

What, exactly, is meant by "the ultimate meaning of my life"?

What could very well be meant, naturally (and in some places in my writings very likely is meant), is the final consummation of my life, its "eschatological" meaning, which alone redeems it from nullity and insignificance.

But the phrase may also mean what would be better expressed by speaking instead of "the meaning of my life in its ultimate setting," or "the meaning for me of the ultimate setting of my life." In that sense, it means the meaning of my life not only in face of its final consummation, but also given the fact of its primal creation.

Accordingly, "the ultimate meaning of my life" includes my having been created with the freedom of self-creation, to realize the greatest good I possibly can for myself and my fellow creatures as my contribution to God's cause, i.e., God's own unbegun and unending self-creation. If I were not free to decide what, prior to my decision, is undecided either by God or by others, my life would make no difference, have nothing to contribute, and so on. But if the world in which I have to actualize my freedom were not an ordered world, and ordered, moreover, so that there is an optimum ratio of opportunity to risk for my actions as well as those of everyone and everything else, I likewise could make no difference, have nothing to contribute, and so on, since neither I nor anything else could even exist.

At the same time, if what I and all my fellow creatures have the opportunity to create makes a difference, has something to contribute, and so on to nothing more permanent than ourselves, then, again, our lives would be meaningless, indistinguishable from nullity and insignificance.

10 September 1999