

Created to Become Like Christ

Purpose #3

The Purpose Driven Life - Part 4

40 Days of Purpose, January 29, 2023

Review: The Purpose Driven Life:

Purpose #1 is to get to know and love God. That's called Worship.

Purpose #2: Love people. That's called Fellowship.

This week we look at purpose #3.

DAY 1: Created to Become Like Christ

As C.S. Lewis said, the great purpose of God is to make "little Christs."

Romans 8:29 from the very beginning God decided that those who came to Him should become like His Son.

1. This is one of the great story lines in The Larger Story in your life. Through all your ups and downs, your joys and trials, through the good, the bad, and the ugly of your life, God is working behind the scenes through it all, to make you more and more like Christ. This is a "must" story line to understand in your life.

2. How does this story line strike you?

3. God's plan is to make you like Christ. You don't become a god. He wants you to become godly: to develop His character, His perspective, act how He acts, and reflect His values. God wants to make you like Himself.

Ephesians 4:15 God wants us to grow up...like Christ in everything.

4. Growing up means to become like Christ. What does spiritual maturity look like? Take a long look at Christ.

My third purpose in life: Become like Christ.

5. This doesn't happen overnight. It's a process called "discipleship" which takes a lifetime. How does God make me like Christ? He uses the Bible. Applied truth transforms us. God uses people. The more you get with Christians whose life challenges you, the more mature you become.

Prov. 13:20 He who walks with the wise will become wise, but he who walks with fools will become a fool.

Romans 8:28 In all things God works for the good for those who love Him, who have been called according to His purposes.

God works all things for good to make us like Jesus including bad things, mistakes we make sinning, and painful things. It doesn't say all things are good, but God uses them to make me like Christ.

What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 2: Tool #1: Trouble. God uses trouble to teach us to trust Him.

1. In the life of Christ, God used three very unexpected tools. Jesus had **trouble** in the garden, **temptation** in the desert, and He bore **trespasses** on the cross. Don't be surprised when God takes you through them.

2. Trials are events God uses to draw us closer to Him. They're not designed to hurt us; they're designed to shape us. If things go great you don't need to trust God, and it doesn't build character. God brings troubles to stretch you.

Romans 5:3-4 ...trouble produces patience, and patience produces character, and character produces hope.

3. God is more interested in what you are, your character, than what you do, your career. The goal of life is character, not career or comfort. Until you understand this life won't make sense in adversity. When problems come you'll ask, "Why is this happening to me?" as if your life is supposed to be a life of comfort. It's not. One day you're going to be in a place with no trials. If you keep thinking you're going to have heaven on earth, you'll be disappointed. This is not the place for comfort; this is the place for character development. It takes trouble.

Every problem has a purpose.

4. The night before Jesus was crucified His turmoil was enormous. He would bear the sin of the world on Himself and die by crucifixion. Would He trust God to know what's best even if it meant a horribly painful death?

Mark 14:32 They came to a garden called Gethsemane and Jesus said to His disciples, "sit here while I pray."

5. Jesus needed friends when He went through trouble. So do you.

Mark 14:34 "The worry in My heart is so great that it almost crushes Me."

6. Most of you know that feeling. "I can't make it another day." Notice how Jesus responded to trouble.

Mark 14:36 "Father, everything is possible for You. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet, I want Your will, not Mine!"

7. When you go through trouble, it's OK to say, "God, I want you to take it away. It's possible for you to take it away." He added, "yet, if this is what's best for me Your will be done in my life." He surrendered to God's plan.

8. To become like Christ, you've got to learn to trust God even when things appear to be falling apart. God uses trouble to teach us to trust Him. The real test of your faith occurs when everything is going wrong. The next time you ask, "Why is this happening?" you'll know at least one reason. He's giving you opportunity to trust.

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 3: Tool #1: Trouble (continued).

*2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet **inwardly we are being renewed day by day.** 17 For our light and momentary **troubles** are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

1. These verses provide the necessary perspective to help us navigate through trouble. We'll look at each verse separately.

*2 Corinthians 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet **inwardly we are being renewed day by day.***

2. We are tempted to lose heart when we are faced with trouble. To lose heart means to get discouraged, quit trying, or give up.

3. What does Paul tell us as the antidote for losing heart? (v. 16).

*2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light and momentary **troubles** are **achieving** for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.*

4. Paul draws a contrast between our troubles and what our troubles are achieving for us. Write down three observations from verse 17.

