

Why Am I Here? - The Four Great Questions of Life
Renovaré Series Video #2 – Part 1 – The Will vs Desire
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"You are a never-ceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's great universe."

1. It is important to get this idea of the human as a spiritual being straight. One common misunderstanding is to ignore the importance of the body.
 - The body is absolutely central to human identity, and it is a glorious thing. The body is precious. Matter is precious. The body is meant to be spiritual in its own right, because that's where we live our eternal life. The continuity of life involves our body. The body is meant to be a spiritual expression of the person.
 - Heaven is the natural extension of eternal living now.

For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. Col. 3:3
...our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. 2 Tim. 1:10
Very truly I tell you, whoever obeys my word will never see death. John 8:51

Jesus taught that we could start living in eternity right now in our bodies. We don't have to wait until we die because we have died. Fear of death governs human life; just watch the evening news. The world is obsessed with death and destruction, but we are not of the world. We have life eternal.
 - One aspect of the body is that we can hide ourselves within it. When Adam and Eve separated from God, they hid and we have been hiding ever since. Young kids are not able to hide in their bodies, but we soon learn to avoid transparency. Jesus said,

Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Mat. 18:3

We need to learn how to stop hiding and to allow the eternal life within us to shine through our bodies.
2. Understanding God's purpose for us in creation.
 - The first significant event in human history is creation. This explains why are here. It's about creative goodness which is the natural expression of love.

And God saw that it was good. Gen. 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31

Why does God create? Because He loves. Love creates what is good. The center of the universe is love. The great Triune Community is love. Therefore, goodness came forth.
 - Genesis 1: 26 & 28 lays out why we are here.

Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness... Gen. 1:16

We are by nature suited to eternal living. God said, "Let them have dominion." What does that mean? It means, "Let them be responsible." Adam and Eve would be responsible for life on earth. That's the basic nature of the human being, to be responsible for bringing about good and that good comes from love. To be responsible is to work for what is good.



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3. The problem we all face is that our will to bring about good is in conflict with our desires.
- Will contemplates alternatives. Our will can deliberate and then we express that in a choice. Desire does not deliberate, but skips deliberation and simply says, "I want that." The nature of desire is essentially conflictual.

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from the desires that battle within you? James 4:1

Will is not essentially conflictual.

Epithumia is a common word in the New Testament which is often translated "lust" which narrows our thoughts to sexual desire. A better translation is "obsessive desire," something we all struggle with. *Epithumia* is a desire that won't leave you alone, a thirst that won't go away. Jesus promised to free us from being under obsessive desire so that we can live for what is good.

ἐπιθυμία Rom. 1:24,6:12,7:7-8, 13:14; Gal. 5:16,24; Eph. 2:3,4:22; Php. 1:23; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 2:17,4:5; 1 Tim. 6:9; 2 Tim 2:22,3:6,4:3; Tit. 2:12,3:3; Jam. 1:14-15; 1 Pet 1:14,2:11,4:2-3; 2 Pet 1:4,2:10,2:18,3:3; 1 Jn 2:16-17; Jude 1:16,18; Rev 18:14

...but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. John 4:14

If we can be satisfied in Him, then our will has the power to write desires off, to overcome obsessive longings, and choose the good. The process of spiritual formation is largely a matter of bringing desire under the control of what is good.

You can't get rid of desire. We shouldn't try to go down the path of Buddhism and attempt to extinguish desire. Desire is essential to survival. If we are going to grow up, we are going to have to master desire. Desire must come under the direction of the will for what is good. Because love produces good, we must understand that we confuse love with desire. It's common to say we love what we desire. We don't really love chocolate cake because we don't seek it's good. We desire it and want to consume it.

- Our will is central to our calling which is to be responsible for the earth. Our will has to be corrected because it is the executive center of the self. It is meant to direct all the other parts of the self under God. The will is primarily designed to trust God.
- We need to understand temptation and how it plays upon our desires. The primary form of temptation is, "If I don't do this, I'm going to miss out on something great." We see this in Eve, in Jesus and in 1 John.
 - *When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate.* Gen. 3:6
 - The temptation of Christ was similar: bread, notoriety and power.
 - *For everything in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...* 1 John 2:16

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In Part 2 and 3, Dallas will explain the process of how we can become “really good people.” People who live lives of love and bring about creative goodness.

QUESTIONS

1. Dallas emphasizes the importance of the body because he believes that you can begin to live an eternal life right now in your body. You don't have to wait until you die and are freed from your body. What are your thoughts about living an eternal life in your body?
2. Young children are transparent whereas adults have learned to hide within our bodies. When did you learn to hide and what caused you to do so? Do you desire transparency in your life and what would need to occur for this to happen?
3. Dallas suggests that God has placed us on earth to exercise dominion (to be responsible) to bring forth creative goodness from agape-love. How does this calling impact you?
4. Our will to choose what is good conflicts with our desire to get or do what we want. Can you identify specific desires in your life that conflict with your will to choose what's best?

Notes, outline and summary are by Bill Dwyer.

