

# KNOW YOUR PURPOSE!!!

Throughout time, phrases such as - “Who am I?” Why am I here?” “What is my purpose?” etc. – have always been asked and pondered on by many, many people. There have been books written on this by both Christian and secular writers. Philosophers have “philosophied” on these phrases for years. Google dictionary defines the term “purpose” in two ways. One is that when used as a noun it means, “The reason for which

something is done or created or for which something exists.” When used as a verb it means, “To have as one's intention or objective.” Both of these definitions are important to our discussion as we will see.

I would like to begin our discussion in Malachi 3:1 where we read, *“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.”* It is quite obvious that Malachi is referring to two **different** “messengers.” The first was to “prepare the way” which points to John the Baptist. The second was the “Messenger of the Covenant,” referring and pointing to the Messiah, Jesus. In the New Testament, the Apostle John describes this aspect of Jesus in this way – *“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.”* (1John 3:8)

The above scriptures give us a very clear understanding of what Jesus’ main purpose was in His first coming 2000 years ago. In using both of our definitions concerning the term “purpose” we can see the above scriptures clearly state the reason for which Jesus existed and came to dwell among us as well as they clearly show us His intention and objective. In short, He knew His purpose. This may seem pretty obvious, but let’s follow this through. As the son of Man, Jesus came to this earth to be crucified, rise from the grave and become the “first fruit of many.” As the Son of God His purpose was to be the “Messenger of the Covenant” and preach the Good News, the Gospel. By doing both of these as the Son of Man and the Son of God, Jesus fulfilled His purpose and destroyed the “works of the evil one.”

As we read the Gospel accounts we see that Jesus, being the “Messenger of the Covenant,” begins His ministry by “preaching.” He went about **preaching** that the *“Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the Gospel.”* (Mark 1:14-15) Jesus was the Kingdom of God manifested upon the earth. John’s preaching was to prepare the way for the “Messenger of the Covenant.” John’s baptism was that of repentance. John’s baptism was to “prepare the way” for any individual that truly would have a desire to hear the Good News from this “Messenger of the Covenant” and therefore, receive the Kingdom of God which is found in Jesus. Jesus’ purpose was to declare and establish the New Covenant that would restore the relationship between God and man breached because of the sin of Adam. This sin caused spiritual death – separation from God. The Good News that Jesus preached was that, through Him, God the Father would heal and restore that relationship. The Good News is all about **“relationship.”**

Luke 4:18-19 tells us, *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”* Jesus was reading from Isaiah 61:1-2. On that Sabbath day Jesus declared in the synagogue that He was the fulfillment of God’s plan of restoration of the broken relationship as prophesied by the prophet Isaiah. Jesus came and “preached the gospel” to the “poor in spirit.” Jesus came and “healed those who were brokenhearted.” They were “broken hearted” because they knew they could not fully enter into an intimate relationship with their God because of their sin no matter what sacrifice they may have offered. We see this in Simeon (Luke 2:25-35) and Anna the prophetess (Luke 2:36-38). Just seeing Jesus as a baby brought hope to their hearts which were broken and aching for a true relationship with their God. Just seeing Jesus turned their sorrow into joy.

Jesus went about and preached that there was a way out of this captivity to sin and death (deliverance). It would come through Him and the New Covenant in which He was the “Messenger” of. To those who truly wanted “to see” and experience this relationship, He opened their “spiritual eyes” that were blinded (because of sin) to the truth. Jesus brought freedom (liberty) to those that were bruised by the enemy’s strategy of destruction. Jesus preached that all of this was now “at hand” through Him, at that very moment in time (and forever). Jesus’ first appearance 2000 years ago was the “acceptable year.” It was God the Father’s perfect timing when everything would fall into place and all prophecies would be fulfilled concerning the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of the promised Messiah and Savior of the world.

