 8:28**), who gives humanity purpose (**Genesis 1:26-28**), and who gifts each of us individually for a reason (**1 Corinthians 12:12-27**), then I know that my existence means something.

My being here isn't random. It is good that I exist. God loves me. God wants me to partner with Him in redeeming and restoring all of creation (**2 Corinthians 5:17-20**) as a part of His Church.

And the same is true for you too.

Your being here isn't random. It is good that you exist. God loves you. God wants you to partner with Him in redeeming and restoring creation as a part of His Church.

I don't know where you're at personally with a question like, "Why am I here?", but I know that for me, when I'm feeling like a flag being tossed about by the wind, there have been a few Bible verses and resources that have helped to anchor me down.

I wanted to just share a few of those here today for you to look at this week as you wrestle with this question yourself and alongside your life group.

Here are three resources I've found helpful:

1. Scripture. Time and time again, I've turned to Scripture to help me answer the question, "Why am I here?" Here are a few that have helped me answer that questions: **Psalm 16:5-11; Psalm 73:24-28; Psalm 86:9,12; John 17:21-23; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 10:31; and Revelation 21:3-4**. I hope they help you in answering it too.
2. I loved this talk from pastor and author Timothy Keller called, "A Reason for Living."
 - Copy and paste this link in your browser for the podcast version → <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/timothy-keller-sermons-podcast-by-gospel-in-life/id352660924>
 - Copy and paste this link in your browser for the YouTube version → <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OU69so6VjHA>
3. Here's link to a 5-min video from philosopher William Lane Craig that tries to sum up why God is necessary to a meaningful life and why the absence of God actually means that life is meaningless. → <https://www.reasonablefaith.org/meaning>

I hope you find these Scriptures and resources enriching; I know they have been for me. Take some time this week to really wrestle with the question of, "Why am I here?" and share your thoughts with people close to you as well as your life group.

Grace and peace,
Emerson