

# What Is My Purpose?

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**Q.** What is man's primary purpose?

**A.** Man's primary purpose is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.

(Westminster Shorter Catechism #1)

*"Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."*

(1 Corinthians 10:31)

Today we begin a brand new daily devotional that will last approximately 4-months as we study through the rich biblical doctrines which are taught in the Westminster Shorter Catechism. The Westminster Shorter Catechism is one of the greatest of the documents that was produced during the Protestant Reformation. Literally hundreds of Reformed Confessions and Catechisms were written by Reformed churches, pastors and theologians between the years 1523-1693 in order to help people understand what they believe, why they believe it, how to live it and how to share it with others. The Westminster Shorter Catechism belongs to a family of three different documents (*the Westminster Shorter Catechism, the Westminster Larger Catechism, the Westminster Confession of Faith*) which make up the Statements of Faith of faithful Presbyterian Churches around the world. We refer to these three documents collectively as the "*Westminster Standards*".

If you grew up in a Roman Catholic church or have some Roman Catholic background, a word like "*catechism*" may cause you to think to yourself, "*Wait...that sounds Roman Catholic! I thought we were Protestants! What are we doing studying things like catechisms?*". In reality however, catechisms were not a Roman Catholic invention. In fact, it was Protestant Christians who first produced catechisms in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in order to teach the Protestant Christian faith to both children and new believers. Protestant Pastors such as Martin Luther and John Calvin were some of the first to write catechisms for the benefit of the Christian churches in their cities. Luther wrote his first catechism in 1529 to teach the children of his church the basics of the faith. It wasn't until the year 1556 after the Council of Trent (*the Roman Catholic "counter-reformation" in response to the Protestant movement*) that the Roman Catholic Church produced its own catechism after they had become so popular in the Protestant/Reformed churches.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism begins with question #1 by asking us, "*What is man's primary purpose?*". Other translations say it in this way, "*What is the chief end of man?*". Either

way, the question is one that each of us as human beings has asked at one point or another. This question is one that philosophers have spilled much ink over trying to answer throughout the centuries. Philosophers refer to this as a question of “*teleology*”. Teleology comes from the Greek word “*Telos*” which literally means “*goal*” or “*end*”. What is the goal of life? What is life’s ultimate purpose? Are we just aimlessly bouncing around in the universe by chance? Is the grand meaning of life simply to please ourselves (*hedonism*) or is there a grander, more transcendent meaning and purpose to your life and my life? The Westminster Shorter Catechism, in summarizing the Bible’s teaching on this matter, answers this question plainly and simply: The purpose of life is to bring glory to God. The Apostle Paul summarizes this perfectly when he writes, “*Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God*” (1 Corinthians 10:31). The word “*glory*” in the New Testament comes from the Greek word “*δόξα*” (*doxa*) which literally means “*worship*” or “*praise*”. What is the purpose of your life? It is to worship and praise the God who created you and saved you through His Son Jesus Christ. Every human being was created by God to worship God. That is our purpose. That is what you should be pursuing today.

## Dig Even Deeper into God’s Word!

Psalm 86:9

Romans 11:36

1 Corinthians 6:20

Revelation 4:11