**Why the University Should Matter to the Church**

Episode #3: What Does It Matter? The Significance of ‘Meaning’

Biblical | Theological | Historical | Philosophical | Practical | Example

**Examples** Student Q, “What is the purpose of life?” Faculty comment “Something was still missing.” Psychology classes include data but not human Qs. Escher staircases to nowhere. *About Schmidt* movie. “Life of a child” quote. Metallica, “Nothing Else Matters.” Poetry: e. e. cummings “Manunkind,” Poe, “The Conqueror Worm,” Shakespeare, “Hamlet” (Act 5 Scene 5). Simon Sinek 2009 Ted Talk. The three questions that always need to be answered: “So what?! Who cares?! Why should I listen to you today?!” *Shinedown* “A Symptom of Being Human”

**What does ‘meaning’ mean?** Significance, worth, purpose, reason. Qs to consider: (1) What matters? (2) Where do I look? (3) Does my life count? (4) Who decides? (5) What now?

**What makes life *meaningful* in university?** Why “Why?” is the most important question in life. (Hint: And *the answer is not,* “To get good grades to go to a good college to get a good job to make good money to have a good life.”). University is where: Indicative: forming beliefs. Imperative: making choices. Intention: life planning. Importance: students deciding. Instruction: profs teaching. *Not* “checking boxes”

**Stealing Moses** “When your children ask you ‘Why?’ you are to say” (Ex 12, Deut 4, 6, 11, Josh 4). Joshua 4:1-9: 4:6 “sign” historical marker, pointing back to an event; a “billboard;” 4:7 “memorial” planned reflection for generations to come; Pay attention: planned [curricula], action based; audible; physical; Q/A, Stories, Visual Aids; Church “memorials” Why ‘Why?’ matters: Joshua 4:24

 

**Crowned with Glory and Majesty** ‘Crown’ suggests a wreath, woven with flowers, worn at banquets as a sign of royal authority—honored and elevated. The exaltation of humans by Yahweh begins as an inward essence; humans bear the weight (“glory”) of God, a show of uniqueness. Human significance begins with the character of Yahweh; a person’s worth, value, and dignity has intrinsic beginnings. “Majesty” is more of an extrinsic display of God—what is put on public display. Having a good reputation “in the sight of God and man” (Luke 2:52; 2 Cor 8:21) demonstrates the inside-out, character-conduct key to Psalm 8:5. “Glory” = wealth: The more one "tipped the scales" with gold, for instance, meant the person's wealth showed their "glory.”

**Thomas Aquinas** What matters? Where do I look? Does my life count? Who decides? What now? *Summa Theologica* Ultimate purpose is to know God, to glorify Him forever. **Westminster Catechism** “What is the chief end of man? To glorify God & enjoy Him forever.” [1 Chr 29:11-12; Ps 16:11; 43:3-4]

**Further notes** on “Glory” and “Meaning” - Why did God create us? (for His glory is 43.7) Did God need humanity? (aseity, Acts 17.24-28) Do humans create their destiny? (for God’s good pleasure Eph 1.11) Purpose? (glorify God 1 Co 10.31) Purposeless = time + chance + impersonal force // Purposefulness = plan + power + Personal God. Ecclesiastes = life has meaning, “All of life is a gift from God” (2:24, 25; 3:12, 13; 5:18-20; 7:14; 8:15; 9:7). Everyone says, “I want my life to count for something.” *Acts 13:36 “David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, died.”*