

The Purpose of Life

Ephesians 1:3-12

INTRODUCTION:

All Stand and Read Scripture

Ephesians 1:3-12 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵ He predestined (preselected) us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him ¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined (preselected) according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹² to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

Prayer

Have you ever asked yourself the question, "What is the purpose of my life?" It is the age old question that men have always tried to answer. Every day we seem to go through the same old routine:

- Get out of bed.
- Eat breakfast.
- Drive to work.
- Work 4 hours.
- Eat lunch.
- Work 4 hours.
- Drive home.
- Catch up on tasks at home.
- Eat dinner.
- Watch TV.
- Go to bed. (Repeat)

Is that all there is to life? Why am I here? Why is mankind here?

This is a question that I personally have pondered. It seemed to me that there had to be a purpose of life. If there is a purpose to life, then I would like to know what it is and make sure that before I die, I have spent a productive life doing what I was born to do.

It is not like there are no answers to this question out there. One of the answers that summarizes a more common belief is from an old beer commercial. It goes, "**You only go around once in life so grab all the gusto you can**".

The idea behind that is that pleasure is the only thing that is important. The purpose of life is to have pleasure.

This can work itself out in two ways:

1. One would be through **addiction**.
 - Your addiction could be a philosophy that life is just one big party. That is why it is not surprising that it is a part of a beer commercial.
 - Alcohol.
 - Gambling.
 - Drugs.
 - Immorality.
 - Excessive fanaticism in your work, sports, or hobbies.
2. Another way that the search for self pleasure could exhibit itself is through **materialism**.
 - The old saying is that you need to "Keep us with the Jones".
 - We need the biggest house, the fastest car, the biggest boat, the most expensive wedding ring.

When people are seeking pleasure by addiction and materialism, it really is the purpose of their life. They are willing to do anything that seems to bring them pleasure. Often these lead to a great cost to ourselves. In the search for pleasure, we destroy our bodies, our minds, our jobs, our finances, and our friendships.

The problem with a pleasure seeking lifestyle is that eventually the pleasure fades and you have to have to go to further and further extremes to regain that pleasure that you are seeking.

- It could be fun to get drunk. But then there are the stupid mistakes you make while you are drunk and then the hangover.
- Gambling could be fun for a time, but then the cards turn against you and you suddenly have no money to pay the bills and support the family.
- Drugs and immorality can seem like fun while you are high and while the illicit affair is happening. But then you have to go through the withdrawals, the destruction of your body, the broken relationships, and the unexpected pregnancies.

So if self pleasure is the purpose of life, why is it so illusive, unfulfilling and unsatisfying?

Surely there is a better reason for why we are here.

Another common philosophy on life is that if you...

- Live a good, clean, moral life.
- Work hard.
- Take care of the family.
- Be the best husband or wife that you can be.

Then all will be well and you will be OK.

This generally proves to be a more satisfying lifestyle. And there is a good reason why. These are good traits that are of God. Unfortunately, this lifestyle, by itself, will also lead to disappointment.

Deep down in our guts, we all KNOW that there is a reason why we are here. For most of us, we WANT to do what is expected of us so we will not be disappointed when we die.

Who hasn't entertained this question, "**If I only had 30 days left to live, what would I do?**" The answer to this question will very seldom be something trivial. For some, it may be trivial because they don't have a better answer. For most us we don't want the final days of our lives to be trivial, we want them to count. And the answer to that question WILL be influenced upon your understanding of the purpose of life.

The Bible has a LOT to say about this subject. In our passage of scripture this morning, Paul is writing to the Christians in Ephesus and explaining to them the purpose of their life.

BODY:

I. Be Holy and Blameless Before Him.

Ephesians 1:3-4, 7-8a (NASB)

³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.

God knew us before we were even born. He had a purpose for us to fulfill. The scriptures tells us that we were chosen by God long before we chose Him. We are important to God. He knows us and desires that we will accept His son. God created YOU in His image and made you just as you are so that YOU could accomplish what He purposed for YOU to do in your life. God has given each of us the free will to choose or deny Him. When we choose Christ as our Lord and Savior, we will be made holy and blameless before God.

Verses 7 & 8 tell us how that happens.

⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He lavished on us.

John 3:16 (NASB)

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

God sent His only begotten son to die on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins. He became the perfect sacrifice for us. We cannot take advantage of the free gift of eternal life with God in Heaven until we accept Christ in our life. It is by His grace that we are saved. There is nothing that we can do on our own to rid ourselves of sin and be found righteous (or free of sin) before God on Judgment Day.

This is one of our purposes in life, to be made holy and blameless before God. Once we die or when Christ comes again, this opportunity is gone forever.

