

## Life's Basic Questions

### Responses to questions by Gay Anderson, Barbara Collins and Pat Joyce

As part of the ministry of this website we try to respond to e-mails. We received the following questions from a young lady. We thought that a lot of folks might have asked the same questions and so we are posting our answers. Gay Anderson's answers are first, followed by Barbara's then Pat's.

Question #1. Who am I? (Gay) We have all asked that same question! Since I am Christian, a believer and follower of Jesus Christ, I believe that according to the Holy Scriptures we are all created in the image (spirit) and likeness (holiness) of God. When God created mankind, they were holy and had the Spirit of God within them. When man sinned and disobeyed God, his spirit died; but he did not die physically although physical death was to follow because of sin. Man's spirit was cut off and snuffed out, and he ceased to have a relationship with His Creator. In other words, spiritual death came. Man's search began for reconciliation and restoration.

In all of His great knowledge, the good news is that God knew what was going to happen. Even before He created the world, He planned a way back into fellowship with Himself. God is Spirit; and His Spirit is divine Love. Because He is Perfect Love, He provided a marvelous way through His only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who died on a cross to save us from our sins and was raised from the dead by the power of the Spirit.

To no avail, people have tried all sorts of ways to get to God and to earn His favor and blessings. Jesus Christ came and lived among us here on planet earth, expressing the love of God the Father. He came for one purpose--to restore all who receive Him as Savior and Lord and to give them eternal life. He proclaimed, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no man comes to the Father but by Me." We are all going to live forever because the soul of man is eternal, BUT we will either live eternally with our Creator God in heaven or in an everlasting place of punishment called hell. The choice is ours.

So, who are you? You are God's creation, but not His child unless you receive His Son, Jesus Christ, and born from above and made alive in your spirit to God. Then, we become new people and begin a spiritual walk in relationship with the One True God made known to us through His Son.

1. Who am I? (Barbara) I am a new creation in Christ Jesus. Because of His death and resurrection and my identification with Him by faith, the "old" me has passed away, and something fresh and new has come. (II. Cor. 5:17).

1. Who Am I? (Pat) I am a child of God, created in His image and for His purposes

Question #2: Why am I here? (Gay) You are here to have fellowship with God, to give Him pleasure and to bring honor to His name. Also, He has a plan and a purpose for your life. God planned for a family and longs for us all to become part of that family. When we enter into His life, He begins to reveal His plan for us. God told His prophet Jeremiah, "I know the thoughts and plans I have for you, plans for welfare and peace, and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome."

2. Why am I here? (Barbara) I am here to fulfill God's purposes, plan and destiny for my life. The master craftsman, the Lord Jesus Christ, takes the life that I give Him and begins to write a poem. Paul tells us that we are His "workmanship," which comes from a word meaning "to make" from which we get our word "poem." Each life given to Him becomes a work of art--God's poem. (Ephesians 2:10).

After all, the Lord's plan for us is welfare and peace, not evil--plans to take care of us, not abandon us and plans to give us the future we hope for. (Jeremiah 29:11).

2. Why am I here? (Pat) God created us for His pleasure. Why do we humans have children? Don't we want someone to love, to be like us, to share memories with, to enjoy watching them growing up, to see what they will do with their lives and to bring honor to our name. I think these natural things in us are just a dim reflection of the reason that God created mankind. His love is so much more than that of an earthly parent.

Question # 3 Where did I come from? (Gay) Holy Scripture tells us we were formed by God the Creator in the womb of our mother. Psalm 139:13-15 reads: "For You did form my inward parts, You did knit me together in my mother's womb. I will confess and praise You, for You are fearfully wonderful, and for the awful wonder of my birth! Wonderful are Your works, and that my inner self knows right well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was being formed in secret and intricately and curiously wrought (as if embroidered with various colors) in the depth of the earth."

3. Where did I come from? (Barbara) I came from the heart of God. Not only did He form my inward parts, He covered me in my mother's womb. Each of us is fearfully and wonderfully made, fashioned by the hand of our Creator. All the days of our life were written before ever they took shape when as yet there were none of them. (Psalms 139:13-16).

3. Where did I come from? (Pat) The Bible says in Eph. 1:4 that I was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. So I came from God. I love Psalm 139 where it says He formed me in my mother's womb, and that He wrote in His book what was intended for each day of my life before I was even born.

Question #4: Where am I going to? (Gay) I have answered this question in the response to # 1. Scripture tells us that if we confess and turn away from our sins and turn to and confess Jesus as Lord of our lives, believing in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead, we will be saved and live with Him eternally.

4. Where am I going? (Barbara) Since I came from the heart of the Father, if I make the correct decisions to choose life in Him by loving, obeying and serving Him, I will return to the heart of the Father. My body shall see corruption and return to dust. However, that eternal part of me--my soul and spirit--shall find its home in the presence of the Lord. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. (II. Cor. 5:8) One day I will receive a glorified body as well.

