

## Lesson 12

# Visualizing God's Work and Plan

## Introduction

It may be hard for us to imagine all the possibilities when we allow ourselves to be an instrument of God. If you look back, the pathway of your life has not been down a straight line. There have been many curves and detours along the way. Today, you may be living in a city or state that you never would have imagined when you grew up. Over the course of your life all sorts of people have come into your life for seasons of time. They were impacting you and you were impacting them. Chances are you have had several different stops along your career pursuit. There are many ways that God could have worked using you to shine and bring glory to Him. His plan is to save every person you ever meet and He has left that responsibility in your hands.

When we read Jesus' great commission in the final verses of Matthew and Mark we need to be reminded of our purpose.

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

– Matthew 28.19-20

Moving with purpose is a key factor in our success. Inventions that have been created without a purpose or need usually fail. We are a new creation and God has created us to demonstrate His excellence. How do you plan on following through? What is the providential purpose for which you have come to Christ?

## God raises up individuals for the purpose of bringing others to salvation

Both Testaments reveal to us the stories of those who acted through the power of God to do His work of bringing salvation:

- Noah, Genesis 6-9
- Joseph, Genesis 39-50
- Moses, Exodus 1-14
- Gideon, Judges 6-8
- Samson, Judges 13-16
- Elijah, 1 Kings 18-22
- Elisha, 1 Kings 19, 2 Kings 2-13
- Jeremiah
- Daniel
- Esther

- YOU

## God did not place you here without purpose

In Acts 17 the rioters in Thessalonica accused Christians of turning the world upside down. The impact of the church of the first century is undeniable. It was considered such a threat that the greatest Empire on the planet subjected the church the waves of deadly persecution over the second and third centuries. This is because the early church took seriously God's call to proclaim the message of salvation and magnify the Christian lifestyle wherever and whenever it could.

God's mission and purpose has not changed. *What part do you play in God's providential plan?* If we fail to accept we are fellow workers in the plan of God, we are nothing more than the one talent man of Matthew 25. Your purpose is to serve. Will you look at others in the way the good Samaritan did?<sup>21</sup> Will we see others and their great need for God in the way Andrew did when he shared with his brother Simon how he had found the Messiah?<sup>22</sup>

## Conclusion

Please take a moment or two to consider other members of your local congregation. Most likely there are families there who would have never known the Lord except because of the drive and determination of someone else who was driven by God's eternal purpose to save the lost.

How does this weigh on your mind?

It wasn't luck that brought you to Christ. Somewhere along the line, maybe in generations past, someone embraced their role as a servant and visualized God's message of salvation and shared it personally with us or someone we love. Where would you be today had that not happened?

Where does the mission of God's salvation fall inside your own visualization and understanding? Will you use it to impact the lives of others?

## For Thought and Reflection

1. What is the purpose given to all Christians in Matthew 28.19-20?
2. What is your plan to follow through on this great commission?

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<sup>21</sup> See Luke 10.25-37.

<sup>22</sup> See John 1.40-42.

3. How did God use Noah to bring salvation?
  
4. How did God use imperfect men like Gideon and Samson to carry out His purposes?
  
5. How much a difference did Jeremiah make during his time? How has God used Jeremiah's work over the rest of time? How does this fit into providence?
  
6. What kind of impact did the first century church make on Greco-Roman society? What is the lesson for us?
  
7. What will be the result if we fail to accept the fact that we are workers in the plan of God? What does the parable of the talents teach regarding this?
  
8. Who brought you or your family to Christ? What if that had not happened? How can God use you in a similar way to impact someone with the gospel?
  
9. This study has helped me in the following way: