"What's My Purpose in Life?"

A dear younger friend of mine recently posted this question on a forum:

"Do you feel that you have a great mission or purpose in life?

"I do feel like I'm made for something more than this, but whatever it is I can't reach it, or find out what it is. I do feel as though I have a great purpose or mission in life—I'm sure I do!!! Why can I just not figure it out?

"Was I born in the wrong time? My roommate says that I'm like a young person who thinks they were meant for more. She says hardly anyone here has a great life of purpose and I just have to accept reality. 99% of the people are just normal people—that there are not that many characters, priests, prophets, or heroes.

"Does everyone go through life never figuring out what their great purpose is? There has to be a purpose beyond just surviving. Roommate says that my problem is that I think I'm born to be a superstar, a saint or a hero. She thinks I'm just unrealistic, and what I expect from and of myself is unrealistic. I think she's a pessimist. I want to do something big. I don't want a mediocre life."

Similar to <u>C.S. Lewis' argument</u> that our longings correspond to God's plan for the fulfillment of those longings (such as experiencing hunger because food exists for us to eat, and experiencing fatigue because there is such a thing as sleep), I think my friend's longing for the something bigger and something more, her disdain for a mediocre life, is indeed shaped by God's call to love and serve Him in large and glorious ways. But we may have been waylaid by the "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life" gospel, since many 20th-century Westerners seem to have directed their focus to finding out this wonderful plan rather than on God Himself.

I don't see anywhere in scripture where we are called to find our purpose in life. I think God just wants us to obey what He's already given us. When we do a search for the phrases "God's will" or "will of God" in the Bible, we know for sure God wants us to do things like give thanks in all things (1 Thessalonians 5:18), be sanctified and avoid sexual immorality (1 Thessalonians 4:3), silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good (1 Peter 2:15), and sometimes, suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong (1 Peter 3:17).

All the "one anothers" in the Bible are commands, so those are God's will as well. So our purpose in life is to please Him through obedience, which should grow out of our awareness that He loves us and made us for Himself.

Because we are made in the image of God, our purpose in life is to put Him on display. We-our bodies, our minds, our humor, our gifts and talents-are a display case for the glory of God. I think the specifics of how we go about that don't matter as much as we seem to think they do. Desiring to be truthful and transparent in serving as display cases for the treasure within matters more, I believe.

According to John 15, it is the Lord's pleasure—and thus His purpose for us—that we bear *much* (as opposed to *some* or *more*) fruit in us. That means Christlikeness; that means the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control (Galatians 5:22). So whether we are engaged in paid work or evangelizing on street corners, changing diapers or driving in traffic, putting Jesus on display is the most important thing. To do that, we need to continually immerse ourselves in His presence and His word, and hang around His people who are also immersing themselves in His presence and His word. Right along with spiritual fruit is the topic of <u>spiritual</u> <u>gifts</u>. Finding God's personal purpose for us will involve discovering which of the spiritual gifts He has given each one of us, and using them to build up the body of Christ and bless others. (They are found in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 and 1 Peter 4.)

And finally, 2 Corinthians 2 offers a delightful word picture of Christ-followers serving as "a sweet aroma of Christ to God" the Father, as well as bringing the fragrance of knowing Christ to people who are either being saved or perishing. That, too, is part of our purpose in life. I think that if we focus on what God has already told us pleases Him, obeying the commands He has already given His children, we'll get to the point of looking in the rear-view mirror of life and discovering, "Oh, that was my personal purpose! Cool!"

This blog post originally appeared at <u>blogs.bible.org/whats-</u> <u>my-purpose-in-life</u> on Aug. 14, 2012.

What's the Meaning of Life?

Former Probe staffer Jerry Solomon explains how Christianity answers the biggest question of them all: What is the meaning of life?

Cathy has been married to her husband Dan for twenty years and is the mother of two teenagers. She is very involved in family, church, and community activities. Many consider her to be the model of one that "has it together," so to speak. Unknown to her family and her many friends, lately she has been thinking a lot about her lifestyle. As a result, she has even questioned whether there is any ultimate meaning or purpose underlying her busyness. At lunch one day she finds herself in an intimate conversation with a good friend named Sarah. Even though they have never talked about such things, Cathy decides to see how Sarah will respond to her questioning. Lets eavesdrop on their conversation.