4. Where am I going? (Pat) That depends on where we stand with God. I believe that as a born from above person (a clearer description than saying "born again") I have eternal life, and that life has begun now while I am still on earth. However, if you are asking what happens when we die, for a Christian death is overcome. We will leave this body, and go immediately to be with Christ. While our bodies may rest in the grave, our spirit and soul are with Christ.

Question #5: What is the true nature and purpose of life? (Gay) True life is lived out in the Spirit of a Holy God. Man was created a spiritual being. Scripture gives a little picture of what mere physical life brings forth without the Spirit of God. The natural life produces: immorality, indecency, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, divisions, factions, sects, heresies, envy, drunkenness, carousing and the like. We are warned that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Spiritual life lived out in the Spirit of God brings forth: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, meekness, gentleness, and self-control. Galatians 5:19-23. The life of a child of God is set

apart for God's use and lived out in holiness and love.

5. What is the true nature and purpose of life? (Barbara) Since the Lord created all things and is worthy to receive all glory, honor and power, the purpose of all He has created is to bring Him pleasure. It is by His will that we exist and were created. Therefore, our worship has a single focus directed to the only Lord and Savior and is the focus of our life.

What is the true nature and purpose of life? (Pat) God has a purpose for every life and He wants us to discover it. He wants to fellowship with us, and teach us, and love us. How much I discover and conform to His plan for me will determine how fulfilling my life will be.

Question # 6: Is there life after death? (Gay) Yes, and the Scripture tells us it is appointed unto man once to die and then the judgment. Only in this life is there opportunity to receive the One True God and to live forever with Him. Jesus came to die for us so that we would not have to suffer the consequences of sin. Jesus spoke the words, "I AM the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in Me though he may die, yet shall he live. And whoever continues to live and believe in Me, shall never actually die at all." Jesus is saying that when one dies who believes in Him, their spirit simply continues on into eternity because the believer's spirit never dies in Him.

6. Is there life after death? (Barbara) Yes. If there were no life after death, life would be a hopeless, fatalistic endeavor. Paul said, "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And our faith is empty, and we are still in our sins. (I. Cor. 15:13-17). By the first man Adam came death, but by the perfect Man, Christ Jesus, came the resurrection of the dead. Just as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (15:21-22) Our eternal life and our assurance of the resurrection begin at the time of our acceptance of Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior--our salvation. Indeed, at the moment we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus in our heart that God has raised Him from the dead, we are saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:9-10) The Amplified Bible gives such a good definition of what it really means to believe, showing that it is more than mental acceptance. To believe in and on the Lord Jesus Christ is "to give yourself up to Him, take yourself out of your own keeping and entrust yourself into His keeping, and you will be saved." Luke, the author of the Book of acts, continues that not only does this apply to you but to your household--your family--as well. (Acts 16:31)

6. Is there life after death? (Pat) Yes. We are spiritual beings. What is important is where we will spend that eternity. Jesus said over and over that He was the only way to be a part of the glorious eternity that has been prepared for those who love God. Those who have not realized their need for Christ as their Savior will spend eternity in the lake of fire that was prepared not for them, but for the devil and his angels. (Matt 25:11)

Question # 7: How can I attain deeper levels of wellness and spiritual wisdom? (Gay) Jesus had a reason for telling us that He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Many are telling us there are many ways to God, but Jesus said HE is the WAY. No faith on earth boasts of an empty grave except the Christian faith, which is a RELATIONSHIP with God. It is NOT religion, which is man's attempt to "fix things"! Jesus is TRUTH; outside of Him, there is none. Jesus is LIFE. He holds the keys to man's eternal future--the keys to heaven, death and hell.

For deeper levels of real life, we go to Him Who is the Source. We go to His Word, the Holy Bible; for His words are healing and they are life. His words are the Bread of Life and the source of wisdom for all. We ask the Holy Spirit to come and fill us with the Spirit of God and show us Jesus and His great love for us. We cry out to Him for mercy and ask for the living water of His Spirit that satisfies our spiritual thirst. We talk with Him, fellowship with Him and with those who know and love Him and

seek to do His will.

7. How can I attain deeper levels of wellness and spiritual wisdom? (Barbara) First of all, you must ask for it. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." (John 15:7) "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all liberally. . ." (James 1:5) By consuming and devouring His Word, we partake in the healing that's in His Word. "He sent His Word and healed them. . ." (Psalm 107:20) Every day we present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God which is our reasonable or spiritual service of worship. In that voluntary act of our will, our bodies become set apart and reserved for God and His service.

7. How can I attain deeper levels of wellness and spiritual wisdom? (Pat) I am going to assume that you mean spiritual health and wisdom. Actually, you will be better off physically, too, if you have a deep and abiding faith.

