



Bible Discussion- May 13th, 2020

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WHAT IS GOD'S PURPOSE FOR YOUR LIFE (AND HOW TO FIND IT)

Waking up feeling purposeless is incredibly frustrating. You look around and see your friends and coworkers living passionate, engaged, meaningful lives. They have deep relationships, rewarding jobs and a sense of direction that compels them to hop out of bed each morning with a spring in their step.

You know that God has something good in store for you. You don't believe he intends you to live a life of painful drudgery in which each day is a total drag. After all, the Bible is chock full of passages about joy. While this certainly doesn't mean that every single day is a parade and circus, it does mean that an overall sense of gladness should permeate your life.

In Psalm 63:7, David said, "...for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I will sing for joy." How can you get to that place? Where, instead of wandering aimlessly through life, you're actually *singing* for joy (or just making a joyful noise if you're not the singing type)?

In this post, we're going to first talk about some key signs that you may not be living in the fullness of God's purpose for you. Then we'll give some key suggestions for how to begin living a meaningful, enthusiastic, joyful life.

6 SIGNS THAT YOU MAY NOT BE LIVING IN GOD'S PURPOSE

Before we dive into this point, we need to make at least one caveat. In one sense, you are *always* living in God's purpose. God is God and He works all things, including your life, according to his purposes. Nothing can happen without God ordaining it.

Psalms 138:1-2 says, "I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me." This is key in understanding God's purpose for your life. God has numbered your days and will fulfill every purpose He has for you.

However, our choices and actions also really matter. In some ways, this is a mystery we can't fully understand, but that doesn't mean it's not true. We can choose to do things that will bring us more joy and give us more of a sense of purpose. That's where we're headed in this post. We want to help you identify those choices you can make to bring more excitement and God-given purpose into your life.

But first, here are 6 signs that you don't have much purpose in your life.

YOU'RE BLATANTLY LIVING IN SIN.

Let's start with the obvious here. If you're blatantly disobeying the Bible, you're not living in God's purpose and you will certainly experience a sense of aimlessness in your life. This one is pretty straightforward so we don't need to spend too much time here.

YOU LACK JOY AND EXCITEMENT.

If you wake up every day filled with apathy or dread or total boredom, you're probably not doing what you were meant to do. God has created you uniquely, has really good things planned for you and one of the fruits of the Spirit is joy (Galatians 5:22). Sure, there will be difficult things you encounter that require patience and persistence, but overall you should have a sense of joy and excitement that fills your days, your work and your relationships.

YOU WORK SO THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORK.

You know the feeling of pointless work. You go to the office, clock in, do your job, then go home and collapse in front of the television. You work for the weekends and for retirement. All true joy you experience comes from things outside of work. From hobbies or friends or side jobs.

Ecclesiastes 8:15 says, "And I commend joy, for man has nothing better under the sun but to eat and drink and be joyful, for this will go with him in his toil through the days of his life that God has given him under the sun."

Would you say that this kind of joy characterizes your life and work? If not, you may need to rethink where you're headed.

YOU FEEL STUCK.

If you desperately want a change but also feel totally stuck in your life, that's almost *certainly* a sign that you're not walking according to God's purpose. Those who are stuck want to go in a particular direction but don't know how to get there. So they spin their wheels, feeling endlessly frustrated but unsure of how to make the frustration end. Do you feel trapped?

YOU HAVE NO DIRECTION.

If you don't know God's purpose for your life, you constantly feel a sense of aimlessness. You feel as though you're wandering from thing to thing without any forward progress. Nothing excites you and you don't have any specific goals you're working toward. Unlike the Israelites, who wandered for 40 years yet still had a goal (the Promised Land), you don't even have a goal in front of you.

6 WAYS TO REGAIN YOUR PURPOSE

In his classic book "[The Lord of the Rings](#)," J.R.R. Tolkien wrote poem that included the line, "Not all who wander are lost." The same applies to you. Even though you feel like you're wandering without any true purpose, that doesn't mean you're lost. You can regain your sense of purpose and discover what God has for your life.

Here are 6 ways to discover God's purpose for your life.

GO TO GOD IN PRAYER.

Again, let's start with the obvious. If you feel purposeless, ask God to give you wisdom and direction. James 1:5 states, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."

That's incredibly good news. God *wants* to give you a purpose. He wants to bestow divine wisdom on you. It's not like God is holding out on you to make you miserable. He desires you to have a joyful, ambitious, purposeful life. Ask God for purpose and expect Him to give it to you.

DIG INTO GOD'S WORD.

The primary way God speaks to us is through the Bible. This means that one of the first things you should do in your search for God's purpose is to start digging into scripture. Now, you won't find any verses that tell you to become a dance instructor or painter, but you will begin to understand the heart of God.

Psalms 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." God's word brings light to paths that otherwise seem dark. In the Bible you learn how to live wisely in God's world, which is the first step toward finding your purpose.

DETERMINE YOUR GIFTS AND STRENGTHS.

God has given you very specific gifts and strengths. Maybe you're a math whiz or a wise counselor. Maybe you have a mind for electronics or business. Maybe you're great at organizing people and getting things done. God's purpose for you probably involves the things you're already good at.

This is where education can be particularly valuable. Going to college or going back to college allows you to discover your gifts and then determine how you're going to use them. It also connects you with people who want to help you find your purpose.

DETERMINE YOUR PASSIONS.

What is one thing you're particularly passionate about? Really, this can be anything. Business, art, economics, alleviating poverty, whatever. If money wasn't an issue, what would you love to do?

Determining your passions often helps you figure out what God has called you to do. It's often said that God works at the intersection of our gifts and our passions. Where do your gifts meet your passions? That may be God's purpose for you.

BRING OTHERS INTO YOUR LIFE.

Proverbs 11:14 says, "Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety." In other words, one of the main ways God will help you find your purpose is through others.

A caveat needs to be made here. Your counselors should be people you *trust*. Whether this is your professors, parents or friends, it needs to be people who have your back and want the best for you. You want wise counselors to help you find God's purpose for you.

TAKE A SOLITUDE RETREAT.

Sometimes it can be incredibly helpful to get away from it all and take some unhurried time to think, pray and journal. You don't have to spend a week in the woods for this to be effective. Even just a day away from the hustle and grind can be hugely rewarding.

During these retreats, allow yourself to simply be still. To ponder. To ask God for direction and listen for His voice. This doesn't need to be complicated and doesn't require any elaborate rituals. Hebrews 11:6 is a reminder that God *always* rewards those who seek him. He's not hiding in the dark, trying to keep his will hidden from you. He wants to guide you.

IN THE END, TRUST GOD

Trying to discover your life purpose can be a stressful, overwhelming thing. It can seem like such a big, confusing, frustrating subject. You want to move forward, but you're not sure how. You want to find your purpose, but you feel like you're aimlessly wandering.

But you can trust God to lead you where he wants you to go. As Psalm 23:2-3 says, "He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

You may feel confused, but God doesn't.