As previously mentioned, 1John 3:8 tells us, *“For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.”* This was accomplished through Jesus. He preached the Gospel, the Good News, that salvation from a broken relationship with God was “at hand” and available to anyone who would receive it. This was Jesus’ purpose on this earth – to preach this Gospel, this Good News. Relationship back with God is now “at hand.” Yes, Jesus did many wonderful miracles, healed many and set people free from the grips of demonic possession. However, preaching the Good News concerning the restoring of relationship back to our Father was His main purpose. So how does this relate to us and knowing our individual purpose while we as a children of God, are on this earth? Well, let’s see...

I went through all of the above because I wanted to bring our attention to Mark 1:35-39. Again, it is concerning Jesus. We see that Jesus, after a long day of healing and casting out demons went out very early the next morning before sunrise to pray. We usually take this scripture and use it to say that just as Jesus got up early and spent time with the Father before His day, so should we. To that point, I am in total agreement. It is imperative that we spend quality time with the Father as we begin our day. However, I also see something else in this account which, I believe has to do with our discussion concerning knowing and sticking with your “purpose.”

As we discussed, the previous day was a very busy day for Jesus. If we read the verses prior, we will see that many came to Jesus. His notoriety and popularity was growing. He also had just healed a leper which was one of the four “Messianic miracles” that the religious leaders said Messiah would do. People from all over were coming to Him. Could Jesus be the One – could He be the Messiah? Or could He be a mighty prophet like Elijah and Elisha? To most of them however, it didn’t matter who He was. They just wanted to be healed and set free. Many came just to watch and see what was happening.

Now, we see in Mark 1:35 that Jesus is praying. He was having a discussion with the Father. What were they discussing? Could they be planning what was next up for Jesus? Was Jesus giving the Father a report of what has been happening? Could Jesus be asking for strength for another day? All these are very real possibilities. However, I believe that Jesus needed to “clear His head.” I think He was having a discussion concerning the clarity of His purpose and mission. I think Jesus was getting concerned about the events that were taking place. Yes, many had come to Him and many were healed and set free. This was all so very wonderful. But in all those wonderful things, was the true purpose, the main message that He was sent to bring forth as the “Messenger of the Covenant” – was it getting lost in the midst of all the “signs and wonders?”

I think Jesus may have been getting “mixed signals” within Himself. He knew what His main purpose was to be, as spoken in Malachi 3:1, as the “Messenger of the Covenant.” He knew He was to declare and establish the New Covenant between God and Man through His preaching and through His blood. Did this change? It seemed as if the “signs and wonders” was what the majority of the people were really looking for and following Him for. I believe that as Jesus spoke with the Father, and the Father spoke to Him, it was reconfirmed to Him what He was to do.

I say this because we read next that Simon (Peter) and the others came looking for Him and said to Him, *"All men seek for thee."* His response to His disciples is found in verse 38 where we read, *"He replied, Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so I may preach there also; that is why I came [from the Father]."* (Amplified Versions) Jesus' time with the Father reconfirmed and assured Him of His primary purpose – to preach the Good News of a restored relationship back to and with, a loving Heavenly Father.

Jesus always knew what His main purpose was to be. He was the "Messenger of the Covenant" who would come and be as a *"...refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness."* (Malachi 3:1-3) The refining would come through His blood but most importantly it would come through His preaching of the pure unadulterated truth – the Word of God. Jesus is the Word of God. God, the Father, sent His Word in the form of Jesus to refine, cleanse and purge us from all affects of sin and "untruth." It is only through the purifying blood and receiving the "message" that Jesus, as the "Messenger of the Covenant," preached that we are now able, as true priests, to offer up to God our offerings of righteousness. Just to be clear – when it speaks of offering an "offering of righteousness," it is referring to our lives, our character and our lifestyle of obedience and integrity to the true Word of God in the power of, and being led by, the Holy Spirit. This is the offering of righteousness, this is that "living sacrifice," that is now acceptable unto the Lord and which is our only rational and sensible thing to do because of what He has done for us. (Romans 12:1)

Ultimately, this is now our main purpose for being on this earth. We are to be His priests that offer unto Him the "spiritual sacrifices of "joy" (Psalm 27:6), "praise" (Jeremiah 33:11), "thanksgiving" (Psalm 116:17), and "righteousness" (Deuteronomy 33:19). We are His priests that offer unto Him ourselves and all that we are as a "living sacrifice." This is our purpose collectively as the Body of Christ and individually as children of the Most High God.