Cathy: Sarah, I've been doing some serious thinking lately.

Sarah: Is something wrong?

Cathy: I don't know that I would say something is wrong. I just don't know what to make of these thoughts I've been having.

Sarah: What thoughts?

Cathy: This may sound like Im going off the deep end or something, but I promise you Im not. Ive just started asking some really heavy questions. And I haven't told another soul about it.

Sarah: Well, tell me! You know you can trust me.

Cathy: Okay. But you promise not to laugh or blow it off?

Sarah: Stop being so defensive. Just say it!

Cathy: Sarah, why are you here? I mean, what is your purpose in life?

Sarah: (She pauses before responding flippantly.) You're right, you have gone off the deep end.

Cathy: Sarah, I need you to be serious with me here!

Sarah: Okay! I'm sorry! I'm just drawing a blank. Actually, I try not to think about that question.

Cathy: Yeah, well, denying it doesn't work anymore. It just keeps rolling around in my head.

Sarah: Cant you talk to Dan about it?

Cathy: I've thought about it, but I don't want him to think there's something wrong between *us*.

Sarah: Well, what about talking to your pastor? I bet he'd have some answers.

Cathy: Yeah, I've thought about that too. Maybe I will.

Is Cathy really "weird," or is she an example of people that rub shoulders with us each day? And what about Sarah? Was her nervous response typical of how most of us would respond if we were asked questions about meaning and purpose?

James Dobson relates an intriguing story about a remarkable seventeen-year-old girl who achieved a perfect score on both sections of the "Scholastic Achievement Test, and a perfect on the tough University of California acceptance index. Never in history has anyone accomplished this intellectual feat, which is almost staggering to contemplate." [1] Interestingly, though, when a reporter "asked her, What is the meaning of life? she replied, I have no idea. I would like to know myself."[2]

This intellectually brilliant young lady has something in common with Cathy and Sarah, doesn't she? She is able to understand complicated subject matter, but she has no idea if life has any meaning.

Our goal in this essay is to see if there is an answer for them, as well as all of us.

The Questions Around Us

As I was driving to my office one day I heard a dramatic radio advertisement for a book. It began something like this: "Would you like to find meaning in life?" As I listened to the remainder of the ad I realized that the books author was focusing on New Age concepts of purpose and meaning. But the striking thing about what was said was that the advertisers obviously believed that they could get the attention of the radio audience by asking about meaning in life. Some may think it is advertising suicide to open an ad with such a question. Or perhaps the author and her publicists are on to something that "strikes a chord" with many people in our culture.

Questions of meaning and purpose are a part of the mental landscape as we enter a new millennium. Some contend this has not always been the case, but that such questions are an unprecedented legacy of the upheavals of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. $\{3\}$ Others assert that such questions are a result of mans rejection of God. $\{4\}$

Even though most of us don't make such issues a part of our normal conversations, the questions tend to lurk around us. They can be heard in songs, movies, books, magazines, and many other media that permeate our lives. For example, Jackson Browne, an exceptionally reflective songwriter of the 60s and 70s, wrote these haunting lyrics in a song entitled *For a Dancer*:

Into a dancer you have grown
From a seed somebody else has thrown
Go ahead and throw
Some seeds of your own
And somewhere between the time you arrive
And the time you go
May lie a reason you were alive....{5}

Russell Banks, the author of *Affliction* and *The Sweet Hereafter*, both of which became Oscar-nominated films, has this to say about his work: "I'm not a morbid man. In my writing, I'm just trying to describe the world as straightforwardly as I can. I think most lives are desperate and painful, despite surface appearances. If you consider anyone's life for long, you find its without meaning."<u>{6}</u>

Woody Allen, the film writer, director, and actor, has consistently populated his scripts with characters who exchange dialogue concerning meaning and purpose. In *Hannah and Her Sisters* a character named Mickey says, "Do you realize what a thread were all hanging by? Can you understand how meaningless everything is? Everything. I gotta get some answers."{7}

Even television ads have focused on meaning, although in a flippant manner. A few years ago you could watch Michael Jordan running across hills and valleys in order to find a guru. When Jordan finds him he asks, "What is the meaning of life?" The guru answers with a maxim that leads to the product that is the real focus of Jordan's quest.

