

can i change - part 1 - the search is real

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BIG IDEA - you can change, but not without help

scripture focus - Ecclesiastes 3:11 NLT “Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. **He has planted eternity in the human heart**, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God’s work from beginning to end.”

Welcome to 2023!

What a year 2022 was, right?

I always find it interesting to see what the largest search engine in the world summarizes what the year looked like through Google and their recorded

8.5 billion searches a day.

Of all the searched topics people could have typed in that bubble space at the top of Google’s website or app, Google’s A.I. decided that folks were looking for something very specific - **how can i change**

Oh, there were a lot of curiosities scattered throughout the year, some you may have thought about about, many of which you could care less.

<https://trends.google.com/trends/yis/2022/US/>

Top Searches for 2022 - a game, politics, money and people. Odd results, but Google saw something more, something deeper - a

search within, an intimate curiosity about us and how or where we fit into the future.

1. Wordle
2. Election results
3. Betty White
4. Queen Elizabeth
5. Bob Saget
6. Ukraine
7. Mega Millions
8. Powerball numbers
9. Anne Heche
10. Jeffrey Dahmer

the search is real

When you place eternity in the human heart you cause a longing, an ache for what's real and what's lasting. And with that longing **comes a permanent, existential search for change. It is not necessarily a search to become, but to find out who we are and why we exist.**

Our culture, here in the United States, which is vastly different from other cultures in other parts of the world, is still subject to the laws and intentions of God, who created all things. And because of that, **this search is in fact GLOBAL.**

Just a fun whimsical way to prove that, let me **tell you about Pinocchio**. You know about Pinocchio, the puppet made of wood who wanted to be a real boy.

The original story came from a novel by Carlo Collodi in 1883, from Florence Italy. Florence is a beautiful place, rich with history, art, music, and Cathedrals. Carlo created a character, a poor woodcarver named Geppetto, that would carve a very unique puppet.

Pinocchio - I want to be a real boy.

The children's novel [The Adventures of Pinocchio](#) (1883) by Italian writer [Carlo Collodi](#) of [Florence, Tuscany](#). Pinocchio was carved by a woodcarver named [Geppetto](#) in a Tuscan village. He is created as a wooden [puppet](#), but he dreams of becoming a real boy. The name [Pinocchio](#) is possibly derived from the rare Tuscan form [pinocchio](#) ("pine nut") or constructed from [pino](#) ("pine tree, pine wood") and [occhio](#) ("eye").

Carlo's original wooden puppet was naughty, mischievous, even malicious. Upon being born, Pinocchio immediately laughs derisively in his creator's face, whereupon he steals the old man's wig. In Disney's version, they had to make Pinocchio more lovable and less dark and impish.

In the book, Pinocchio goes from one bad decision to another, determined to play the fool and reap the consequences. Many pity him and try to help him, but Pinocchio always seems to return to his own stubborn will and foolish decisions. He is captured and escapes several times. He is constantly lied to and taken advantage of, only to fall for trap again and again. It's a perfect story of someone who wants something they just can't get their hands on, someone who just can't learn and change. Pinocchio can't and won't change on his own, he needs help and plenty of opportunities to get it right.

The story has been popular enough to generate over 65 movies and TV shows.

There were two recently remade - 2022 Disney live-action remake of the 1940 film. For the [Guillermo del Toro](#) stop-motion animated film, see [Pinocchio \(2022 animated film\)](#).

Here's what we know about this question, this quest about change –

**"If you want to change, you must be willing to be uncomfortable."
– Author Unknown**

Ecclesiastes 3:11 NLT “Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. **He has planted eternity in the human heart**, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God’s work from beginning to end.”

How did God do this?

Genesis 1:27 NLT

“So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

He breathed Himself into the very essence of our physical bodies.

Genesis 2:7 NLT

“Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man’s nostrils, and the man became a living person.”

Why did God do this?

Isaiah 43:7 NLT

“Bring all who claim me as their God, for **I have made them for my glory. It was I who created them.**”

imago dei - Latin for Image of God. We are image bearers.

We are living, breathing billboards of God here on this big blue ball perfectly suspended in the universe. Some of us LOVE that we carry that likeness, others HATE it, preferring to believe they came from a primordial soup and rose from trillions of genetic mutations with no purpose or design. Just a random, cold, impersonal freak of nature that cannot be explained nor repeated.

John Piper writes: “The point of being created in the image of God is that human beings are destined to display God. That’s what images do. And the point of being redeemed by Jesus, and renewed after the image of our Creator, is to recover this destiny”.

What does this mean for me?

God created us, but on our own volition, our own decision we selfishly decided God couldn't be trusted and we wanted more. We chose a lie over truth and broke a perfect world and a perfect relationship with God.

If you're wondering why we must take the fall for a couple of people's bad decisions, know this – you and I would do it all over again. **There are no "what ifs, only what was."**

PLUS, it's hard to face, **but this whole experience we call life is HIS story not ours**, it's God's design, mystery, and dominion, not ours.

Jesus redeems our broken lives and fractured planet, making it the biggest restoration project the world has ever seen!

So, can i change? You betcha, but not on my own.
can you change? Absolutely, but not on your own either.

What do you want in the new year, in 2023?

Forget about resolutions and lofty promises and goals for a moment.

Be honest this brand-new year, the start of something big!

Are you asking the question that a algorithm, an A.I. revealed about humanity by shifting through trillions of questions?

can i change...

If that's your question this year and you are looking for the answers, start with this simple prayer:

Jesus, change me. I surrender my life to you. Make me new, help me look more like you!

I don't care how many times you've tried to get your life together, get it right, live right.

I don't care how many times you've failed and told yourself you can't do it, or something is wrong with you and everyone else has got it right.

I want you to get up out of the gutter and believe God again.

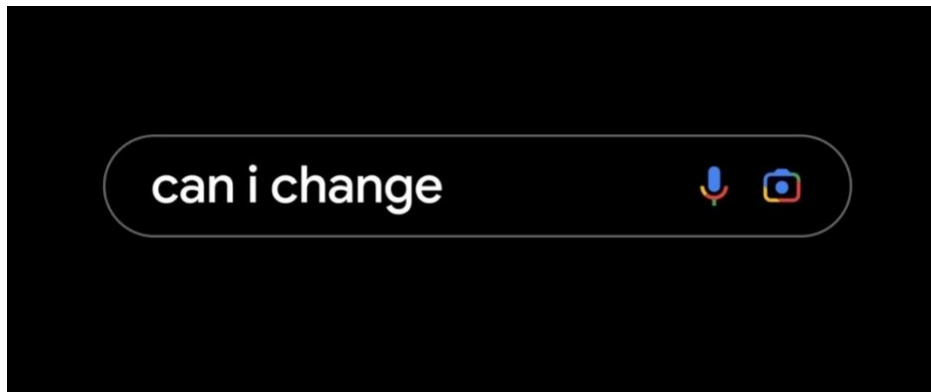
Don't stay down. Don't give up! Get up, and reach out to God who is faithful to change you, and change me.

NOTES

Google search 2022 - <https://about.google/stories/year-in-search/>

<https://youtu.be/4WXs3sKu41I>

This year, more than ever before, the world searched... "can i change?"



God puts *olam* עולם in the human heart. Olam refers to God's placing an eternal longing or sense of eternity in the human heart. Taking this understanding to be the correct one, Ecclesiastes 3:11 affirms the idea that **humans operate in a different way than other forms of life**. We have a sense of eternity in our lives; **we possess an innate knowledge that there is something more to life than what we can see and experience in the here and now**.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/eternity-in-our-hearts.html>

Scriptures

Ecclesiastes 3:9-11 NLT

“What do people really get for all their hard work? I have seen the burden God has placed on us all. Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end.”

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