

Is ultimate satisfaction, meaning, & purpose even possible?  
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# HOW TO RECOVER FROM THE GREAT DISAPPOINTMENTS OF LIFE

# Answer these questions:

- Do you long for truth?
- Do you long for “final,” “ultimate” answers?
- Do you long for happiness?
- Have you found “certainty?”
- Does “fixed” happiness seem to elude you?
- Have your expectations for truth and happiness been crushed by unforeseen circumstances?

# Consider:

- Have you discovered that what you thought was “true” was really a “lie.”
- Have you experienced the pain of realizing that what you thought could make you happy generated disappointment if not pain?
- Do you continue to find yourself going from one hobby to another, one job to another, one relationship to another, one religion to another, or one philosophy to another, not finding what will satisfy these longings for truth and happiness?
- Or have you “given up” searching for truth and happiness... and so you just live with the reality of incompleteness... experiencing these longings believing they can’t ever be satisfied?

# Can we even recover?

- Is it even possible to recover from...
  - Disappointment in marriage and children
  - Lies and deception
  - Personal loss
  - Lack of fulfillment in our jobs, relationships, religions, philosophies, and social and political causes
  - Broken dreams
  - Shattered expectations
  - Tragedies
  - Lack of meaning and purpose
  - Reoccurring dissatisfaction?





**Consider this quote from philosopher Blaise Pascal:**

We desire truth and find in ourselves nothing but uncertainty.

We seek happiness and find only wretchedness and death.

We are incapable of not desiring truth and happiness and incapable of either certainty or happiness.

~ *Pensees*, 401(437).

# Closer look at this seeming paradox of our human condition:

- We universally long for:
  - Truth
  - Happiness
- We universally find in physical reality:
  - Uncertainty
  - Wretchedness and death

## We naturally long for truth & happiness:

“Since no one can change human nature, no one can make us stop desiring truth and happiness; and no mere human being can give us truth or happiness. We may mediate these two things, but we cannot create them; we are aqueducts, not fountains” (Peter Kreeft, *Christianity for Modern Pagans: Pascal’s Pensées*, 48).



See C. S. Lewis,  
*The Great Divorce*, chapter 11  
for a thoughtful discussion why  
we can't make each other really  
happy for long.

# Consider:

- But I posit to you that one of the reasons why we can't satisfy those longings, why we experience great disappointments in this life and why we can't seem to find lasting satisfaction is because we have demanded too much from them. In other words, we falsely assumed or were led to believe that people, government, relationships, objects, and vocations would satisfy the deepest longings for truth and happiness.
- Anytime we place our faith in "earthly" sources we are bound to experience dissatisfaction, lack of fulfillment, loss, and tragedy.



Peter Kreeft puts it this way:

“To place divine experiences on human shoulders is an infallible recipe for ruin and bitter disappointment” (Ibid., 48).

This is particularly poignant of people who only look at and trust a naturalistic worldview where the only thing that is real is what is materialistic, experimentally and physically observable, and that we can create better people and better societies from this source and this source alone.