Even though such illustrations can be ridiculous, maybe they serve to lead us beyond the surface of our subject. We often get nervous when we are encouraged to delve into subject matter that might stretch us. When we get involved in conversations that go beyond the more mundane things of everyday life we may tend to get tense and defensive. Actually, this can be a good thing. The Christian shouldn't fear such conversations. Indeed, I'm confident that if we go beyond the surface, we can find peace and hope.

Beyond the Surface

Listen to the sober words of a famous writer of the twentieth century:

There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide. Judging whether life is worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy.... I see many people die because they judge that life is not worth living. I see others paradoxically getting killed for the ideas or illusions that give them a reason for living (what is called a reason for living is an excellent reason for dying). I therefore conclude that the meaning of life is the most urgent of questions. <a>[8]

These phrases indicate that Albert Camus, author of *The Plague, The Stranger,* and *The Myth of Sisyphus*, was not afraid to go beyond the surface. Camus was bold in exposing the thoughts many were having during his lifetime. In fact, his world view made it obligatory. He was struggling with questions of meaning in light of what some called the "death of God." That is, if there is no God, can we find meaning? Many have concluded that the answer is a resounding "No!" If true, this means that one who believes there is no God is not living consistently with that belief.

William Lane Craig, one of the great Christian thinkers of our time, states that:

Man cannot live consistently and happily as though life were ultimately without meaning, value or purpose. If we try to live consistently within the atheistic worldview, we shall find ourselves profoundly unhappy. If instead we manage to live happily, it is only by giving the lie to our worldview. <u>{9}</u>

Francis Schaeffer agrees with ' analysis, but makes even bolder assertions. He also maintains that the Christian can close the hopeless gap that is created in a persons godless worldview. Listen to what he wrote:

It is impossible for any non-Christian individual or group to be consistent to their system in logic or in practice. Thus, when you face twentieth-century man, whether he is brilliant or an ordinary man of the street, a man of the university or the docks, you are facing a man in tension; and it is this tension which works on your behalf as you speak to him.{10}

What happens when we go "beyond the surface" in order to find meaning? Can a Christian worldview stand up to the challenge? I believe it can, but we must stop and think of whether we are willing to accept the challenge. David Henderson, a pastor and writer, gives us reason to pause and consider our response. He writes:

Our lives, like our Daytimers, are busy, busy, busy, full of things to do and places to go and people to see. Many of us, convinced that the opposite of an empty life is a full schedule, remain content to press on and ignore the deeper questions. Perhaps it is out of fear that we stuff our lives to the walls-fear that, were we to stop and ask the big questions, we would discover there are no satisfying answers after all.{11}

Let's jettison any fear and continue our investigation. There are satisfying answers. It is not necessary to "stuff our lives to the walls" in order to escape questions of meaning and purpose. God has spoken to us. Let us begin to pursue His answers.

Eternity in Our Hearts

The book of Ecclesiastes contains numerous phrases that have entered our discourse. One of those phrases states that God "has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart. . ." (3:11). What a fascinating statement! Actually, the first part of the verse can be just as accurately translated "beautiful in its time." Thus "a harmony of purpose and a beneficial supremacy of control pervade all issues of life to such an extent that they rightly challenge our admiration." $\{12\}$ The second part of the verse indicates that "man has a deep-seated sense of eternity, of purposes and destinies." [13]But man can't fathom the vastness of eternal things, even when he believes in the God of eternity. As a result, all people live with what some call a "God-shaped hole." Stephen Evans believes this hole can be understood through "the desire for eternal life, the desire for eternal meaning, and the desire for eternal love:"<u>{14}</u>

