

What Is Your Destiny?

Did you know if you take a 10-minute quiz online you can discover your destiny? All you need to do is search the question, "What is my destiny?" and there is no shortage of such quizzes to tell you about your future. However, one quiz does warn you not to take its results too seriously, because the quiz is all in fun.

"What is my destiny?" is a question asked by many people. Some believe destiny is a fixed sequence of inevitable and unchangeable events. Others believe individuals choose their own destiny as they choose different paths in their lives. But you and I, let us see our destiny invariably connected to our relationship with God.

But first, our starting point today is a dose of reality. One of things we cannot change about our destiny as people is that our lives are short. Psalm 90 reminds us we get 70 or perhaps 80 years of life, and then we are gone. Even if we manage to live into our 90s or somehow live a century or better, our death is certain.

This is one of the grimmer aspects of the coronavirus pandemic. As we hear daily reports of people contracting the virus, going into the hospital, and dying from it, we are in constant touch with our mortality. In other words, it is not our destiny to live on this earth forever, and 1.3 million Covid-19 deaths in the world is proof.

Recently, I officiated at Marlys Jacobsen's funeral. Marlys died of Covid-19. It's weird to think of her as being one of those 1.3 million people. She beat cancer 3 times in her 86 years, and then sadly, her life was ended by Covid-19. Yet, when I spoke with her the day before she died, she was wonderfully hopeful.

I'm not saying she was hopeful to extend her life here on earth. She understood the virus would soon end her life. So, she was hopeful not for more life here in this world, but rather for life with

God in heaven. She didn't know any more about heaven than you or I do, but still, her hopefulness for it was unmistakable.

You see, Marlys understood she was a child of God, and because of that relationship, her destiny was life in heaven with God. This is what we see in First Thessalonians 5. There we are called children of God, who are not destined only for a short life on this earth and then death, but also for eternal salvation.

In fact, our Lord Jesus Christ died for us for this very reason. Jesus died for us so we can face with his help all the hardships, challenges, and struggles of our lives with hopefulness, because we are children of God. This includes the coronavirus pandemic, Covid-19, as well as the powers of sin, evil and death.

So, as children of God we are destined for a hopeful future. We are destined to be loved by God, to be forgiven our sins, and for eternal life in heaven as well. As Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."

This means, we even face the end of time, the day the Lord Jesus will come to judge the living and the dead, with hope. Christian people believe there is such a time where Jesus will return to restore heaven and earth to Almighty God, and to usher in the Kingdom of God, where Jesus and God will reign forever.

The events of this past year have led many Christian people to believe this time is near. While I tend not to take a position on such a matter, I understand how the pandemic, and in the US, how the racial and political turmoil, have caused some people to wonder if the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is finally upon us.

This time is often called a great and terrible day, which will come upon the earth and its people like a thief in the night. We see this

in First Thessalonians 5. To read about it can be scary. All that is sinful and evil in the world, all the darkness in the world, is to be overthrown, judged by God, and ultimately banished forever.

But you are children of God who do not live in darkness. You live in the light, the light of the Lord Jesus Christ. This Lord Jesus who died for you and was raised from the dead, has saved from sin, evil and death, and has also destined you for a hopeful future, that is salvation, which means forgiveness, love, and eternal life.

Therefore, you face the end of time, as we call it, the return of the Lord Jesus, the same way you face any other day of life, as hopeful and confident children of God, who have been and are still today, destined for hopeful things. You are destined to be loved and cared for by the God who has saved you in every possible way.

Yet, we do not know the day of the Lord's return. As far as we actually know, it could be many years, many centuries away. It is likely many of us will live out our lives, die, and enter into eternal life, even before the Lord Jesus returns. So, what does this mean for our lives here and now in the midst of life as we know it.

Maybe you have heard that Martin Luther was once asked such a question, "Dr. Luther, what would you do if you knew the Lord was returning tomorrow?" Martin Luther's answer was as hopeful as anyone might give. Without hesitation, he told his student, "I would plant an apple tree." Why would Luther answer this way?

Well, simply because he believed the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, the end of time, so to speak, was hopeful for him, and that it was hopeful the world. He believed in a hopeful future as stated in Jeremiah 29:11, "I know the plans I have for you, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."

In other words, Luther was convinced that the Lord had plans for a wonderful destiny for him, and for all the children of God. That is why life for us on the last day of time as we know it, is as hopeful as was life on the first day of time for Adam and Eve. God is a good and gracious God who has great things in store for us.

That is why the parable from Matthew 25 is so important. It is our reminder that even as we are destined for a wonderful and hopeful future, the Lord does not wish us to sit around and wait for it. In fact, we were born with certain talents which the Lord has given us to share with the world, while we are here living in it.

The story shows that we don't all get the same talents, or even the same amount of talents, but one thing that is the same, is that God wants us to use, to invest the talents he has given us in the world. So, musicians play their music, nurses heal their patients, teachers teach their students, crows fly their hurt friends, and so on.

As Christian people, who are children of God, we share our talents in the world with love, believing the work we do might help others see they too have a destiny, a life with God, beyond this short life we live here on this earth. Therefore, we use our talents, the things we are good at, to serve and uplift other people in this way.

I don't think you can learn much about your destiny taking an online quiz. It might be fun, but you may also just get a lot of spam emails. If you want to see your real destiny, turn to the Bible. There you will see you are children of God, who have been given talents to use here on earth, and a destiny that is unimaginably hopeful.

After all, it is your destiny to have the Lord Jesus himself walking alongside you in life, helping you every day, and whispering into your ear the promise of the hopeful future God has in store for you. You are destined for more than a short life here on earth. You are destined for love and life in heaven with God forever – Amen.