

Why Did a Loving God Make Me This Way?

Psalm 139:13-14 - “For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. 14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.”

Why Did a Loving God Make Me This Way?

- Is there value in asking why we do what we do, especially in spiritual matters?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Can our service to God be enhanced and more effective if we purposefully consider what we are to do and why we are to do it?
- How much of what we are and what we do is based on how God made us, and how much is based on our choices, or others, or on time and chance?
- To what extent is God responsible for my lot in life?

Why Did a Loving God Make Me This Way?

- God created us with the fundamentals we need to become His children
 - John 1:12 - “But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God”

Why Did a Loving God Make Me This Way?

- After that, whatever you do or become, whether in trial, tests, triumphs, toils, or traits, depends on other factors:
 - Time to grow
 - Talents given
 - How hard one is willing to work
 - Random chance
 - Personal choices
 - Choices imposed by others
- We may not make God responsible for these factors
 - The question is flawed; it assumes that it is God's job to void these factors for your personal happiness.

We Have Purpose And Have Been Given Direction

- People lead lives of desperate failure when they are unguided
 - Prov. 29:18 - “Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law.”
 - 2Tim. 3:16-17 - “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

We Have Purpose And Have Been Given Direction

- People lead lives of tragic unhappiness when they have no purpose other than existing
 - Prov. 24:20 - “For there will be no prospect for the evil man; The lamp of the wicked will be put out.”
 - Phil. 3:13-14 - “Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

We Have Purpose And Have Been Given Direction

- Focus, determination, purpose required to fulfill God's purposes and lead a rewarding, worthwhile life
 - 1Cor. 9:24-27 - “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.”

We Have Purpose And Have Been Given Direction

- Focus, determination, purpose required to fulfill God's purposes and lead a rewarding, worthwhile life
 - Heb. 12:1-3 - “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.”

Why Were We Made To Do What We Do?

- Two answers:
 - The Biblical expectation: what we must do according to scripture in order to be well pleasing to God (By design)
 - These are things that all Christians can and must do
 - None of them are outside of the scope of human beings
 - Worship God, live moral lives, be faithful until death
 - The Divine expectation: what we must do according to Biblical examples in order to grow in the Lord and lead fulfilling, useful lives (By determined effort)

How This Works In Worship

- According to Scripture, all things in the assembly are to be done:
 - To reverence God (Biblical expectation)
 - Psalm 89:7 - “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, And to be held in reverence by all those around Him.”
 - And for building up others (Divine expectation)
 - 1Cor. 14:26 - “How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.”

How This Works In Worship

- Praying:
 - We pray to thank God and to make requests of Him
 - Col. 4:2-3 - “Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; 3 meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains”
 - At the same time, the one leading the prayer should consider how the prayer will build up others
 - 1Cor. 14:14-17 - “For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. 15 What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding. 16 Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say? 17 For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified.”
 - With the first we keep the command; with the second we fulfill our purpose

How This Works In Worship

- Singing:
 - We sing to praise God
 - Heb. 13:15 - “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”
 - We also teach and encourage one another in song
 - Eph. 5:19 - “Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”
 - Col. 3:16 - “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”
 - As singers, we should consider how well we are speaking to one another, and if we really mean what is sung, and song leaders should consider how the songs they select work to build up Christians

How This Works In Worship

- Lord's Supper:
 - We partake to remember Jesus' death
 - 1Cor. 11:23-26 - "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me. 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."
 - Attention must be given as to how we can best encourage and edify brethren as they partake; after all we are showing forth something as we partake
 - 1Cor. 11:26 - "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes."
 - With the first, we keep the command; with the second, we help others to draw nearer to Christ

How This Works In Worship

- Giving:
 - Giving as one prospers, keeps the command
 - 1Cor. 16:2 - “On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.”
 - Giving cheerfully and eagerly, manifests growth in the Lord
 - 2Cor. 9:6-9 - “But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 9 As it is written: He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever.”
 - The first obeys God; the second obeys God with joy

How This Works In Worship

- Preaching:
 - Preaching is to instruct, exhort, rebuke, encourage as necessary. One who gets up and preaches truth fulfills the command
 - 2Tim. 4:2 - “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.”
 - One who gives thought as to how best to communicate the message to people to build up their faith truly edifies them and fulfills himself
 - 1Tim. 4:15-16 - “Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. 16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”

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Why Did God Make Me This Way?

