

Sitting in the waiting room I was deeply engaged in the activity the name implies, waiting. Looking through the stack of magazines I was drawn to one with the following teaser on the cover: "Science answers the most critical questions for the 21st century." Intrigued, I began turning to the article eager to learn the questions, the answers to which were going to dominate the minds of the worlds greatest scientists for the next thousand years or so.

Imagining this to be some sort of quiz, I made a mental list of MY most important questions for the new millennium. I was attempting to match wits with the greatest thinkers in the world. No doubt this was my opportunity to show my mental prowess, quick wit, and amazing grasp of the "real questions of life." I was almost lamenting the fact that after scoring high on this "quiz" I would remain undiscovered and underappreciated since the reality was that I, of course, was in a waiting room.

Upon finding the article, I read the headline indicating there were "Six question that will define our future." Those questions in the order they were given, are as follows: 1. Will humans survive to the next millennium? 2. Does life exist beyond earth? 3. Can we stop aging? 4. Will we clone a human? 5. Will we control the weather? 6. How did the universe begin and how will it end?

I have to admit. I was underwhelmed! Comparing my mental questions to those I was reading, not only did I not set the curve on this quiz, I totally blanked. I mean zip, zero, not a point. I found out immediately I was not in the same class as the world's greatest thinkers. I could have just asked my kids and I'm confident they would have informed me of such, without nearly as much mental anguish and disappointment.

But then I started thinking. Just last week I was in another waiting room, anxiously awaiting the outcome of eight hours of surgery to remove a tumor on the brain stem of a relative. I'm quite confident the uppermost thought on her mind was not "will humans survive to the next millennium?"

I then thought of a friend who had just undergone major surgery who was in anguish because he wasn't a Christian and wasn't prepared for death. Frankly, he was not the least bit concerned if life existed on Mars, Jupiter, or the Moon.

I was reminded of a couple whose son is addicted to drugs, who is in a battle for control of his own brain, and I'm sure the question of "can we stop aging?" would not have been on their list of critical questions either.

I thought of a young lady now in Arizona at a half-way house trying her best to overcome her seven year addiction to anorexia and bulimia. I have no doubt the most critical question on her mind and in the minds of her parents is not, "will we clone a human?" in the next thousand years.

My mind continued to wander and I thought of a young couple in Nashville, Tennessee, whose baby is about to be born with a serious physical problem. For them, "will we control the weather?" is such a ludicrous question it wouldn't even rank in the top 100.

And finally I thought of a wonderful lady who is recovering from a divorce, whose sister is seriously ill, both of who need our prayers desperately. I'm totally confident a scientific treatise on "how did the universe begin and how will it end?" is not a question with which she is the least bit interested.

No doubt most of us would not be classed as the greatest thinkers of all time. But it obviously doesn't take a scientist to realize the most critical question in the world has been and will continue to be the question asked in the Bible in Job 14:14, "If a man die, will he live again?" Answering in the affirmative the Bible then poses the second most critical question of all time. It's found in the book of Acts, chapter 16 verse 30 and it asks, "What must I do to be saved?" Now those are questions worthy of thought, for the millennium and beyond.

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