

“MORE PURPOSE”

PURPOSE: The reason for which something is done or created or for which something exists.

AGE OLD QUESTION: WHY AM I HERE????

New York Times January 2018 article: Only around 25% of American adults say they have a clear sense of what makes their lives meaningful.

Study: eehealth.org

**Having a sense of purpose and meaning in life affects our physical & mental health.
-buffer against stress, anxiety & depression**

All of us are living life at one of three levels:

- 1) Survival.....just barely getting by....just existing!
 - controlled by circumstances
 - put in their time and live for the weekend

- 2) Success....by the world's standards, you've got it made!
 - comfortable living, compared to the rest of the world.
 - you have possessions
 - you have a job
 - you have freedom
 - you have good health

Many people feel successful, but so many still ask,

“If I’m so successful, how come I don’t feel fulfilled?”

*It takes more than success and it takes more than status to satisfy.

- 3) Significance..... not just survival or being successful.....

**-BUT KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING YOUR PURPOSE!
WHAT IS YOUR GOD FIT ON THIS EARTH!!!**

WE CAN MISS SOME SIGNIFICANCE.....UNLESS YOU GO TO THE CREATOR!

Google searched: “common things used for the wrong purpose”

Spaghetti-single serving
Chinese food carton-plate
Heinz 57 Logo-tap it
Plastic Wrap -tabs
Pop can: straw holder
Insta Pot- cover holder
Oven drawer -warmer

HOW DO YOU FIND YOUR SIGNIFICANCE?? GO TO YOUR CREATOR!

Three things you need to know to find significance!

#1 You need to know how much you matter to God - that gives you significance.

Genesis 1:27 ”So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him.”

-Devil has distorted that image and added confusion!

-God is NOT the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33)

Psalm 139:13-16 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

You were created in God’s image—and *that’s* your true identity.

Now, the reality is that a lot has happened to mar God’s image in you and me.

-Some of it is stuff that was done to us; some of it is stuff we’ve done.

-And so God’s image has been marred in us, but it’s *still* our true identity.

You need to know that you are significant!

-You are important!

-You are of value!

EXAMPLE: Extras in a movie!

-Main actors....AND EXTRAS!

-YOU ARE the main character in the story of Your life!

#2: You need to know the meaning of life - that gives significance.

-YOU WERE CREATED TO LIVE FOREVER WITH YOUR CREATOR!

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

-Our calling: **GO AND MAKE MORE DISCIPLES** (Other followers of Christ)

-BAPTISM: I once was THIS.....Now I am THIS!

-From Darkness to Light

-From Lost to Found

-From Death to Life

-OUR PURPOSE IS A RESCUE MISSION!!

#3: You know God's purposes for your life and you're living them out and that gives you significance.

EVERYONE HAS BEEN GIVEN THE SAME MISSION!

Matthew 28:18-21 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

AND GOD HAS MADE YOU TO BE HIS HANDS AND FEET ON THIS EARTH!

Ephesians 2:8-10 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

WHY ARE YOU HERE???

TO BE THE HANDS AND FEET OF JESUS!

-TO MAKE AN IMPACT!

You were created in God's image—GOD'S HANDIWORK.....and *that's* your true identity.

Now, the reality is that a lot has happened to mar God's image in you and me.

-Some of it is stuff that was done to us; some of it is stuff we've done.

MANY OF US BENCH OURSELVES BECAUSE OF OUR STORIES!

-Deem ourselves as unqualified!

YOUR LIFE IS A UNIQUE STORY!

-THE GOOD.....THE BAD.....AND THE UGLY!

Romans 8:28 “In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

God works all things for good to make us like Jesus.

YES it does include **“all.”**

Does that include bad things?

Painful things?

Does it even include mistakes we make from sinning?

Yes, it does. In all things God works for the good of those who love him.

*It doesn't say all things are good because there's a lot of bad in the world, but in all things God uses it to make me like Christ.

Two things we try to hide and forget, but can make us more like Jesus!

1. **GOD USES TROUBLE TO TEACH US TO TRUST HIM.**

-in the Bible this word “trouble” is often called “trials,”

“trials” are situations designed by God to draw us closer to him.

They're not designed to hurt us; they're designed to help us.

When things go too good in your life.... It doesn't take any faith, it doesn't take any character.

James 1:2-5 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

LISTEN: WE DON'T LEARN TO TRUST...UNTIL WE NEED TO TRUST!

God is far more interested in your life, in what you are, than in what you do.

God is always more interested in what you are, your character, than he is in what you do,

Why? Because you're not taking your career to heaven with you, but you are taking your character.

Every problem has a purpose.

I don't care whether you caused it, somebody else caused it,
the devil caused it,

I don't care who caused it; every problem has a purpose.

And what is that purpose? It's to make me like Jesus Christ, to build character in my life.

So, the next time you get into some trouble and you go, "Why is this happening?"

-Change it to: What is God trying to teach me through this?

Author Lee Stroebel says, "*God can use suffering... to strengthen our commitment to Him, to force us to depend on grace, to bind us together with other believers, to produce the sermon, to foster sensitivity, to discipline our minds, to spend our time wisely, to stretch our hope, to cause us to know Christ better and deeper, to make us long for truth, to lead us to repentance from sin, to teach us to give thanks in times of sorrow, to increase our faith, to strengthen our character, and on and on and on.*"

2. GOD USES TEMPTATION TO TEACH US TO OBEY.

I think it's important to be real clear about the definition of temptation, what we're talking about.

Temptations are situations designed by Satan and they're intended to harm us.

God never tempts us to do evil. The Bible is very clear about that.

They are designed by Satan, intended to hurt us.

James 1:13-15 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. ¹⁵Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

FEW PRACTICAL THINGS.....

1) remember that it is not a sin to be tempted.

Jesus never sinned, yet he was tempted. It's not a sin to be tempted.

Martin Luther used to say, "*You can't keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from building a nest in your hair;*" if you have enough hair for them to build a nest in, that is. *It's not a sin to be tempted.*

2) Everyone is tempted in the same ways....by our weaknesses!!

3) It's important to remember that you'll never outgrow temptation.

NEVER

NEW MINDSET: **TEMPTATION is not bad....it is an opportunity to do GOOD!**

1 Corinthians 10:13 says, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."

When you are tempted.....**GOD WANTS YOU TO WIN!**

HE PLACED HIS SPIRIT IN US AND WANTS US TO WIN!!!

2 Timothy 1:7 For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.

I am absolutely convinced:

Your greatest testimony as a believer is how you handle TROUBLES & TEMPTATIONS

TROUBLES teach you to TRUST
TEMPTATIONS teach you to OBEY
WE ARE ALL STUDENTS OF LIFE!

The ULTIMATE goal.....is to TRUST & OBEY!

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.