

BIBLE STUDY 3 (STUDENT GUIDE)
The Meaning of Life: A Gift From God
Third Sunday: Life Is A Gift To Be Used to God's Glory
"Why am I still here? Why won't God just let me go home?"

For the past two weeks, we've been discussing how to handle death as Christians. Today God's Word directs our focus on how to handle the life we have before we die as Christians, regardless of its quality.

Introduction: Imagine this scene. You are lying on a hospital bed. You are unable to speak or respond. You aren't able to communicate in any way. You can hear what is going on around you, but no one knows if you are even aware of their presence. What is going through your mind?

I. First of all, why are we here in the first place?

- Read 1 Peter 2:9-12 and list the two related reasons given.

- How does 1 Corinthians 10:31 answer that question?

Sometimes, though, doesn't it seem that God would be more glorified by this or that person if they were in heaven already singing with the saints and angels? In Romans 8, God tells us that He works all things for the good of those who love Him. God's Word gives several examples of God serving good through sufferings.

II. Why do we suffer here?

- Read the following passages and discuss why God allows us to go through difficulties and why He may cause us to suffer longer than we choose.

2 Corinthians 1:3,4

Galatians 6:2

Matthew 25:40

Ephesians 2:8-10

Philippians 1:12-14

Examples: Consider these stories and evaluate the quality and value of the lives involved.

- **Luke 10:30-35 – The Good Samaritan**
 - What was the quality of the traveler’s life as he was lying on the side of the road, left for dead?

 - What was the value of that traveler’s life as he was lying on the side of the road, left for dead?

 - Why did God allow that traveler to survive the attack?

- **John 9:1-7 – The Man Born Blind**
 - Use this true story to defend the statement: God gives people a low quality of life for His glory.

- **Mildred:** Mildred never said a word in the four years I knew her. She lay on the nursing home bed, apparently on the brink of death, only communicating through a few facial expressions. Then, her body started rejecting the food that was coming through the feeding tube, causing all sorts of problems and ultimately resulted in its discontinuation. The family figured it was only a matter of time...not much time. God caused her to continue living for more than over 11 more weeks without food because the options for feeding her had been exhausted. Consider some ways God might have used her during that additional time.

Someday, that might be you. Your loved ones will want to show love to Jesus by showing you love. They might be frustrated and confused, not knowing if you can hear them, not knowing what you want. Think about that. What would you want them to do?

Activity: Develop a wish list for those who might visit you when you aren’t able to communicate with them. Include on the list opportunities for them to serve Jesus by serving you.

Closing Prayer: O Lord, teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. And as we consider the number of our days, bless us with the confidence that our times are in Your hands, and You have purpose for all of our days. Help us to see all life as a gift from You and use the life You have given us for You. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.