II. To Be His Children.

Ephesians 1:5-6 (NASB)

⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

The word predestined in our English language gives the wrong connotation to what is being said here. This verse is not telling us that we are "predestined" to become adopted sons regardless of what we do on earth. God, being all-knowing, already knows how we are going to react to the Gospel. We still have the free will to accept Him or deny Him. God's purpose for us that we will accept Christ and become heirs of His Kingdom.

III. Be Under Christ's Rule.

Ephesians 1:8b-10 (NASB)

In all wisdom and insight ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.

What is the mystery that Paul is referring to? The word mystery is used several times in the Bible. Colossians gives a better understanding of the "mystery of God's will".

Colossians 1:25-28 (NASB)

²⁵ Of *this church* I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the *preaching* of the word of God, ²⁶ *that is*, the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, ²⁷ to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

²⁸ We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

The mystery is that Christ died on the cross so you could have your sins wiped away and made sinless or righteous before God. Past generations before Christ did not have the wisdom to understand what Christ was going to do for mankind. No longer were animal sacrifices needed to temporarily free them from sin. Christ died once for all times as the

perfect sacrifice for us. Our sins are forgiven, not by what we have done, but because of what Christ did for us by His grace.

The mystery also meant that when we repent of our sins and are obedient in baptism, we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit in our lives (Christ in you) and are made citizens of the Kingdom of God.

Since Christ is now our Lord and savior we are now under His rule. We are now serving Christ in His Kingdom. We are now under His rule, as He purposed us to be.

IV. Give Glory to God.

Ephesians 1:10b-12 (NASB)

In Him ¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹² to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

What have we inherited? Through Christ we have inherited citizenship in the Kingdom of God among the saints. We have been given spiritual blessings. How can we help but to give God the glory for sending His only begotten son to die on the cross to save us from sin.

Colossians 3:17 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁷ Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

Everything that we say, everything that we do should be in a manner that will glorify God and allow people to see Christ in us. Many times our actions speak louder than words.

CONCLUSION:

There are people all around us who are searching for a meaning in life. They are aware that what they are doing is futile and that their lives are meaningless. They have that gut feeling that there is a purpose and somehow they have missed it. And their gut feeling is correct. They just don't know what it is.

This is a symptom of people who are outside of Christ. Because being apart from Christ, they have failed to meet God's purposes for them.

They are not holy and blameless before God because it is impossible to be holy and blameless before God without Christ's atoning blood to wipe away our sins and make us righteous before God.

Being apart from Christ, they are not God's children because only in Christ is this fulfilled. No one chooses their parents. Only the parents can choose their children. So, this purpose could never be met in their lives.

The third purpose to be under Christ's rule cannot happen. They are a part of another kingdom that is at war with the Kingdom of God. They are actually enemies of Christ and His kingdom. So they could never fulfill God's purpose for them to be under God's rule.

The final purpose of our life to give God the glory in everything that we do and say will never be fulfilled until you know Christ and serve Him in your life. Why would a person who is apart from Christ ever WANT to glorify Him?

So, being apart from Christ means that your life really is meaningless. Because the only one who can bring it meaning has not been accepted in their life. It also means that nothing you do will ever bring enjoyment and satisfaction to you.

But, there is Good News! Christ did, in fact, die on the cross to reconcile you to God. In other words, he died as a sacrifice on the cross for you so that your sins could be forgiven and you could be found faultless before God.

He died to make us holy and blameless.

He died to make us His adopted children, to make us His own.

He died to transfer you from a worldly kingdom at war with Him to His Kingdom.

He died to do what you could not do. That is to be found blameless without sin before God.

That is the true purpose of life. To accept Christ into your life and let Him make you righteous before God and serve Him so that when you die, you can spend eternity with Him.

Ever since the fall of man when Adam and Eve ate of the tree of good and evil and sin entered in the lives of mankind, we have all sinned.

Romans 3:23 (NASB)

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

There is nothing that we can do on our own to make ourselves sinless before God. That is why living a moral life and trying to be the best person we can be is not enough. Despite all of our "good" deeds, we are still in sin before God.

Romans 6:23 (NASB)

²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We are made up of a temporal body and an eternal soul. When we die apart from Christ, we will live eternally apart from God (**the wages of sin is death**) a spiritual death apart from God, (**but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**)

When you accept Christ as your savior, you will find meaning and purpose in your life and you will find satisfaction and fulfillment that cannot be found apart from Him.

If you do not know Christ as your Lord and Savior, I invite you to come forward this morning and place your faith in Christ. Don't wait until you have cleaned up your life.

You don't clean yourself up to come to the Christ; you surrender yourself to Christ, to let Him clean you up!

He Is Lord!

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.