

May 26, 2013

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

Romans Chapter 12

INTRODUCTION:

We are at the crossroads to a new chapter in the history of Greenwood Christian Church. Greg has resigned and is no longer with us. He has worked through some pretty lean times faithfully delivering scriptural teachings and messages from the Word of God. Through his efforts we have been blessed with growth and he has started a fire burning. We can feel sorry for ourselves that he is no longer with us and allow the flames to die or we can trust the Lord that His will be done and fan the flames.

As He has promised, God has been faithful to us.

Matthew 18:20

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

²⁰For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst."

Today is Memorial Day.

We must thank the few that remained faithful and worked with Greg to keep the Greenwood church going, especially in the beginning. I am sure that there are many that need to be recognized, but Roy, Carol, Linda, Kathy, and Tim would definitely be in that group.

A couple of weeks ago, I taught a lesson in Bible School about the purpose of life as a Christian. That lesson was taken from the notes to this message that I started several weeks ago.

This morning I would like to discuss the Purpose of Life.

I will start by laying out the groundwork on

- A. Why Mankind is Here and Why We are in the State that We are in.
- B. God's Purpose of Life for the World.
- C. God's Purpose for the Church.
- D. God's Purpose of Life for the Christian.
- E. God's Purpose of Life for YOU.

BODY:

A Why Mankind is Here

1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. He also created man in his image. Man was sinless had a perfect relationship with God. (Genesis chapters 1-2.)

2. Adam and Eve ate from the tree of Good and Evil and brought sin into our lives. (Genesis 3).

B. God's Purpose of Life for the WORLD.

1. Understand that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁶ All Scripture is ^[a]inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for ^[b]training in righteousness; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

2. God sent His Son to earth to die on the cross for our sins. John 3:16.

John 3:16

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that He gave His ^[a]only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

3. On the third day he resurrected from the dead.

4. The Great Commission. How can they believe unless they hear?

Matthew 28:19-20

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁹ ^[a]Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you ^[b]always, even to the end of the age."

5. God wishes that none will perish.

2 Peter 3:9

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁹The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

6. The Plan of Salvation

- a. Believe
- b. Repent
- c. Confess
- d. Be Baptised by Immersion
- e. Live a New Life

C. God's Purpose for the Church (the Body of Christ)

If we expect God to Bless this church, we must understand the scriptures and do as it says.

Romans 12:4-6a (Main Scripture)

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁴ For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *each of us is to exercise them accordingly:*

Beware of backsliding and becoming lackadaisical in our journey with Christ.

I kept considering that I was leading a moral life (not drinking, smoking, drugs, murder, adultery, etc.) , but you can be the most moral person on planet earth and still not be saved.

I slipped away from the church and gradually slipped away from God. It was so slow that I did not even realize how far I had slipped away.

Less Prayer

Less Reading

Not listening to God speaking to you. **To Him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.**

What I missed from not attending church.

1. From fellowship you can expect to be encouraged by God's people.

Hebrews 10:23-25

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; 24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

2. From the study of God's word you can expect to be spoken to by the Lord and gain faith.
3. Through song you can give praise to God.
4. From giving you can give back to God from His blessings.
5. Through prayer you can expect God to be at work in your life.
6. Through communion you can remember God's sacrifice for our sins.
7. From worship you can expect to sense the presence of the Lord.

ILLUSTRATION:

While I was away from the church, I keep hearing "Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is" over and over and over and over. Missing the constant encouragement and the closeness to the Lord through constant prayer, meditating on God's word, and humbling myself to ask the Lord to mold me and make me after His

will and waiting patiently to hear him speak to me was bad enough, but I believe the thing that bothers me the most is knowing that there are many people that I could have led to the Lord who may still not know Him.

D. God's Purpose of Life for the Christian.

What is the Christian's purpose on earth? Every believer in Jesus Christ should ask himself this question, "after salvation, what?"

1. Love God

Luke 10:25-28

²⁵ And a [a]lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? [b]How does it read to you?" ²⁷ And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." ²⁸ And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE."

2. Renewal of Your Mind

Romans 12:2

² And do not be conformed to this [a]world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may [b]prove what the will of God is, that which is good and [c]acceptable and perfect.

3. Study the Word of God

2 Timothy 2:15

¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

4. Serve God through Works

James 2:14-26

¹⁴ What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can ^{14a}that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, ^{16b}be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body, what use is that? ¹⁷ Even so faith, if it has no works, is ^{17a}dead, *being* by itself.

¹⁸ But someone ^{18a}may *well* say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

²⁶ For just as the body without *the* spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

I believe the real answer is all of the above. BE LIKE CHRIST. He was our example.

E. God’s Purpose of Life for YOU.

1. Hearing God's Voice

ILLUSTRATION:

Two deer hunters were hunting when a large buck deer ran out into the open. Both hunters shot at the buck at the same time. The buck fell dead and both hunters run up to the deer claiming: “It’s my deer!” “No it’s my deer!” One hunter was a preacher and the other was a deacon from another church. Not knowing how to resolve the problem, they called the game warden on one of their cell phones and shared with him the problem. The Game Warren drove up on the scene and checked things out. The deacon asked “Well, whose buck is it?” The game Warren said: “It’s the Preachers buck!” The deacon asked: “How do you know” The Wardon said: “Because the bullet went through one ear and out the other.”

