

Why Bother? †
Or A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Eternity

I ask you. And *You*.

Why plant us on this speck of Earth when Heaven is where we belong?

Why bother?

Why bind flesh and bone to an immortal soul when they only weigh it down?

Why bother?

Why test a soul when, cast by its Maker, it's surely perfect at birth? And why test it on *this* stage when temptation has no hold on it in eternity?

I ask you. And *You*. Why bother?

This sojourn on Earth is painfully short, and just as unfair, yet seals a soul's fate for eternity. Eternity! What kind of justice is that?

Why bother with any of it? Why bother with any of it at all?

The soul's too modest Maker made it what it is, and deserves credit, and blame, for all the soul does.

There's no getting around it, so why bother?

If the future isn't fixed, if there's *more* than one possible future, each begins where the present leaves off. But if each begins where the present leaves off, if each arises out of the *same* conditions, which future happens is all up to chance.

So, whether rigged or random, the game of life's no test of a soul's worth, but a sham.

Why bother with any of it, I ask, why bother with any of it at all?

Why bother? Why bother, indeed. Forgive me but, come to think of it, perhaps no one, or nothing, ever did.

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† This question was inspired by Richard Dawkins' memorable performance at the first Beyond Belief conference held November 2006 at the Salk Institute, La Jolla, CA. For a video clip of his talk, go to <http://thesciencenetwork.org/BeyondBelief/watch/watch.php?Video=Session%203>. Inspiring, too, was inquisitive little Ally Barone of *Everybody Loves Raymond*. In the season 6 episode, "Talk to Your Daughter," she asks her dad: "If we all go to Heaven when we die, why does God want us here first?" Raymond, of course, is clueless.