The desire for *eternal life* is the most evident manifestation of the need for God. Deep in our hearts we feel death should not be, was not meant to be. The second dimension of our craving for eternity is the desire for *eternal meaning*. We want lives that are eternally meaningful. We crave eternity, and earthly loves resemble eternity enough to kindle our deepest love. Yet earthly loves are not eternal. Our sense that love is the clue to what its all about is right on target, but earthly love itself merely points us in the right direction. What we want is an *eternal love*, a love that loves us unconditionally, accepts us as we are, while helping us to become all we can become. In short, we want *God*, the God of Christian faith.{15}

We must trust God for what we cannot see and understand. Or, to put it another way, we continue to live knowing there is meaning, but we struggle to know exactly what it is at all times. We are striving for what the Bible refers to as our future glorification (Rom. 8:30). "There is something selfdefeating about human desire, in that what is desired, when achieved, seems to leave the desire unsatisfied." {16} For example, we attempt to find meaning while searching for what is beautiful. C.S. Lewis referred to this in a sermon entitled *The Weight of Glory*:

The books or the music in which we thought the beauty was located will betray us if we trust to them; it was not *in* them, it only came *through* them, and what came through them was longing. These things—the beauty, the memory of our own past—are good images of what we really desire; but if they are mistaken for the thing itself they turn into dumb idols, breaking the hearts of their worshippers. For they are not the thing itself; they are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not heard, news from a country we have not visited.<u>{17}</u>

Lewis's remarkable prose reminds us that meaning must be given

to us. "Meaning is never intrinsic; it is always derivative. If my life itself is to have meaning (or *a* meaning), it thus must derive its meaning from some sort of purposive, intentional activity. It must be endowed with meaning."<u>{18}</u> Thus we return to God, the giver of meaning.

Meaning: Gods Gift

Think of all the wonderful gifts that God has given you. No doubt you can come up with a lengthy record of God's goodness. Does your list include meaning or purpose in life? Most people wouldn't think of meaning as part of Gods goodness to us. But perhaps we should. This is because "only a being like God—a creator of all who could eventually, in the words of the New Testament, work all things together for good—only this sort of being could guarantee a completeness and permanency of meaning for human lives."{19}So how did God accomplish this? The answer rests in His amazing love for us through His Son, Jesus Christ.

Consider the profound words of Carl F.H. Henry: "the eternal and self-revealed Logos, incarnate in Jesus Christ, is the foundation of all meaning."{20} Bruce Lockerbie puts it like this: "The divine nature manifesting itself in the physical form of Jesus of Nazareth is, in fact, the integrating principle to which all life adheres, the focal point from which all being takes its meaning, the source of all coherence in the universe. Around him and him alone all else may be said to radiate. He is the Cosmic Center."{21}

Picture a bicycle. When you ride one you are putting your weight on a multitude of spokes that radiate from a hub. All the spokes meet at the center and rotate around it. The bicycle moves based upon the center. Thus it is with Christ. He is the center around whom we move and find meaning. Our focus is on Him.

When the apostle Paul reflected on meaning and purpose in his

life in Philippians 3, he came to this conclusion (emphases
added):

7...whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, 9 and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, 10 that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; 11 in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

Did you notice how Christ was central to what Paul had to say about both his past and present? And did you notice that he used phrases such as "knowing Christ," or "that I may gain Christ?" Such statements appear to be crucial to Paul's sense of meaning and purpose. Paul wants "to know" Christ intimately, which means he wants to know by experience. "Paul wants to come to know the Lord Jesus in that fulness of experimental knowledge which is only wrought by being like Him."<u>{22}</u>

Personally, Paul's thoughts are important words of encouragement in my life. God through Christ gives meaning and purpose to me. And until I am glorified, I will strive to know Him and be like Him. Praise God for Jesus Christ, His gift of meaning!

Notes

- 1. James Dobson, Focus on the Family Newsletter (May 1996).
- 2. Ibid.
- 3. Gerhard Sauter, The Question of Meaning, trans. and ed.

Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982). 4. Charles R. Swindoll, *Living on the Ragged Edge* (Waco, TX: Word, 1985). 5. Jackson Browne, "For a Dancer," in James F. Harris, Philosophy at 33 1/3 rpm: Themes of Classic Rock Music (Chicago: Open Court, 1993), 68. 6. Russell Banks, in Jerome Weeks, "Continental Divide," The Dallas Morning News (2 March 1999), 2C. 7. Woody Allen, Hannah and Her Sisters, in Thomas V. Morris, Making Sense of It All: Pascal and the Meaning of Life (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 54. 8. Albert Camus, The Myth of Sisyphus, trans. Justin O'Brien (New York: Vintage, 1960), 3-4. 9. William Lane Craig, Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1994), 71. 10. Francis A. Schaeffer, The God Who Is There (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1968), 122. 11. David W. Henderson, Culture Shift: Communicating God's Truth to Our Changing World (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998), 186. 12. H.C. Leupold, *Exposition of Ecclesiastes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1952), 90. 13. Ibid., 91. 14. C. Stephen Evans, Why Believe? Reason and Mystery as Pointers to God, revised ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 58-60. 15. Ibid. 16. Alistair McGrath, A Cloud of Witnesses (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 127. 17. C.S. Lewis, in "The Weight of Glory," quoted in Alistair McGrath, A Cloud of Witnesses, 127. 18. Morris, 57. 19. Ibid., 62. 20. Carl F.H. Henry, God Revelation and Authority, Vol. III (Waco, TX: Word, 1979), 195.

21. D. Bruce Lockerbie, The Cosmic Center: The Supremacy of Christ in a Secular Wasteland (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1986),127-128.
22. Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest's Word Studies From the Greek New Testament, Volume Two (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1973), 93.

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"I Have No Problem Deriving Meaning in Life as an Evolved Biological Organism"

Dear Raymond Bohlin,

I am also a graduate of the University of Illinois and found your article on the Probe Ministries website interesting reading. I was surprised at the low-guality answers you had received from evolutionary biologists about morality and meaning. To me it is absolutely wonderful, amazing, and aweinspiring that you and I, or any human beings can have actual conversations and exchange ideas. It is amazing to me because I believe that we are a result of evolution unguided by any supernatural god. To me there can be deep conviction that we are biological organisms and that there is no god while also maintaining a deep sense of meaning and purpose. It seems to me that if you believe God created everything around us, then He did an embarrassingly poor job. Why have around 50% of our DNA be wasted garbage from a violent evolutionary past? If people are created in God's image, why give them an appendix? Surely if you were truly an all-powerful being capable of anything, you should have done much better. But, if we are a

result of random chance and evolutionary process unguided by a supernatural power, then the world is amazing. It is aweinspiring to have such amazing diversity of life and to have a species with the power to be aware of itself.That 50% of our DNA actually works becomes amazing and wonderful testimony to the glory of the evolutionary process. If we are merely a creation of an all-powerful god, then we are clearly his rejects, because he should have been able to do much better. But if we are a result of an evolutionary process then we are amazing and valuable.

Similarly, I see the same problem with meaning. You claim that if we are "merely" biological then there is no real meaning. I would argue just the opposite. If we are merely the result of a supernatural god, then the best we can do is discover God's predetermined meaning. We are unimportant and can never create any meaning in our lives. But if we are biological organisms in the absence of a supernatural god, then we are the creators of meaning. We are the meaning pioneers who must establish meaning, value, and morality as we go. To me, my life seems so much more meaningful if I feel that I can create meaning and values, and be one of the first species to truly experience love, beauty, and understanding. If I am just some all powerful-god's creation, then my personal life seems meaningless because all meaning has been pre-established by some supernatural force beyond my meager comprehension. To say we are "merely" or "just" biological to me is insulting. Being biological does not prevent me from having as much meaning and purpose as I want in my life. But now, the responsibility lies on me. If I have a meaningless life, then it is my own fault for not creating any meaning. I personally find deep meaning and purpose in the love, compassion, and discovery of ideas that I share with my fellow humans who are also creating meaning and purpose in their own lives.

