

UNLIKELY HEROES *Ordinary Life, Extraordinary Purpose* July 15, 2018

“Use your ordinary life to live out your extraordinary purpose”

Daily walking w/ Jesus, fulfilling God’s purpose for our lives.

Jesus knows you. Jesus made you. He has a plan / a purpose for your life

Ephesians 1:4 TPT He chose us to be His very own, joining us to Himself before He laid the foundation of the universe! Because of His great love, He ordained us that we’d be seen as holy in His eyes w/ an unstained innocence. **5** It was always in ***His perfect plan*** to adopt us as His delightful children, through our union w/ Jesus, the Anointed One, so that His tremendous love that cascades over us would glorify His grace—for the same love He has for His Beloved One Jesus, He has for us. **This unfolding plan brings Him great pleasure!**

It’s up to each of us to spend time w/ God & make sure that we have the Lord’s will & purposes for our lives.

Isaiah 26:3 GNB You give perfect peace to those who keep their purpose firm and put their trust in you.

“Our ordinary life for His extraordinary purpose!”

Luke 23:26 As they led Jesus away, a man named **Simon**, who was from Cyrene, happened to be coming in from the countryside. The soldiers seized him & put the cross on him & made him carry it behind Jesus.

Mark 15:21 A passerby named **Simon**, who was from Cyrene, (*in Libya - could have been an African black man or since it was a Greek colony he may have been more olive skinned*) was coming in from the countryside just then, & the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus’ cross. (Simon was the father of Alexander & Rufus.) **22** They brought Jesus to a place called Golgotha.

In all Synoptic Gospels, but Simon of Cyrene is nowhere else mentioned.

JESUS PREDICTING HIS DEATH

Luke 9:22 “The Son of Man must suffer many terrible things,” “He’ll be rejected by the elders, the leading priests, & the teachers of religious law. He’ll be killed, but on the third day He’ll be raised from the dead.”
23 Then He said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be My follower, you must give up your own way, **take up your cross daily**, & follow Me.

I wonder if people remembered Jesus’ words when they saw Simon?

“Take up your cross daily, & follow Me.” What does it mean? **It doesn’t mean** a burden or weight or strained relationship or illness...w/ self-pity say, “it’s just the cross I have to bear...” Nope.

It means death by the most painful, humiliating way possible. We think of the cross as atonement, forgiveness, grace, & love. But they thought of it as torturous death. It means dying to self; surrendering all to Jesus. It means sacrifice your own ideas, plans, purposes, dreams, & desires in exchange for His! Are you willing to lose close friends, your family, your reputation, your job, even your life? That’s taking up your cross.

Hopefully, after receiving an extreme close-up of the suffering Jesus endured **on his/our behalf**, Simon came to trust Jesus as His Savior. Speculation/church tradition says Simon later became a Christian... Other theories state that he was already a follower of Jesus before the crucifixion—and was a leader in the early church.

What an example for his sons!

There’s also tradition that the **Rufus** mentioned in Mark 15:21 is the same **Rufus** mentioned by Paul in Romans 16:13 along w/ his mother. If

this is the case, then it would lend credence to the idea that Simon & his family were prominent in the early church.

5 Benefits of Daily Walking In His Purpose & Plan for Your Life

1. Gives Meaning to Your Life – You were made to have meaning; “Without God, life has no meaning. Without meaning, life has no significance. Without significance, life has no hope.”

Isaiah 49:4a ... *“But my work seems so useless! I have spent my strength for nothing and to no purpose...”*

Job 7:6 “My days fly faster than a weaver’s shuttle. They end w/out hope.”

“The greatest tragedy is not death, but life w/out God’s purposes & plans.” *Hope is essential to your life. Hope comes from having a sense of purpose.*

Jeremiah 29:11 “I know the plans I have for you,” “They’re plans for good; not for disaster, to give you a future & a hope.”

Ephesians 3:20 MSG God can do anything; far more than you can ever imagine, guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working w/in us, His Spirit deeply & gently w/in us.

2. Simplifies Your Life – it defines what you do & what you don’t do; which activities are essential & which aren’t; “Does this ‘activity’ help me fulfill one of God’s purposes for my life?”; Gives you a foundation to make decisions, allocate time, & use your resources instead of: your circumstances, pressures, & mood/feelings –then you try to do too much=causing stress, fatigue, conflict, & anxiety!

You “People Pleasers” it’s impossible to do everything that people want you to do. You have just enough time to do God’s will.

Proverbs 13:7 MSG A pretentious, showy life is an empty life; a plain & simple life is a full life.

If you can’t get it all done, it means you’re trying to do more than God intended you to do. All of this leads to a saner & peaceful life.

3. Focuses Your Life – it concentrates your effort & energy on what’s important; you’re effective because you’re selective; it’s normal to get distracted, but for many of us it’s *aimless distraction*;

*** We’re busy, but we’re not producing! ***

Real focus on God’s purpose, you won’t keep changing directions, jobs, relationships, & churches trying to fulfill an emptiness.

Ephesians 5:17 Don’t act thoughtlessly but understand what the Lord wants you to do.

****Example of the sun magnified light can set grass/paper on fire and a laser beam can cut through steel.****

The people who’ve made the greatest difference in history were the most focused like the Apostle Paul who said,

Philippians 3:13b ...I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past & looking forward to what lies ahead.

Focus your life to have more impact. Stop trying to do it all. Do less. Prune away even good activities, do only what matters most.

Philippians 3:15 MSG Let’s keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us. If any of you have something

else in mind, something less than total commitment, God'll clear your blurred vision-you'll see it yet! Now that we're on the right track, let's stay on it.

4. Motivates Your Life – purpose produces passion; energy; drive; excitement; positive emotions; Meaningless work wears us down, wears you out, zaps our strength, & robs our joy;

Luke 24:32 AMP ...Were not our **hearts greatly moved & burning within us** while He was talking w/ us on the road & as He opened & explained to us the Scriptures?

5. Prepares You for Eternity – God's plans will effect the Kingdom; build an eternal legacy; heavenly minded; driven by eternity
"You weren't put on earth to be remembered. You were put here to prepare for eternity."

Romans 14:10b we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.
Romans 14:12 Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God.

Question #1 "What did you do w/ my Son, Jesus Christ?" Did you accept what Jesus did for you & did you learn to love & trust Him?

John 14:6 I am the Way, the Truth, the Life. No one can come to the Father except through Me.

Question #2 "What did you do with what I gave you?" What did you do w/ your life?-All your gifts, talents, opportunities, energy, relationships, & resources that God gave you?