With that being said, I also believe that each of us, individually, has a distinct God given purpose. God has ordained and appointed each of His most prized of all creation to a distinct purpose and mission while they are upon this earth. We must be careful not to think of this as referring to only, what we may call, "ministry functions" – those things that we relate with our commitment to the local church or ministry in which we may be a member of. It can refer to many, many other things.

Each child of God, now that we have been restored back into relationship with our Heavenly Father, has been given a renewed opportunity to be the man or woman of God that he or she was meant to be. Each individual born into this world was first and foremost "found in the heart of God." Each of us, as it may, were "created" and established first within our Heavenly Father's heart. He created and designed each of us for and with our own unique purpose.

First, as we already mentioned – to live a lifestyle of moral excellence and obedience unto the Lord which, as we said, is the only reasonable, rational and sensible thing to do because of all He has done for us. Secondly, He has given each of us an additional purpose. Here is where each of us must seek after the Lord to allow Him to reveal what that specific purpose may be. Yes, it may be involvement in some kind of "ministry" work. However, the possibilities go way beyond "ministry" and being in full time "ministry." The scriptures tell us that each of us has a function. Collectively, each of us with our specific function/ purpose, make up the Body of Christ. Together through the power of the Holy Spirit we are "fitly joined together" to make one Body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:16; Romans 12:5) No one's purpose is greater than another's. It is all about collectively living out our God ordained purpose for the benefit and betterment of the Body of Christ and to the glory of God.

That is why it is imperative for each of us to truly know the purpose that God had intended and destined for each of our lives. It is just as important for each church and ministry to know their specific purpose for their existence. Many times we can veer “off course” ever so slightly. We can get caught into doing things that are definitely “Godly” but are they what God has called and purposed for you and/or for your ministry. The trap is that we get snared into well meaning but endless and empty business. We waste our valuable time with things other than what God has called us and purposed for us to be. We must “redeem the time” so that we can fulfill our purpose – the purpose that **He** had designed and destined for us.

What I am saying is that we must “consider our ways” and ask ourselves why are we doing what we are doing? What is the true motive for what we do, both personally and as a church or ministry, in whatever the case may be? Are we doing things because it is what others expect of us and want for us or are we doing what we are doing because it is God’s plan and purpose for us? We need to keep our eyes on our role-model, Jesus. As we discussed, He went to the Father to make sure He was staying on His purpose. Each of us must do the same. We must take time and speak with the Father. He will constantly keep us on course and on the path of our purpose that He had destined for us from the beginning of time. We have been given the Holy Spirit to continually lead and guide us on the correct path that will lead us to completing our purpose as His child upon this earth.

The apostle Paul understood this as he wrote to Timothy towards the end of his life. We read in 2Timothy 4:7-8, “*I have fought a good fight, **I have finished my course**, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*” He knew He had completed his purpose and was ready to go and be with the Lord. It was the same for John the Baptist. He had a “great run.” People flocked to him and were baptized by him. His purpose was to “prepare the way” for the Messenger of the Covenant. When he saw Jesus, he knew that his purpose was completed. We read in John 3:28-30, “*Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: **this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.***” At the time of this writing, we hear of the passing and going home to be with Lord of the Rev. Dr. Billy Graham. We all know of his life and blessed ministry. We can say without a shadow of a doubt that he “had finished his course” and fulfilled his God given purpose for his life.

I pray that when it is our time to either go home to be with the Lord or see Him face to face at His appearing, each of us would be able to say that we have “finished our course” and fulfilled our God given purpose for our lives. It is then that we, with great joy and delight, will hear those wonderful words spoken to us by the Lover of our soul, “*Well done thou good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord.*”