

The Gables - Why are We Here? 2010-08-01

Rick: Hi, Donna.

Donna: Hi, Rick.

Rick: How are you doing this fine evening?

Donna: Oh, just fine. How are you?

Rick: Fine. Donna, have you ever thought about why we're here on earth?

Donna: Hmm... no, not really... let me think about it for a minute... Are we here to shop?

Rick: [Sigh] Well, that wasn't quite the answer I was looking for, but no... try again.

Donna: Oh. We're here to shop 'til we drop?

Rick: [Shakes his head] No, not exactly.

Donna: Well, since this is a Bible study, I figured it must be something about what we do until we drop.

Rick: Well, yes, I guess that's true. You're getting closer.

Donna: Oh, good. Why are all these people here?

Rick: It's a Bible study, remember?

Donna: Oh, yes. That's right. Do I have to act super spiritual or something?

Rick: We'll I guess so. You are a deaconess in the church after all. Dorothy might call the pastor if you don't behave yourself.

Donna: Well, that wouldn't be very nice. Why would she do something like that?

Rick: Never mind. She won't. Don't worry about it. Can we get back to my question?

Donna: What question?

Rick: [Sigh] Why are we here on earth?

Donna: What kind of question is that?

Rick: Well, it's a very important one.

Donna: Why?

Rick: Well, if you don't know where you're going, you won't like where you end up.

Donna: What in the world does that mean?

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Rick: It means that you have to have a plan for your life. You have to have goals. You have to do things that give your life meaning.

Donna: Oh, like getting our house fixed up, or going on nice trips and vacations, or going to parties with friends, or having great dinners, or going to exercise, or going to the movies?

Rick: Do those things give your life meaning?

Donna: Well, sort of. They're fun and they're important to me.

Rick: Sure they're fun and they are important, but ultimately, who do they benefit?

Donna: [Places her hand on her chin] Hmm... Me, I guess.

Rick: Yes. And do these things give your life meaning? Do they make you feel fulfilled? Do they make you feel like your life is worth living? Do they leave a legacy for others?

Donna: Well, no, not really.

Rick: Do you want to know the real reason why we're here?

Donna: Sure.

Rick: To give glory to God!

Donna: To give glory to God?

Rick: Yes.

Donna: And how do we do that?

Rick: That's a great question. We give glory to God by giving our life to Him and letting Him do what he wants with it.

Donna: That sounds kind of scary.

Rick: Well, only for someone who doesn't know God or fully trust Him yet. Actually he has a wonderful plan for your life.

Donna: He does?

Rick: Yes. It says so in the Bible.

Donna: Where?

Rick: In Jeremiah 29. He's telling the Israelites what He will do for them when the seventy years of exile in Babylon are over and they return to Israel. Go ahead. Take a look.

Donna: OK. [Reads from the Bible]

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- *Jeremiah 29:11-13: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹² Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*

Oh, so God does have plans for me!

Rick: Yes. But you need to turn your life over to him. You need to lose your life to find it.

Donna: I need to lose my life to find it? What does that mean?

Rick: Well, Jesus explained it in all four gospels. Here's what it says in Luke:

- *Luke 9:24: For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.*

Donna: [Pause] Can you say that again?

Rick: Sure.

- *Luke 9:24: For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.*

Donna: So, if we just live for ourselves, we'll die an unhappy, unfulfilled life. But if we turn our lives over to God, he'll make our lives into something beautiful.

Rick: Yes, but it's more than that. Jesus wants us, as His disciples, to be totally committed to Him, even to the point of death.

Donna: I see.

Rick: But yes, by turning your life over him, He will make you into everything you were intended to be, and use you to bring glory to Himself.

Donna: I still don't get how we bring glory to God.

Rick: Well, it's two fold. First we have to acknowledge before Him that we are sinners and need a savior, who is the Lord Jesus Christ. We also must repent of our sins. That means to renounce them, to turn away from them. Then God will accept us as his adopted sons and daughters. It brings glory to God when we want to follow Him and become His child.

Donna: OK. What's the second way we bring glory to God?

Rick: God gives each of us gifts. The way we use those gifts is our present back to Him.

Donna: Oh. I have the gift of Helps. If I use it to help others in some way, then I'm giving glory to God?

Rick: Correct.

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Donna: I suppose watching television doesn't bring glory to God.

Rick: I don't think so. But I guess if you were ministering to someone while you were doing it; that might be bringing glory to God. Of course, it's OK to relax once in a while – we all need to rest. But you bring glory to God when you are *doing* things for God or for others.

I have the Gift of Administration. I try to use that gift at the church by serving on strategy committees.

Donna: Do you only give glory to God by what you do at the church?

Rick: No, you should strive to give glory to God in everything you do – at work, at home, at recreational activities, in how you treat others – everything. Here's what 1 Corinthians 10:31 says:

- **1 Corinthians 10:31:** So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

Donna: So, we can give glory to God not only through how we use our gifts, but also in everything we do?

Rick: Yes.

Donna: So, I can give glory to God in how I perform my massage therapy sessions, or in my painting, or in my parenting, or in my stewardship of the possessions God has given me? Everything?

Rick: Yes. Billy Graham said that there may be some people who have prayed for his ministry over the years, that may get greater rewards in heaven than he, because they were more faithful to what God called them to do than he was.

Donna: Everyone can pray for others, right.

Rick: Right. Everyone, as long as they're still alive, has a ministry that God has called them to do. They just need to turn their lives over to Him so He can use them for His glory.

Donna: Amen.