Too many times we have not let God’s Word penetrate our soul. We as Christians tend to be one-sided with God. We pray and ask Him for things, but I believe we fail to be quiet and listen to Him.

When we want to accomplish something, too often we feel that we must jump in and do it. We must be patient and know that we can accomplish much more if the Lord is asking us to do it.

Jesus taught in parables and gave a good example of how listening to Him and doing his work will achieve great results.

Luke 5:4-10

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁴ When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, “Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.” ⁵ Simon answered and said, “Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but [Ⓛ]I will do as You say *and* let down the nets.” ⁶ When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets *began* to break; ⁷ so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸ But when Simon Peter saw *that*, he fell down at Jesus’ [Ⓛ]feet, saying, “Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man!” ⁹ For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken; ¹⁰ and so also *were* [Ⓛ]James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men.”

We have several fishermen in this group. These were professional fisherman who really knew what they were doing. Can you imagine a preacher trying to tell you how to do your job?

Knowing that we are to take up our cross and do Go’s will is great, but how are we to know what His will is in our lives if we do not listen. When was the last time you prayed to God “Help me to hear your voice so I will know what You would have me do?”.

God made us in His image as we are for a purpose. We were born with a task list to do.

How can You Tell if God is Speaking to You and How Does He Do It?

- a. Moses heard God through a burning bush.**
- b. Other People: Greg spoke of angels unaware.**
- c. Circumstances in our Life.**
- d. A still small voice.**

e. Hearing God's Word

Romans 10:17

¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word ^[a]of Christ.

6. Studying the Word

2 Timothy 3:16-17

¹⁶ All Scripture is ^[a]inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for ^[b]training in righteousness; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

6. Meditating on the Word

Psalm 119:11

¹¹ Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.¹
John 4:1

7. Testing the Spirits

I John 4:1

⁴ Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

ILLUSTRATION:

Holy Spirit Alarm.

When have God's Word in our heart and something just does not sound right, I like to think a Holy Spirit alarm goes off in your body. I don't know what it sounds like to you, but it sounds like OOO-AH, OOO-AH to me. It is unmistakable. Let God's Word be your guide to identify sin.

Listen for His voice and follow His lead. He has promised that **"I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me"**.

2. Identifying and Using Your Spiritual Gifts and Talents

ILLUSTRATION:

It is sad when someone who is obviously talented at something and they do not use that ability.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a ^[a]temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from ^[b]God, and that you are not your own? ²⁰ For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

Romans 12:1-2 (Main Scripture)

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹² Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, ^[a]acceptable to God, *which is* your ^[b]spiritual service of worship. ² And do not be conformed to this ^[c]world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may ^[d]prove what the will of God is, that which is good and ^[e]acceptable and perfect.

Another Parable of Jesus.

Matthew 25:14-30

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

Parable of the Talents

¹⁴ “For *it is* just like a man *about* to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them. ¹⁵ To one he gave five ^[a]talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey. ¹⁶ Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents. ¹⁷ In the same manner the one who *had received* the two *talents* gained two more. ¹⁸ But he who received the one *talent* went away, and dug *a hole* in the ground and hid his ^[b]master’s money.

¹⁹ “Now after a long time the master of those slaves *came and *settled accounts with them. ²⁰ The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, ‘Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.’ ²¹ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your [Ⓛ]master.’

²² “Also the one who *had received* the two talents came up and said, ‘Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents.’ ²³ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’

²⁴ “And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no *seed*. ²⁵ And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.’

²⁶ “But his master answered and said to him, ‘You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no *seed*. ²⁷ Then you ought to have put my money [Ⓛ]in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my *money* back with interest. ²⁸ Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.’

²⁹ “For to everyone who has, *more* shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. ³⁰ Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

II. THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS - AN OVERVIEW.

B. What the Parable of the Talents says.

1. The Participants

- a. A Man traveling to a far country - The Lord Jesus Christ who was to return to Heaven. He was departing to prepare a place for his disciples (John 14:1-4).
- b. The servants - They are Christians who are servants of Jesus and left behind to do his work till he returns.

2. The trust given

- a. Each servant was entrusted with a considerable amount of wealth.
- b. It was in relation to their differing abilities. One was given five talents, one two, and one was given one.

3. Two of the servants labor and bring forth an increase based on their ability. One is fearful and hides his talents.

4. The Reckoning

a. The Master returns and calls for an accounting. (2 Corinthians 5:10)
b. He blesses both the five and two talent man for being faithful "over a few things." (Ephesians 2:7-9)

c. He deals harshly with the one talent man. His excuse is called wicked and lazy. He is cast out into "outer darkness." (Matthew 25:46)

CONCLUSION:

Our Lord has entrusted us with His work and given each of us all the talents we need to do His work. When Jesus returns he will judge us based on our faithfulness in using what God has entrusted with us.

He is Lord, He is Lord.

He has risen from the dead and He is Lord.

Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess,

That Jesus Christ is Lord.