

## “And What Then?”

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by Bill Crews

### *What are you planning to do with your life?*

If we “aim” at nothing in life, that’s exactly what we will “hit.” If we have no goals in life, we will reach none. If we have no purpose in life, we will fulfill none. Many people live aimless, goalless and purposeless lives and wonder why they have so many troubles and problems and so little joy and contentment.

On the other hand there are those who aim at the wrong things, set goals that are wrong, and entertain purposes that are wrong (either things that are sinful and foolish or things that are not that important and should not be given priority). Fame, notoriety, human praise, popularity, riches, affluence, power, authority, influence, physical feats, athletic success, literary success, artistic success, political success, physical and sensual pleasures are goals that are either sinful and foolish or not so important that they should be given priority over all else. All of these pertain to this life alone. They do not allow or encourage one to look beyond this life.

Since we are creatures of God, made in His image, accountable and answerable to Him; since we had a divine origin (Genesis 1-2; Acts 17:24-25), have a divine purpose (to glorify God, to please, to worship and serve God, to fear and obey God — Ecclesiastes 12: 13 -14; Micah 6:8; Acts 10:3 4-35; Matthew 4:10; 1 Corinthians 10:31), and will have a destiny (heaven or hell forever) that will be announced to us at the last day when God judges us through His Son (Romans 2:16; Acts 17:30-31; John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 5:10); it would be foolish and vain for us to plan our lives and use our lives without keeping these things in mind. It isn’t wrong to engage in some labor for food (and other necessities), but we must put more emphasis upon spiritual food (John 6:27). It isn’t wrong to lay up some treasures upon the earth, but we must put more emphasis upon laying up treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21). It isn’t wrong to give some attention to material things that can be seen, but we must give greater attention to spiritual things that cannot be seen — except with the eyes of understanding and by faith (2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Ephesians 1:18). It isn’t wrong to seek and to set our minds on the things that are upon the earth to a degree, but to a greater degree we must seek and set our minds upon the things that are above (Colossians 3:1-2). All of these passages have to do with getting our priorities straight.

Go ahead and have your aims, set your goals, plan ahead, decide what you are going to do with your life (the sooner, the better), but be sure that you make the most important things first and that you plan far enough ahead — all the way into eternity. I recall a story that I read almost sixty-five years ago as I was starting out as a preacher. It was about an old man (which I have now become) questioning a young man in his adolescent years about what the young man was going to do with the rest of his life. Each time the young man would give an answer, the old man would then ask, “**And what then?**” By his persistence the old man was able to move the young man through several stages of his life — graduate from high school, obtain a college education, secure a job, find a suitable mate and get married, have children and rear them, stay with his job until he reached retirement, use up his twilight years of retirement, grow feeble and die and be buried by his loved ones and friends. But when the old man again, for the last time, asked, “**And what then?**” the young man had no answer to give. And do you know why? He had said nothing about his soul, his God, his real purpose in life, the Bible or his destiny beyond this life. Don’t be like this! Plan your eternal destiny first, and let it remain first throughout your life. Because of the love, grace and mercy of God, because of the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, as a sacrifice for your sins, because of the revelation of the gospel of Christ, you can be made right with God, continue to meet with His approval as long as you live, and die in the Lord with the hope of eternal life where God is when time as we now know it has ended. Give God His place in your life and you will be happy and content here and hereafter; leave Him out and . . . . .

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