

THE GOOD NEWS GAZETTE

THINK ON THESE THINGS...

PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9

As the woman stepped forward in the shot of an ancestry.com commercial, she announced that DNA testing revealed her to be 26% Native American. This information gave her a sense of identity and meaning. In a similar commercial, a man trades in his lederhosen for a kilt when he finds out that he is really of Scottish descent and not German as he believed. For him, the study of a whole new culture ensues as a result of genetic testing.



People throughout time have shown a desire to know who they are, where they come from, and why they are here. Even little children will ask, “Mommy, where did I come from?” When I was young, I heard about older kids who went off to

find themselves. I’m not sure where they all went, but remember that some never came back. I guess they are still looking. In any case, people, almost universally, seem to have a longing for belonging. They want to have a purpose and to fulfill their purpose in life.

Today, more than ever, people seem to be at a loss for purpose and belonging. Over 40% of all children born in the United States last year

were born to unwed mothers. Among the African American population about three out of every four children are born to unmarried mothers. Many children don’t even have a father’s name listed on their birth certificates now. The disruption of the family unit makes it easy to see how children can have no sense of heritage, belonging or

purpose. These cultural trends may also explain the growing interest in DNA testing. “Who’s your daddy?” is a common question today without an answer. Sometimes even the mother of a child doesn’t know who the father is.

Where do we come from? Where do we belong in the big scheme of things? What is our purpose? The Bible has answers to all of these questions. In Genesis 1:27-28 we read, “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’” From this passage, we see that all mankind came from God. In addition, all people are made in the likeness or image of God. We look like the one who created us. Do we tell our children that they resemble the Creator of the universe? Are we able to fully grasp that we came from and belong to Him?



Genesis 1:28 specifically tells us our purpose. Mankind was made to have children, fill the earth, subdue it, and rule over all its creatures. God put mankind in charge of the earth. Some teach that we are to subvert ourselves to “mother earth” and that animals have rights, but this is not God’s will or instruction. Our authority comes from God and is subservient to His authority and will. Proverbs 19:21 says, “Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.” Whatever our will may be, it is God’s will and purposes that are supreme.

In Jeremiah 1:5 God said to Jeremiah the prophet, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” Speaking of the Pharaoh in Egypt during the time of Moses God said, “But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.” (See Exodus 9:16

and Romans 9:17) It is clear from these passages that God has a specific will and specific purposes for specific people.

King David understood this concept and his place in God’s plan. In Psalm 139:14-16 David said, “I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.” Do we and our children understand that God has a plan and purpose for our lives? Do we know what it is?

In Acts 17:24-31 Paul spoke in the meeting of the Areopagus in Athens, Greece proclaiming God’s will saying, “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man (Adam - the first man) he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men should seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being. As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are His offspring.’ Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone — an image made by man’s design and skill. In the past God over-looked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man (Jesus) he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.”

Who are we? How do we explain to our children who they are and where they come from? We are the creations of the one, true and living God. We are made in the very image of our heavenly Father. There is something about us that is divine and immortal. Does everyone believe this? No, but Romans 1:18-20 says, “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities— his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.”

To whom do we belong? Jeremiah, Pharaoh, and David all knew that they belonged in the plans of God. The Bible makes it clear that we all belong to God, whether we agree with that concept or not. Psalm 24:1 says, “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world and all who live in it; for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters.”

Who are those that follow God in Christ? In John 1:10-14 God gave to all who receive Christ and believe in his name “the right to become **children of God** — children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.” In Galatians 3:26 Paul says, “**You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus**, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Christians are God’s children and His heirs. In I John 3:1 John tells the early Christians, “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called **children of God!** And that is what we are!” In I Peter 2:7-10, Peter reinforces John’s words by saying, “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, **a people belonging to God**, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness

into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now **you are the people of God**; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

What is our purpose as the people of God? God’s will is for us to accept His will and serve Him. Does everyone believe this? No, but it’s true. Will everyone follow God’s will? No. Jesus said in Matthew 7:21 and following that not everyone that even calls on the Lord will be saved or enter the kingdom of heaven, “but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.” We can not be acceptable to God by doing our will and living our way. This is critically important to understand. Our eternal salvation and that of our children depends on our responses to God’s call. We can not please God without aligning our lives with His plan and purpose. In Ephesians 2:10 Paul’s words to the Ephesian Christians explains our purpose, “For we are God’s workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus to do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” God has work for the Christian to do and a plan for them to fulfill.

Let’s share this good news with our families and friends. Our DNA is from God. We belong with God, and as we walk in His plan, will fulfill His purpose for our lives. Let us think on and teach these things...

Robin Robbins House



What Does the Bible Say?

Who asked Jesus about who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

Why did Jesus call a little child to stand before him?

Who will never enter the kingdom of heaven?

Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

What did Jesus say about the person who welcomes a little child in his name?

What did Jesus say would be better for the person that caused a little one who believed in Jesus to sin?

Must things that cause people to sin come in to the world?

What is meant by the scripture “if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away?”

What did Jesus mean when he said it was better to have one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell?

Who did Jesus tell the disciples not to look down upon?

Who always sees the face of the Father in heaven?

Why is it significant that the face of the Father is seen?

Why would the owner of a flock of 100 sheep leave 99 sheep to find 1 lost sheep?

What does Jesus say to do when your brother sins against you?

What does Jesus say to do when your brother won't listen to you?

At what point does Jesus say to take a brother's sin against you to the church?

If a brother will not listen to the church, how does Jesus say to treat him?

How were pagans and tax-collectors treated in Jesus' day?

What does Jesus mean by binding and loosing on earth?

When does Jesus say he is with them?

Who asked Jesus about how many times he should forgive his brother?

How many times did Jesus say to forgive and what does it mean?

Explain the parable of the king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

Why is it important to have mercy?

How will the heavenly Father treat those who do not forgive their brother from the heart?

What does it mean to forgive from the heart?

Answers to the questions above can be found in Matthew chapter eighteen.

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