First and foremost is to accept our need for the atoning sacrifice of Christ and yield to Him as Lord of our lives and receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Once this is done it is an ongoing process as He leads us into deeper wisdom. He says that He will never leave us or forsake us. The Bible also promises in Phil 1:6 that that He who began a good work in us will carry it on to completion until the day Christ Jesus returns.

Part of His working on us comes as we read and study the Bible and ask the Holy Spirit to teach us. There are also wonderful books by Christians who share ways that God has shown them to deepen their relationship with Him. This relationship is nurtured by spending time in prayer. Not just prayers that others have written, but also our own personal conversation with Him—this includes listening for His answer.

Worship is critical to relationship with God. There is something about worship that opens us to God. For me, music is a path to worship. As I sing, the words can become a prayer. I also love to put on good worship music and just sit quietly before the Lord. Try it!

Question #8: How can I achieve successful relationships and a fulfilling, prosperous life? (Gay) Joshua 1:8 reads: "This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe and do according to all that is written in it: for THEN you shall make your way prosperous, and THEN you shall deal wisely and have good SUCCESS." God's Word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path (Psalm 119:105).

8. How can I achieve successful relationship and a fulfilling prosperous life? (Barbara) Your relationship with any other person on this earth is anchored to your relationship to God. To be successful in relationships is simply to receive the love that God has for you, and then let it continually flow forth from your life to all people in all circumstances. The successful, prosperous life is revealed in Joshua 1:8 when the Lord speaks to Joshua: "the Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do all that is written in it. For THEN you will make your way prosperous, and THEN you will have good success." What does it mean to meditate? It means to repeat God's words; thus they "shall not depart from your mouth." To the Hebrew mind, the meditation upon the scriptures is "to quietly repeat them in a soft droning sound while utterly abandoning outside distractions." One of the characteristics of the blessed man is that his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. . .and whatever he does shall prosper." (Psalm 1:2-3)

8. How can I achieve a successful relationship and fulfilling prosperous life? (Pat) In our relationship

with God and other people, we will be most successful if we live a Biblical lifestyle. That is a lifestyle based on principles and direction given by God through His Word to teach us how to live. A fulfilling and prosperous life is only found when we are in right relationship with God. Far too many people think of prosperity in terms of money, but find that without God their lives are not satisfying. There is nothing wrong with having money, but God must be first. Jesus says we can't serve God and money—in other words there can be only one thing that is Lord (ruler) of our lives.

Question # 9: Is there any meaning to my life? (Gay) Outside of the One true God, life holds no meaning and no eternal purpose in life. Only in the ONE TRUE GOD, made known through Jesus Christ, does one's life ever find eternal meaning and purpose. If you have never considered Jesus in this way, may I invite you to receive Him right now? Just pray: "Lord Jesus, I believe You are Who You claim to be--the only Son of God Who came and died on a cross that I might be forgiven and receive the privilege of becoming Your child. I confess and turn from my sins and turn to You for Life. I invite You to come into my heart and make me a new person in You. I ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit to come and fill me with the very life of God, my Creator. I thank You and commit my life and my way to You and trust You for my salvation. Make me a holy praise to Your name. Amen."

I pray the eyes of your heart will be opened to see and know Jesus, the lover of your soul. I pray He will lead you into rich paths of His choosing; that He will satisfy the deep longings in your heart to know and understand what this life is all about. He loves you with an everlasting love! Thank you for trusting us with your heart.

9. Is there any meaning of my life? (Barbara) The most powerful force at work in your life is your destiny. Your true ability and achievement is all wrapped up in your destiny--your becoming exactly what God ordained you to be. God created man to have DOMINION over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on earth." (Genesis 1:28) God didn't intend for man or woman to dominate or control one another or others. Through the prophet Jeremiah, God said, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." (Jeremiah 29:11) Again, another scripture mentioned previously is Ephesians 2:10--"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." And, Romans 8:29-30: "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."

9. Is there any meaning to my life? (Pat) Yes. I remember, before I was saved, thinking that it was all so pointless. You were born, grew up, had kids, got old and died; and it happened over and over to each generation. When I came to know the Lord, I realized that I was put on this earth by God for a purpose. Remember Psalm 139. It is important that you find what God has planned for you and join Him in doing it. In this way, you deepen your bond with God and prepare for eternity with Him. We spend so much time working in or toward earthly careers and so little time building a relationship with the Lord. Which is more important—or lasting in value?

We also should remember that our lives impact the lives of others. If I live my life faithful to the Lord, it will be far different than if I live as though this world is all there is. We can be a light to those who are caught in darkness. There is a saying, "We are the only Bible some people will ever read." Think about that!

Source: <http://godswordtowomen.org/basicquestions.htm>