

Packing Your Child's Suitcase

Purpose

Colossians 1:13-28

November 12, 2023

HDBC

A young mom explained to her 6-year-old daughter, Kayla, that she was taking a course to help make her a better mommy. The next Sunday, after church, Kayla became upset and had a tantrum because she was not getting her way. Both parents tried to calm her. But with tears streaming down her face and in a loud voice, Kayla announced to her mother, *You told me you were taking a course to make you a better mommy. Well, it's not working!*

There are several things wrong with that picture. **First**, it is not the child's place to determine if the mom is being a good parent. Kids are not able to make that kind of assessment. So, parents, no matter what unkind things your kids say about your parenting skills, let it go in one ear and out the other.

Second, the kind of job that you are doing as a parent cannot be evaluated in the middle of the process. It is better seen when the job is done.

Kids leave the nest in several different ways and at different times in their lives.

College: Some make the break when they go off to college.

Work: Others when they get out of high school and begin to work.

Military: Still others when they join the military.

Marriage: Others when they are married.

At some point your child will leave the nest. When they do they will take some things with them. Clothes, books, computer, music, personal items. Among the things that they take there is a special suitcase that needs to be packed by you. A suitcase that will contain essential ingredients for their survival in the adult world. **Review**

A Ticket Home Heaven

Wisdom Ability to discern and make good decisions

An Anchor The word of God. Stand against dangerous currents.

Before they leave home your children need to receive a **sense of purpose in life**. They need to know why they exist.

Without a sense of purpose they will simply **drift through life**. When they get to the end there will be a gnawing emptiness. A hunger to have done something that really mattered. If they know their purpose, they will be able to reach the end of their life with a sense of satisfaction.

Rick Warren's wisdom and practical insight were first introduced to pastors and church leaders in his book ***The Purpose-Driven Church***. Now let me quickly state that I appreciate the insights from the younger Rick Warren. I'm not much of a fan of older Rick Warren. But the concepts in his book helped thousands of churches refocus their priorities and redefine their mission.

But it was ***The Purpose-Driven Life*** that captured the minds of people across the nation and world. It became a number one best-seller and continues to be read and discussed. We studied it as a church many years ago.

Why so popular? Because people are hungry to have a purpose. Hungry to know why they are here. They want to answer the question, **why am I alive?**

I think God's purpose for our lives can be reduced to three things. These are found in **Colossians 1:13-28**

This is a long passage. In it we find a great description of who Jesus is and of His relationship with creation and with His Father. But it also reveals our purpose in life. The underlying principle is found in verse 16. So, let's look at that one verse as a starting point and I will point out others as we go through.

Read Colossians 1:16

Did you catch it? We were created by him, and FOR him. Not only did He make all things, but He made all things **for himself**. In other words . . .

It's not about me. It is about God. We must teach our children that our purpose in life is not found in a focus on self, but in our relationship and response to our creator. You're not first, God is. You're not even second, other are. As Gale Sayers declared in his biography, ***I Am Third***. It starts with God! He's first.

The LORD has made everything for his own purposes. Proverbs 16:4

Mug; Candle holder. Paper weight. Sand box shovel.

Shirt; Could be used as dust rag, bandage, or flag.

Wedding Band: Could be used as napkin holder, toy, draw circles.

Each will find its fulfillment when it is used for what the creator had in mind.

It is not about us, it is about God. We will only find peace and fulfillment as we discover and fulfill God's purpose for our lives. It starts by acknowledging that He is God and we are not. He created us and has a purpose for our lives.

So, **what is my purpose? Three things.**

1. To Know God (13-14)

When I say our purpose is ***to know God*** I don't mean in the sense of knowing about God, but in the sense of having a relationship with God. The Bible makes it clear that we have all been separated from God because of sin and therefore do not have an intimate, personal relationship with Him. That's reflected in the words ***rescued, transferred, and redemption***, in these two verses. Because of our sinful status, we needed for those things to happen.

Genesis 1 records the account of creation. It clearly states that everything has been created by God. **The pinnacle** of God's creation was the man and the woman whom we know of as Adam and Eve. When it came to their creation, God did something for them not done for any other part of creation..

