

Purpose #1: Planned for God's Pleasure

The Purpose Driven Life - Part 2

January 15, 2023

If you want to know the purpose of life, you won't create something big enough to satisfy your soul. You won't discover your purpose starting with you. To know the purpose of life, you have to talk to the creator who made you, and look in the owner's manual. You were made by God and you were made for God. Until you understand that, life isn't going to make much sense. This week we'll look at the first of God's five purposes for your life.

DAY 1: Pleasing God

1. When I was a kid all the way up until my father went to heaven, I had a longing to please my father. Why? I was grateful for his years of sacrifice for me, his direction in my life, his wisdom when I was tempted to play the fool, and his belief in me—in spite of me.
2. But my desire to please my father was not just altruism on my part. As I look back on those years, pleasing my father brought a validation and connection I could not find anywhere else. Or, more specifically, pleasing my father filled my cup even more than it filled his cup, though it did bring him great joy. But, even there, I benefitted more.
3. Was I being selfish or self-centered in wanting to please my father? Partly. But I learned a lesson with pleasing my father. Living to please my father was a godly win-win for us both.
4. This is all by design, and it is a metaphor for how God looks at His children.
5. When we seek to please God with our lives we benefit most! It is one of the great gospel paradoxes of life.
6. In the following verses what strikes you about God's pleasure for you, and in turn, bringing Him pleasure?

1 Cor. 10:31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

*Eph. 1:4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to **sonship** through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his **pleasure** and **will**.*

Psalms 147:11 the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.

1 Thess. 4:1 As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living.

Psalms 149:4 For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory.

What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 2: Pleasing God thru worship

1. “Worship” is both a noun and a verb. We usually think of worship as a noun, as in a worship service. You go and sing, pray, hear a message, give an offering, and fellowship.
2. But you can attend a worship service (noun) and not worship (verb). I know. I did that for twenty years before I became a Christian.
3. Worship is more than a religious ceremony. Worship is a lifestyle. We all worship something or someone, some things, and some people. We worship outcomes we expect will satisfy us the most. We worship ourselves in this sense—we give our ultimate resources to pleasing ourselves, to feeling satisfied.
4. Whatever we worship God as our highest value and affection we not only do what is right, but the worship of God centers us in daily life, and anchors us in the storms of life.
5. When we worship anyone or anything higher than God, we set in motion the inevitable disappointment of that person or that thing to which we elevate as worship.
6. When we worship God as our highest value and affection, it frees our hearts to genuinely and truly give back to God and to others. But when we worship anyone or anything else higher than God, we will approach those persons and things as takers. The consequences may be long in coming but come they will.
7. In the following verses, jot down what strikes you about worshipping God.

John 4:23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.

Psalms 27:4 One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in His temple.

Psalms 95:6 Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

Psalms 84:10 Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. ¹¹ For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. ¹² LORD Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you.

8. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 3: Worship because of the gospel

1. Over the years you may have watched footage of Seal Team 6 making daring hostage rescue operations. Midnight helicopter rides over mountainous terrain, black uniforms, secret ops, and the team landing behind enemy lines. It is a high-risk operation. Not everyone makes it out alive. Some give their lives in the rescue attempt.

2. But imagine this twist in the story. Imagine the hostages turning down the rescue in the middle of the night, even though some of the rescue team lost their lives!

3. We will not understand the gospel until we understand it as both (1) a rescue operation, taken at great risk to the Rescuer. (It will cost Jesus His life by the cruelest of deaths, crucifixion) and (2) Many, many people turn down the rescue from heaven, in spite of the rescuer losing His life.

*John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him **shall not perish** but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but **to save the world** through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not **condemned**, but whoever does not believe **stands condemned already** because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. ¹⁹ This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.*

4. The same motif as Seal Team 6 and a hostage rescue is the same story of mankind and the incarnation of Jesus Christ as our savior.

5. We, like the hostages stood condemned through our own rebellion and sinfulness. And, astoundingly, we refused the savior's plea to be free from under a state of condemnation.

6. What strikes you from this parallel metaphor?

7. Why do we worship? Because no one loves us like the Savior!

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

8. He gave His life for us, to save us from ourselves and from an eternity in hell.

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 4: Pleasing God or pleasing people?

1. So many people claim to not care what people think about them. That sounds noble and self-assured, but it is a ridiculous claim. We may not care what “people” in general think about us, but we sure do care what some people think of us!

2. How do you know if that’s true? Simple. What is your response when someone treats you poorly? Doesn’t include you in a decision? Is late for an important appointment with you? A driver cuts you off on the freeway?

3. Why do we care what someone thinks about us? Simple. We are trusting the responses of some people for our sense of well-being, feel loved, feel validated, etc.

Galatians 1:10 Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

4. We actually trust people because sometimes it “seems” to work. Sometimes, we do feel loved, respected, validated, understood, included, etc.

5. But the bitter irony of trusting people for their responses is that sometimes people disappoint us and fail us.

6. Marriages often slowly dissipate due to trusting our spouse for our deepest needs. It is impossible to be “the key” to someone else’s sense of well-being.

7. We are designed to find our deepest needs to be met in God.

Luke 14:26 If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple.

8. Jesus is using hyperbole to make a point. In comparison to loving Jesus, every other relationship should pale in comparison. This is not a downer to our familial relationships. Instead, putting Jesus first in our hearts makes our familial relationship far better!

9. What strikes you from Luke 14:26?

10. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 5: Pleasing God, thanking God

1. My mom served me for eighteen years. She cooked meals, did all my laundry, changed the sheets on my bed, drove me to football and baseball practices, attended my games, bought my clothes, and hundreds of other things.
2. I rarely thanked her.
3. After I became a Christian at age twenty, my eyes were opened to the one-way relationship I had with my mom. She gave; I took. Twenty years in the books.
4. I took summer school at the University of Houston while living at home for the summer. I began thanking my mom every day for something she had done for me—whether it was that day or years before. That had a transforming effect on our relationship.
5. Thanking her and praising mom was a blessing to her, but it was also enlarging my heart and soul. It softened my heart, made me less entitled, a young man freer of expectations, less critical, --warmer.
6. This is how praising God and thanking God works. This is how the worship of God is. It brings Him pleasure on the front end. It brings us pleasure on the back end, and it draws us into deeper relationship.

Ephesians 5:20 ...always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7. Human beings are naturally entitled. How do you know that you have a spirit of entitlement? Simple. What happens when you don't get what you think you deserve? If you get angry, guess what? You have a spirit of entitlement, just like all of us.
8. Gratitude to God is one of God's antidotes to change our self-centered, entitled hearts to be transformed into a heart that is content and at peace.
9. What strikes you from today's devotional?