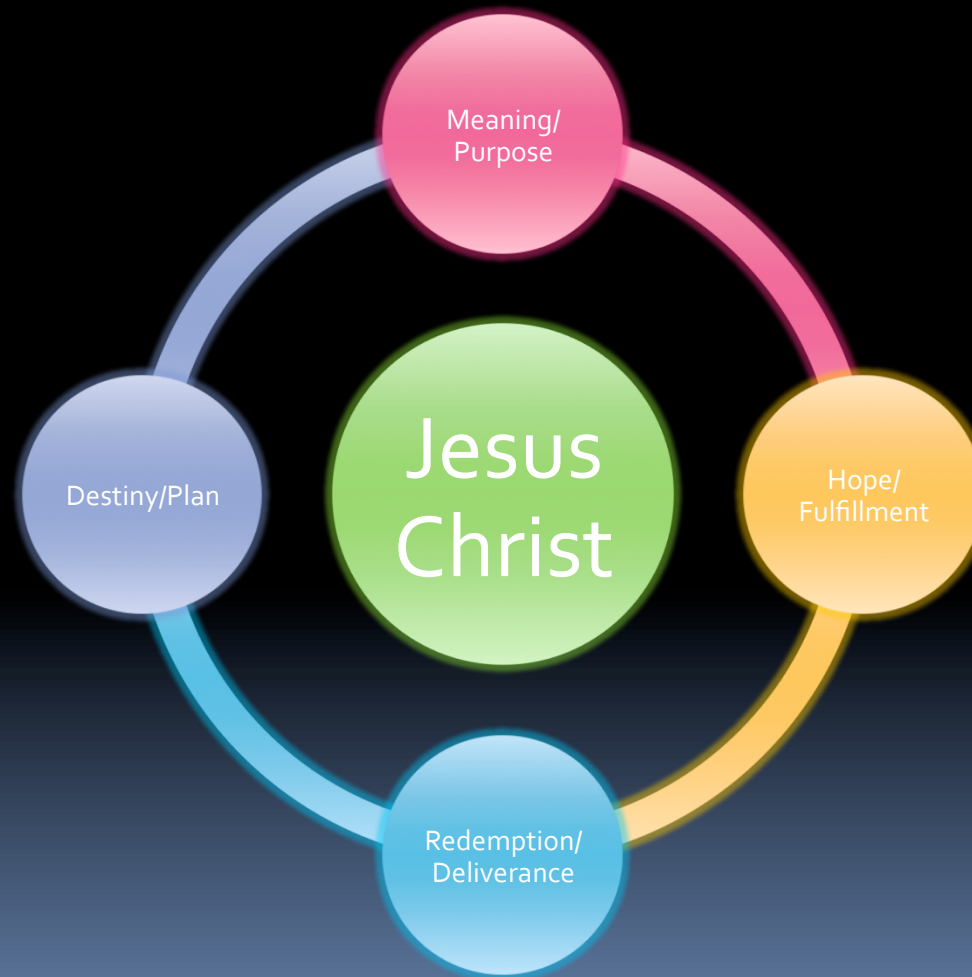
## Kreeft writes:

“Science and technology shield man from a clear knowledge of these four fundamental truths of Pascal, for science (or rather scientism) offers us the illusion that we now know the truth when in fact we only know some truths, and technology has given us comforts but not contentment. We have confused these two things; that’s why these two servants have turned into our masters, like Dr. Frankenstein’s monster, more and more in the three centuries since Pascal’s words were written” (Ibid., 49).

## Kreeft comments:

“These are the four fundamental truths, the *data*, about the human condition always and everywhere. No philosophy that ignores them is worth a first glance; no philosophy that has no explanation for them is worth a second. Ultimately, no philosophy except Christianity is worth a third glance and our belief, only Christianity has a satisfactory explanation for these four facts” (Ibid., 48).

But in Jesus Christ, the God-Man, we can find ultimate truth and happiness. He broke into time and history and offers you lasting:





Look to God for truth & happiness...the eternal aspects of reality. God is the fountain for truth and happiness.



Appropriately appreciate physical aspects of life but do not demand from them more than what they can possibly give. They were never designed to give you ultimate, meaning, purpose, fulfillment, hope, and satisfaction.

# Therefore:

- If you place your faith in that which is physical and earthly, then you are placing your hope, purpose, meaning, and purpose in that which is transitory, subject to change, bankruptcy, and breakdown. Like vapor from a cup of coffee, they will dissipate before your eyes.
- But I submit to you, that if you place your faith in Jesus Christ, who is God, who died on the cross for your sins and rose again, your reality of spiritual incompleteness will be fulfilled.
- And if you will continue to look to Him as a believer for your answers and not allow yourself to become diverted by business or distracted by earthly pleasures, then your “joy” will be full, no matter what trial or difficulty comes your ways.
- Therefore, consider Jesus Christ. Look to Him. Scrutinize His life, words, and ministry. Invite you to study the Gospel of John which is found in the New Testament.