- a.
- b.
- c.

5. Even if some trials last a lifetime, that's nothing compared to the years you're going to spend in eternity.

6. If we could see the rewards awaiting us in heaven, we'd consider the gravest trials we go through as gravy.

2 Corinthians 4:18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

7. And here comes the choice we have of an eternal perspective versus a temporal perspective.

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

Day 4: Tool #2: Temptations: God uses our temptations to teach us to obey Him.

1. Satan designed temptations to harm us. God never tempts us, but God uses even Satan's temptations for good in our lives. Temptation provides a choice. When I choose for God, Satan's plan is blunted and I grow. Choices are needed to develop character. Jesus never sinned, but He was tempted, including an intense 40-days in the desert.

Matthew 4:1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

2. If Jesus faced temptations you and I are going to face temptations, too.

- It is not a sin to be tempted.

3. Martin Luther said, "You can't keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from building a nest in your hair."

- Everyone is tempted in the same way. (*1 Cor. 10:13*)

4. Satan tricks you into thinking your temptation is worse than anyone else's. No! Your temptation is just like everyone else's. If you're feeling, "I'm such a spiritual loser" you're like the toddler who thinks he's the first one to stick a green bean up his nose. All of us face the same temptations.

5. You'll never grow to a point where you're not tempted. Every temptation is an opportunity to make the right choice. It's a stepping-stone toward being like Christ. Notice what Jesus did when he was tempted.

Matthew 4:10 Jesus said, "Get out of here, Satan. The scriptures say, 'worship only the Lord God. Obey only Him.'"

6. He confronted temptation. Obedience is more a matter of love than duty. Temptation tests what I love most. Jesus said, "If you love Me, obey My command." When tempted by money, do I love God or money most? When tempted by a wrong relationship, do I love that person or God more? When tempted by comfort, do I love God or myself? Obedience chooses to say, "yes" to God. How do you go through temptation?

- Get a spiritual partner.

7. One way to defeat temptation is to bring it out into the light. Get a spiritual partner, someone who can help you.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 You're better off to have a friend than to be all alone...If you fall, your friend can help you up.

8. Temptations sometime feel overwhelming. Some won't lessen if you face them alone. "I need someone to help me" is a key to set temptation aside.

Ps. 119:71 The suffering you sent was good for me for it taught me to pay attention to your principles.

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 5: Tool #3: Trespasses. God uses trespasses to teach us to forgive.

Matt. 6:12 "...forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us."

1. The toughest tool God uses to make us like Christ is bearing the hurt of other people without retaliating. It involves being misunderstood, criticized, judged, emotional hurt, or abused.

2. Let me be very clear. These are evil things. God is not the author of evil. God hates sin. He didn't protect His own Son from being misunderstood, judged, and abused. What makes you think you're going to be let off the hook?

Matthew 27:39-44 The people passing by shook their heads and hurled insults at Jesus... the elders made fun of Him...Even the bandits who had been crucified with Him insulted him in the same way.

Jesus said, "Father, forgive these people, because they don't know what they are doing."

3. This is a stunning statement by Jesus. On one hand the people clearly knew what they were doing. They reveled in their insults and mockery.

4. But, Jesus saw something no one else saw. In what ways did they NOT know what they were doing?

1 Peter 2:23 They called Him every name in the book and He said nothing back. He suffered in silence, intent to let God set things right.

5. How did Jesus respond? He yielded His right to get even. He absorbed the hurt and put up with pain. He responded to evil with good. To become like Christ, you have to learn the same thing. In life you're going to be hurt. This is not heaven. This is a fallen world. Other people hurt you. You hurt other people. Hurts are allowed in your life in order to make you like Jesus.

6. How do you forgive?"

Eph. 4:32 Forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ.

7. What does this verse tell us about learning to forgive others?

8. In Genesis, Joseph was cruelly treated by his older brothers. He was thrown down a well and left for dead. When a caravan came by the brothers pulled him out of the well and sold him into slavery. Years later, God used Joseph to save Egypt from starvation, and his own family from starvation. His brothers were later brought to realize their brother Joseph was still alive, and now second in command in Egypt! Joseph could have had his brothers killed for their previous treachery. But this is how he thought of the entire story, and what he told his wicked brothers.

Genesis 50:20 "You meant to hurt me, but God turned your evil into good to save the lives of many people...."

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?