

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF LIFE?

Text: John 18:37, "To this end I was born, And for this cause I came into the world."

Read v5. 37-38a

I. If we are to fulfill our purpose in life we must know who we are.

A. Jesus had no identity problem.

He knew who he was.

B. In every area of life it is important to know who you are. - The person you are.

1. If you are in the army, this means to know more than your rank and serial number and unit. James 4:12 "Who art thou that judgest another?"

2. Before you are a private you are a person. Before you are a soldier you are a person.

Before you are male or female you are a person.

Before you are a trainee or NCO or officer you are a person.)

Before you are white or black you are a person.

C. The clue to understanding who we are is not to be found in the world of nature around us but in the world of God above us.

1. When we look to Christ our Savior we begin to see something of the kind of person we are meant to be. Eph. 1:4-5

2. When we know WHOSE we are, we can know WHO we are.

D. The purpose of life is to know who we are and then to live up to and fulfill our highest potential by God's grace.

"One day I looked at myself--

at the self that Christ can see;

I saw the person I am today

and the one I ought to be; I came from seeing myself,

with my mind made up to be the sort of person that Christ can use, with a heart He may always see."

III. If we are to fulfill our purpose in life we need to know why we are here. Eph. 4:1

A. We must not be content just to make a living; we also want to make a LIFE. (sense of vocation)

B. Our life has a purpose even though that purpose may not always be clear to us.

C. The old Westminster Catechism says, "The chief end of man is to know God and to enjoy Him forever."

1. This reminds us that the real purpose of life is a spiritual one.
2. The purpose of life is to experience the love of God in our hearts and to be a channel through which his love can flow to aid others.
3. Not the years in our life but the life in our YEARS is of supreme importance.
4. When we live for God, we find life illumined by the wonder of his friendship, and then we know why we are here.

D. We are here to enjoy the "more abundant life" through Jesus Christ. John 10:10

We must enlarge the rooms and houses of our lives to make room for His greatness.

When Marian Anderson went with her God-given voice to sing for the composer Sibelius in his home, the great composer listened and said with tears in his voice, "My roof is too low for you!" All too often our life has too low a ceiling for the fullness of God's Spirit.

III. And, in addition to these things, if we are to know the purpose of life, we must know where we are going. (Esther 4:14)

A. Life must have a destination as well as a direction. (Jesus did)

1. Is our activity purposeful in the sense that we are going somewhere, or is it like the scrambling of little feet in a squirrel cage--- much energy but no progress?
2. The destination of Jesus Christ was a cross. He set his face steadfastly toward J'lem.
3. Our destination in eternity is heaven, but we have a destination on earth also. Where are you going with your life? You may have an intermediate destination and a long range destination. (Mt. 25:10, Virgins)

B. There are some things that can keep us from reaching our destination in life.

1. A sliver of steel in the presence of a compass needle causes the whole ship to go wrong.
2. One cup of poison in a reservoir can make the whole reservoir polluted.
3. One speck of dust on the telescope's lens fills the sky with error.
4. One broken thread weakens the whole fabric.

C. One day an old man lay very ill. A friend came to see him and, after talking for a while, asked him, "In your long life, have you any regrets?" The old man's mind went back in the days of his childhood. He said, "When I was a boy, I often used to play with my school friends out on the roadside.

One day, I found at the corner of the road an old rickety signpost. I twisted it in its socket, so that its pointer arms pointed the wrong way. And now I wonder how many travelers

I sent that day on the wrong road, and how many I've sent on the wrong road of life since then by giving bad examples and wrong directions in my life." That is just what sin is. It ~~sends~~ other people on the wrong road in life.

D. There are many Communist and other radical groups today that know where they are going, what they want to do, and the kind of world they desire to see established.

We Christians must have a purpose too, one that is clearer, better, and more worthy than that of any other group.

We DO have such a purpose in the gospel: mankind made one, justice for all, forgiveness rather than revenge,

and the reign of love among all people.

And we shall advance as Christians in proportion to the way in which we make God's purpose, as seen in Christ, our own purpose.

But we must have a driving, compassionate devotion to the cause of Christ.

No half-hearted commitment will do.

We need a mighty faith which believes in that purpose utterly and completely.

CONCLUSION: So what do we learn from all these ideas? Simply that if we know who we are, why we are here, and where we are going, we can fulfill our purpose in life, just as Jesus Christ fulfilled confidently the purpose of his life.

It is the light of the purpose of God for us that lights our pilgrimage on earth.

A life which is shaped by the will of God is a good life and a happy life.

When we learn from God what we are to do with our life, we have a foretaste of the eternal happiness of the heavenly life.

Nothing -- absolutely nothing -- is more wonderful than to know ourselves to be a child of God, to be here on a mission for God, and to be going toward an earthly and a heavenly destination in obedience to God's will and purpose for our life, eventually to share His eternal glory with Him.

Anything less than this isn't really living; it is merely animal existence.

Gateway Bap. Ch. St. Pete Sept. 21, '80

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Introduction:

When King Lear is taken advantage of by his ungrateful daughters and is terribly mistreated, he questions his identity:

"Doth any here know me?

This is not Lear.....

Who is it that can tell me who I am?"

This is the agonizing cry of many poor tormented souls today,

"Who can tell me who I am?"

I. Who we are

- A. God's Children,
Beloved by our
Heavenly Father
- B. We are human
beings, far above
the animal creation,
and should have
remarkable +
self-respect +
respect for each
other as human beings.
- C. Communism + they not
only differ on the
doctrine of God, but
they differ greatly on
the doctrine of man.

II. why we are Here-

- A. To Have an
Opportunity
to choose God +
Begin to know Him
and serve Him
- B. To Get to know
and Help His Other Children.
- C. To fulfill our
Potential and
utilize our talents
+ gifts as fully
as possible - Luke 12:48

III. Where we are Going -

- A. To Our Father's
House - a Place
prepared by Him
just for us -
(if we have
chosen His Son
as our Savior) -

- B. In any case we
are eternally con-
firmed in the choices
we make in this
life (Rev. 22:11);
this is our reward
in judgment -