- Humans do better when given goals and incentives
 - Without direction, guidance, purpose and incentive, humans do not accomplish much

Why Did God Make Me This Way?

- Humans need encouragement
 - Heb. 10:24-25 - “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”
 - 1Thes. 5:11, 14 - “Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing... 14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.”
- With the right incentive and encouragement, people become willing to sacrifice much for vital causes
 - They are motivated by being part of something greater than themselves

Why Did God Make Me This Way?

- Humans are easily distracted and diverted
 - The Adversary pulls our focus away from our goals and re-directs it to the circumstances of this life
 - Things we do not have
 - Health we wish was better
 - Talents we do not enjoy
 - Relationships we cannot cultivate
 - Things we cannot change
 - Matters we should not indulge

Why Did God Make Me This Way?

- With our focus away from anticipation of heaven and the joy of a fulfilling Christian life, we become vulnerable to the emptiness and unhappiness of an earth-centered life
- And while we are wrapped in unhappiness, he moves us to ask God questions that are based on false information and faulty reasoning, and then to blame God when we don't get the responses we want

Why Did God Make Me This Way?

- Unfair questions
 - “Have you stopped beating your wife?”
 - “Have you stopped cheating on your husband?”
 - “Dear God, my life is an unhappy mess. Why did you make me this way?”

So, You Don't Have The Life You Wanted...

- Who does?
 - The day will come when what you sorrow over now will seem so unimportant

Learn to Love the Life You Have

- Lam. 3:31-33 - “For the Lord will not cast off forever. 32 Though He causes grief, Yet He will show compassion According to the multitude of His mercies. 33 For He does not afflict willingly, Nor grieve the children of men.”
- Micah 7:7-10 - “Therefore I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; My God will hear me. 8 Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; When I fall, I will arise; When I sit in darkness, The LORD will be a light to me. 9 I will bear the indignation of the LORD, Because I have sinned against Him, Until He pleads my case And executes justice for me. He will bring me forth to the light; I will see His righteousness. 10 Then she who is my enemy will see, And shame will cover her who said to me, Where is the LORD your God?”

Learn to Love the Life You Have

- 1Thes. 3:3-4 - “That no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. 4 For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.”
- 1Peter 5:10 - “But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.”

Learn to Love the Life You Have

- John 16:20 - “Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.”
- Psalm 126:5-6 - “Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy. 6 He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him.”

Learn to Love the Life You Have

- Did God spare Jesus when He asked for the cup of suffering to pass?
- What makes us think He will spare us?
 - John 15:20-21 - “Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.”

Learn to Love the Life You Have

- Did God remove the thorn in the flesh from the apostle Paul when he thought he would be more effective without it?
 - 2Cor. 12:7-10 - “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”
- What makes us think we are more special than Paul that we would question God for not removing our thorn?

You Have The Life You Are To Have

- God made us human beings beset with the human predicament: all men sin and all men die
 - We are not gods; we are men, subject to the limits and constraints of a physical world
 - We are headed for an eternal life in heaven untouched by the limits of this world
 - Keep your focus there and live an obedient and fulfilling life here
 - Do not be distracted by the Adversary who is teaching you to ask questions of God that are inherently unfair and misguided

You Have The Life You Are To Have

- It is not: Why did a loving God make me this way?
- It is: How wonderful it is that a loving God made me capable of rising above the limits of my existence by means of His gospel!