He breathed into them the breath of life. When he did that he imparted something into them that no other part of creation had. It was a part of Himself. It was His life in them. Because of that they were able to fellowship with God, to know God, to relate to God. And they did. But not forever. Adam and Eve were given the choice of staying in this perfect relationship with God or choosing sin. They chose sin and lost their relationship with God. They no longer walked with God in the cool of the day.

They were made to be in a relationship with God. And so were we. Through their decision they became slaves of sin, spiritual darkness and death. So are we. They needed to be rescued and restored. So do we.

Their sin did not change their purpose of knowing God, it simply changed the reality of it. But God loved them, pursued them, rescued them, restored them. He wants to do the same with us. That's the point of Col. 1:13-14; 21-22.

The first purpose of your life and your child's life is to **know God**. But that is not all. There is a second purpose that is seen here.

2. To Reflect God (19-22)

Read verse 17: Reminder of the divine nature of Jesus. He was as much God as He was man. Jesus was no ordinary person. He was the God man.

Read verse 20: God has always been in the reconciling business. Some people can be at odds with other people and be completely unmoved by it. Some people have no problem with broken relationships. NOT GOD. From the moment Adam and Eve broke the relationship with God, he has been working to reconcile them and all others to Himself.

Read verses 21-22: Even while we were **alienated from Him, hostile in our thoughts, and consumed with evil deeds**, He reached down and built a bridge to bring us back to Himself. That bridge was His Son, Jesus.

Now, notice the second half of verse 22. Here we find the purpose. ***In order to present you before Him (God the Father) holy and blameless and beyond reproach***.

In order to speaks of purpose. It is God's that we be holy, blameless and beyond reproach. In other words, it is God's desire and purpose for us that we reflect God. Those characteristics describe God Himself. It is my purpose to **reflect God**. I am to embrace a pursuit of those very things. Peter reiterates this in 1:15-16.

Like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.

We were created to glorify God! And that can best happen when we cooperate with God in transforming us into the image Jesus and when we embrace His character. Hear Romans 8:29

*For those whom He foreknew, He also **predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son,***

Teach your children that there is a three-fold purpose to their lives.
First two: To know God. To reflect God.

3. To Proclaim God (28)

We are to share Jesus with the world, beginning with those closest to us and expanding to embrace the entire world.

Proclaim – to publicly declare a completed truth or happening. We are called to declare the good news of Jesus to the world. God could have used any number of methods to share his plan of salvation with the world.

Angels

Direct revelation – as with Moses on Mt. Sinai

Jesus Himself could have stayed on the earth

But He has chosen to use those who have already come to know Him to be the ones to reach out to others and tell them how they can also come to know Him. One of the last things Jesus said to His disciples was . . .

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Mark 16:15

Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 2 Corinthians 5:18

He who wins souls is wise. Proverbs 11:30

God is at work in the world doing many different things. But among them all there is one task that stands out as the most important. It is His passion, His love, His Mission. That is bringing people into a right relationship with Himself. He desires this for every person.

He uses us to tell others about Him and to show them how they, too, can become children of God. He invites us to join him in this great work. In fact, He does more than invite us, he commands us. It is our primary job.

This mission is not just for pastors and missionaries. It is for every believer. It is the mission that God has given to you. It's a part of our purpose.

You may find yourself working as a nurse, attorney, school teacher, accountant, hair stylists, chemist, engineer, or some other career. Your career is not your main mission. Your mission is to tell people about Jesus. What a wonderful privilege it is to join with God in this work.

We must teach our children what their purpose in life is.

To Know God. To Reflect God. To Proclaim God

Our greatest fear should not be of failure, but of succeeding at something that doesn't really matter.

The more your kids understand purpose the more satisfying every day of their lives will be. Eric Liddell was one of the fastest men of his generation. Walked away from the fame of sports to follow the Lord to the mission field. But listen to what he said about embracing purpose.

***I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast!
And when I run I feel his pleasure. — Eric Liddell***

Fulfillment in life is never found in following the easy road, the safe road, the busy road. It is found in choosing the one road for your life that enables you to fulfill your God-given purpose.

***A ship in harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are built for. —
Philanthropist John Shedd (1850–1926). They are built to sail on the open seas,
where it's challenging, dangerous, and thrilling.***