Whether you consider the answers I received from evolutionary biologists to be disappointing or not, they are the standard

answers. Your willingness to reach for something more and create meaning is what I would categorize as the third response, that of an existential leap for hope and meaning.

But first to your criticisms of the Creator's workmanship. Please be aware that the previous estimates of useless DNA were closer to 90%. I would not be so quick to assume that the remaining 50% unaccounted for will remain so. We have only begun to unravel the mystery of DNA and its organization. My prediction is that there will be little left without some function after the next 100 years. One of the principal geneticists with Celera Genomics, the private company that arrived at its own independent human DNA sequence, was quoted in the San Francisco Chronicle saying,

"'What really astounds me is the architecture of life,' he said. 'The system is extremely complex. It's like it was designed.'. . . There's a huge intelligence there. I don't see that as being unscientific. Others may, but not me." (February 19, *SFC*, Tom Abate, "Human Genome Map Has Scientists Talking About the Divine").

So what we already know reveals not some clumsily ordered mess thrown together by natural selection, but a highly ordered and specified arrangement.

Over 100 years ago, there were dozens of reputed vestigial human structures such as the appendix, tonsils, and tailbone, but all of these have since yielded a function. The tonsils and appendix are members of the integrated immune system. Can we live without them? Yes, but we are better off with them. Surgeons rarely take out the appendix anymore as part of routine abdominal surgery unless absolutely necessary. The more we learn about our bodies the more complex and truly amazing they are. The power of adult stem cells is proving to be truly amazing and they have resided inside us all the time. I think it is rather presumptuous of anyone to suggest that they could have done a better job of designing our bodies. Our knowledge of how everything works is still progressing. What may seem sloppy today may soon be revealed as the right combination of characteristics to achieve an amazing design. That at least seems to be the pattern. We used to think cells were simple accumulations of membrane, protoplasm, and protein. The last sixty years have revealed ever increasing levels of complexity and organization never even dreamed of. I just don't see how you can view our bodies as rejects. What would you change? What could have been done better in your mind?

If we are the product of an evolutionary process than we truly are amazing. I will grant you that. So amazing that I would suggest that we are alone in the universe. The odds are so stacked against any kind of unguided evolution producing sentient beings such as ourselves, that there just isn't anybody else out there.

I don't understand your revelry in the ability to create meaning. What are we to create it out of? Nothing? Something doesn't come from nothing. Meaning grabbed out of thin air is still air no matter what you call it. In an evolutionary world view all that matters is survival and reproduction and as I said in the article, this ultimately fades away at death which is nothing more than extinction. So what good is the meaning you create? It is ultimately an illusion. A survival device and nothing more. How is that exciting? I am sorry if you are insulted by the characterization of being merely biological, but again, in an evolutionary worldview, that is reality. Your brain has evolved only as an aid to survival and reproduction, not as a truth- and meaning-creating machine.

If we share this meaning and purpose creating capacity with our fellow humans, certainly we arrive at different conclusions. If our conclusions are different, how do we judge who is right? Or does it really even matter? I would suggest that it doesn't matter at all. You are left with the postmodern dictum of "it may be true for you but it's not true for me." The statement is self-contradictory because it assumes that at least that statement is universally true, but how can it be?

Theism can provide true meaning and purpose through the One who is self-existent. Why you think God's assignment of true meaning and purpose somehow cheapens it baffles me. If I were to create a robot, I the creator determine its function and usefulness, not the machine itself. Remember also, that something must be eternal. As I said earlier, something does not come from nothing. So the fact that something is here means something has to have always been here. That something can be either material or immaterial. The material universe, according to current Big Bang cosmology, had a beginning. Therefore it certainly seems reasonable to assume that God is eternal. I don't suggest that the Big Bang proves God, but it does make the assumption eminently reasonable.

You may choose to create your own meaning if you like, but I cannot see how it can be anything but an illusion in an evolutionary, purely materialistic worldview.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, Ph.D. Probe Ministries