

TEACHING GOAL

To show that people are not merely the products of chance or chaotic randomness, but have a sublime reason to exist.

DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

Q. What is the chief end of man?

A. The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

S.C. 1; L.C. 1; W.C. of F. II:II,XVI; Young 1-5

SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Study Passage: Acts 17:16-32

Support Passages: Psalm 73:24-28; Romans 14:7-12; I
Corinthians 6:13-20; John 15:8; Romans 15:5-8

BIBLE STORY

Daniel 4:28-37; Nebuchadnezzar's Boast

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT

"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31, ESV)

APPLICATION

In order to receive God's gracious blessing, we must glorify and enjoy him. In other words, we must be in harmony with the reason for which we were created.

SUMMARY

This lesson is intended to introduce the need for special revelation, the Bible, by demonstrating that mankind has a utility which is to glorify and enjoy God. It is obvious that no other earthly creature has such an ability. If people indeed have such a utility, such a reason to exist, how then do people learn how to glorify and enjoy God?

One view of man follows from the views of Sigmond Freud (Psychology), Charles Darwin (Biology) and Karl Marx (Political Economics) all of whom lived in the 19th century and whose views profoundly affected the course of human history. This world and life view maintains that mankind is a product of his environment and that he has no utility. People who are nothing and have no utility have no creator and no reason to exist. A wrist-watch, on the other hand, has a utility which is to measure time. It follows, therefore, that such an instrument to measure time had a creator, a watch-maker. Nothing useful can evolve from randomness, for randomness only produces its kind, more randomness. The effect can never be greater than the cause. Indeed, that nothing moves from randomness to order unless it has inherent order, is a natural law. Human beings have inherent order and usefulness because they were created by God to possess these qualities. Furthermore, the usefulness of mankind is to glorify and enjoy God and this is accomplished by knowing God and his perfection from the Scriptures.

Glorifying God is a man to God relationship, while enjoying God is a God to mankind relationship. The action terminus in the first case is God and in the second case it is mankind. Each of us is born for a purpose, for a certain usefulness in God's plan. That is, to glorify him and enjoy him forever. As Paul told the men of Athens on Mars Hill, God is "*not far from each one of us*; ²⁸ *for in Him we live and move and have our being.*" (Acts 17:27-28) We are the offspring of God, created by him and for him. All that we have comes from God and all that we do should be for his glory.

Nebuchadnezzar thought that all the greatness of Babylon had been built by his own power and in his own honor. God caused Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom to depart from him and he was sent to live with the beasts of the field until he learned that God, the Most High, is ruler of all. After seven years, Nebuchadnezzar came to know this and praised and honored the True and Living God. Our bodies are a gift from God. They are God's temple, the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in us, whom we have from God, and we are not our own.¹ Paul continues to tell us that we, "*were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*"

To Charles Darwin the evolutionist God says, "*God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.*"²

To Sigmond Freud who maintained that mankind are the product of their environment God says "*And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, "so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;*"³

To Karl Marx who looked for a utopia deriving from Communist economics God says, "*Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, "because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."*"⁴

¹ I Corinthians 6:19

² Acts 17:24-25

³ Acts 17:26-27

⁴ Acts 17:30-31