



SEARCHING FOR MEANING?

by Vincent M. Newfield

What does it mean to live a *meaningful* life? It means to live a life FULL of *meaning*—one that is full of significance, importance and worth. Without question, Jesus Christ lived a meaningful life. He had great significance and value, and His life continues to impact the lives of countless others today. What made His life so meaningful? I believe there are two unquestionable characteristics that guided and governed His life from beginning to end—*passion for the Father* and *compassion for others*.

Passion Pursues Oneness. Just before Jesus was crucified and raised back to life, He prayed a prayer that repeatedly proclaims the focus of His existence. In four different verses of John 17, Jesus said that He and the Father were **one**. In other words, they were so close and united in unbroken fellowship that their thoughts, words and actions were inseparably in sync. *Oneness* is what Jesus asked the Father to bring to all His followers—present and future. Truly, fellowship with the Father is what you and I were created for. We see this in how Adam and Eve were used to walking with God in the cool of the day (see Genesis 3:8-10). Oneness was lost through Adam and Eve’s disobedience, but through Christ it was restored.

If you and I want to experience a life that is *full* of meaning, we must passionately pursue **oneness** with the Father. This shouldn’t be thought of as a chore or a bore—it is an awesome privilege and a joy. Think about it. The Almighty, Eternal Creator of heaven and earth wants to have a relationship with you and me! Wow! Revelation 3:20 says that He stands at the door of our hearts seeking entrance, and James 4:5 declares that His Spirit yearns to be welcomed in our lives. Oneness with God is what makes life worth living and produces the fertile foundation we need to eternally impact the lives of those around us.

One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek, inquire for and [insistently] require: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord [in His presence] all the days of my life.... *You will show me the path of life;* in Your presence is *fullness* of joy, at Your right hand there are pleasures forevermore. —Psalm 27:4; 16:11

Oneness Produces Effectiveness. Out of oneness with the Father, Jesus instinctively knew where to go, what to do, and how to do it. He did *only* what He saw the Father do... He worked *only* where He saw the Father working (see John 5:19-20). He said, *I am able to do nothing from Myself [independently, of My own accord—but only as I am taught by God and as I get His orders]. Even as I hear, I judge [I decide as I am bidden to decide. As the voice comes to Me, so I give a decision], and My judgment is right (just, righteous), because I do not seek or consult My own will [I have no desire to do what is pleasing to Myself, My own aim, My own purpose] but only the will and pleasure of the Father who sent Me* (John 5:30).

Let’s face it: There were poor, hurting and lost people all around Jesus. He did not “spin His wheels” and waste His time and energy trying to go to *all* of them—He only went where the Father led Him. What was the outcome of this kind of living? Effectiveness. Many times I have attempted to do good things, but it was independent of the Father’s orders. I consulted my own will and sought my own purposes. Instead of waiting for His direction and His prompting, I moved prematurely. More often than not, the outcome was **ineffectiveness**, and ineffectiveness drains the joy and satisfaction out of life.

Thankfully, I am learning to passionately pursue oneness with the Father and look for where He is working. For instance, instead of trying to witness to everyone I meet, I look for those who are *open* to spiritual things. How can you tell who is open? They are usually the ones who *seek us out* and *ask us questions*—just like they did with Jesus.

Effectiveness *Makes Life Meaningful*. I encourage you to stay *connected* and you'll be *directed*. Passionately pursue oneness with the Father, and He will show you amazing things (see Psalm 25:14). Like Jesus, you will begin to instinctively know where to go, what to do, and how to do it. Life will become an adventure and take on more meaning than ever before. Not only will you indelibly impact the lives of others, you will also enjoy a sense of satisfaction, accomplishment and contentment that can be found no other way!

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