

# CONNECTING WITH GOD

*“He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.” —ECCLESIASTES 3:11*

There are a number of philosophical views that suggest why we exist, how we exist, and what life is all about. In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon is resigned to the fact that life is simply a case of “whatever will be, will be.” He presents a cynical and depressing outlook in which we are merely participants in a meaningless process that we have no control over. He sympathizes with three views in particular, all of which generate a feeling of helplessness.

The first is the philosophy of ‘determinism’, which believes that the universe is governed by laws of cause and effect. One seemingly insignificant thing happens, which causes something else to happen, which causes a third thing to happen and so on. It’s a natural phenomenon that says life is on a fixed course, and cannot be any other way, because we are locked into this cause and effect process.

Secondly, there is ‘pre-determinism’, which is a supernatural phenomenon that traces the process of life back to a God who ordained things before the natural process began. Theologically, it’s known as ‘predestination’. Solomon relates to this view when he says in Proverbs 16:33, “The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.” It’s like flipping a coin, and God deciding which side it’s going to land on, so our lives are predetermined by Him.

The third view is ‘compatibilism’, which attempts to reconcile determinism with pre-determinism by including the idea of free will. It’s

making compatible God controlling our lives while giving us some liberty to influence results. This view, however, has many complex arguments as it involves defining the human will, and is subject to physical, moral and spiritual laws that govern our lives.

The problem with these philosophical views is that they don't provide answers to very relevant questions: What is the purpose in this? Why are we here and where are we headed? In Ecclesiastes 3:11, Solomon tells us, "He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end." It is this sense of eternity inherent in us, which prompts us to reach outside of ourselves for answers that give meaning and purpose to life. We were never meant to live apart from our Creator. God has set eternity in our hearts so that we may seek Him and find Him. It's in connecting with God we find significance and purpose, and our world begins to make sense.

***PRAYER: Dear Father, thank you for making sense of this world, and giving my life meaning and purpose in it.***

***TO REFLECT UPON: How has my relationship with God changed my view of life?***