

God's Purpose



"God hath work to do in this world; and to desert it because of its difficulties and entanglements, is to cast off His authority. It is not enough that we be just, that we be righteous, and walk with God in holiness; but we must also serve our generation, as David did before he fell asleep."

JOHN OWEN



PRAY FIRST: I rejoice to think that all things are at thy disposal, and it delights me to leave them there. Then prayer turns wholly into praise, and all I can do is to adore and bless thee.

Understanding the Truth

Jeremiah 29:11—*"For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope."*

God has a unique purpose for every human being. The key to unlocking the understanding of your purpose is found in Christ (*Ephesians 2:10*). The key to understanding *who you are* is discovering *who He is*. By getting to know the One who made you, you can begin to see the purpose of His design for your life.

Who Are You?

- A. Read Psalm 139:13-14. According to these verses, did you evolve from some “lower form of life?”
- B. According to verse 14, did God make any accidents when He created you?
- C. What are God’s works called?
- D. What should this truth cause you to do? (v.14)
- E. Read Genesis 1:26-27. God made every human being in His image, which means that we have the capacity to reflect some of the attributes that God has—for instance: love, goodness, righteousness, and holiness.
 - Although every human being is a creation of God, every human being is not a child of God until he or she receives Christ as personal Lord and Savior (*John 1:12*).

When the Bible speaks of God’s image it points to these different areas:

1. **Structurally**—we have rational transcendence (the capacity to know and reason) and moral self-determination (the capacity to choose).
2. **Functionally**—we serve as God’s representatives on Earth.
3. **Relationally**—we are able to have relationships with God and others.

Here’s a good way of looking at people from God’s point of view: *deeply flawed, yet precious*.

Why Am I Here?

King Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 3:11b that God has “*set eternity in the heart of man*” which suggests that there are eternal questions that every human being has in his or her heart—questions like:

1. Who am I?
2. Who made me?
3. Why am I here?
4. Where am I going?
5. How can I know?

Read Psalm 8. One of the main points that David is making is that man has a unique position and purpose in God's universe. What purpose is this?

Augustine once wrote,

"The most profound essence of my nature is that I am capable of receiving God."

John R.W. Stott once wrote,

"Our greatest claim to nobility is our created capacity to know God, to be in personal relationship with Him, to love Him and to worship Him. Indeed, we are most truly human when we are on our knees before our Creator."

Francis Schaeffer affirms this when he says,

"Man, made in the image of God, has a purpose—to be in relationship with God, who is there. Man forgets his purpose and thus he forgets who he is and what life means."

Summarize the quotes above in your own words. God's purpose for my life is: _____

Discussion:

- What makes people different from animals? Do you know of any animals that have a need to worship something?
- According to Psalm 8:6-8, what has God done for man that sets him apart from other creatures?

Personality

Every person has a personality. Personality is the collective emotional, temperamental, and mental traits that influence your behavior. Here are four descriptions. See which one best describes you.

Description

- Decisive, Direct, Demanding
- Inspiring, Influencing, Impressive
- Competent, Cautious, Compliant
- Steady, Secure, Submissive

Basic Motivation

- Challenge and Control
- Recognition and Approval
- Quality and Correctness
- Stability and Support

Animal That Best Describes

- Lion
- Otter
- Beaver
- Labrador Retriever

Biblical Examples

- The Apostle Paul
- The Apostle Peter
- The Apostle Thomas
- The Patriarch Moses

Which one best describes you and why?

What is the Difference Between Talents and Spiritual Gifts?

1. Natural Talents—given by God through parents and given at birth to benefit people in general
2. Learned Skills—learned by us, learned through life to benefit people in general
3. Spiritual gifts—given by the Spirit independent of parents, given at conversion to benefit the church

Spiritual gifts

A. According to 1 Peter 4:10, what does every believer have from God?

B. Identify the gifts in the following verses:

- Ephesians 4:11: _____
- 1 Corinthians 12:28: _____

C. What is the purpose of these gifts? (*1 Corinthians 12:7; Ephesians 4:12*)

Spiritual gifts are not discovered by searching for them like some hidden treasure, but they are discovered as you grow spiritually and serve faithfully. These three things will be true concerning your spiritual gift(s):

- You will enjoy using it (them).
- People will benefit greatly from it (them).
- Leaders in the church will acknowledge it (them). (*1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6-7*)

Embracing the Truth
Knitting the truth of God's Word into our lives



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- Dream for a moment. If you could be given the ability to do anything you wanted for the glory of God, what would it be?
 - Does this dream line up with your personality? Talents?

God's purpose for you is not discovered in a day or a month. But as you give all that you know of you to all that you know of Him, God begins to put a vision in your heart. Preparation is a part of that process, so examine what's going on in your life right now. How could God use what you are experiencing right now to prepare you for the Gospel advance?

APPLICATION

Being a doer of the Word

1. What did I learn ("teaching")?
2. Where do I fall short ("reproof")?
3. What do I need to do about it ("correction")?
4. How can I make this a consistent part of my life ("training")?



ACCOUNTABILITY

Placing yourself in transparent and accountable relationships

How are you doing in the area of **INTEGRITY** and **CHARACTER**?

- Assess your battle against ungodly thoughts (unbelief, bitterness resentment, lust, pride, self-righteousness, cynicism, jealousy, covetousness, racism, etc.):

(Unstable) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Stable)

- Have you been with a man or woman in the past week in a way that could be viewed as compromising? Yes/No
- Have you viewed sexually explicit material? Yes/No
- Have you had any financial dealings that failed to be filled with integrity? Yes/No

Obeying the Truth—your mission this week

Engaging the lost through word and deed with the intention of imparting the Gospel



- Find time to volunteer for a non-profit or school in your community.



MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK: Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'"



EXTRA RESOURCES FOR THE VAULT

MacArthur, John. *Charismatic Chaos*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 1992. Print.
MacArthur, John. *"Spiritual Gifts"*. Grace to You Ministries. <https://www.gty.org/resources/study-guides/40-5100/Spiritual-Gifts>. Web. n.d.

Who Are You?

- A. no; God made me
- B. no
- C. wonderful
- D. give thanks to God

Why Am I Here?

God's purpose for my life is: answers will vary (ex: to know God; to be in a relationship with God)

Discussion:

- man has dominion over the earth and all things in it

Spiritual gifts

- A. a special (or spiritual) gift
- B.
 - Ephesians 4:11: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers
 - 1 Corinthians 12:28: apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, healings, helps, administrations, tongues (languages)
- C. for the common good to equip the saints, and for the building up of the body of Christ

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible: 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.