

Our Purpose in Life

Acts 2:1-21

Introduction

We are in the season of graduation. It is a time of endings and beginnings. Childhood, with grade school and high school is ending and adulthood, with its pursuit of purpose in life is beginning. Pentecost is an ending and beginning. The Easter season has ended, and Ordinary Time is beginning. The focus for the winter and spring months has been celebrating the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus. With Pentecost, the focus shifts to the Church Age, with her purpose and mission.

The Worldly Purpose of Man

To understand the purpose of the church, we must first find the purpose of humankind. Why are we here? The world doesn't have an answer to that question. According to the philosophy of the world, we are here because of millions of years' worth of accidents. If life is an accident, then there is no meaning or purpose. The best one can come up with under this way of thinking is that the purpose of life is to be "fulfilled" and everyone chooses for himself what is fulfilling. I guess the advantage of that worldview is that if you don't like where your life is headed you can just change your purpose and make it fit the direction your life is going. It gives validity to giving up and failure is merely changing course.

The Biblical Purpose of Man

The Bible tells us that God created us. And He created us for a purpose, for His purpose. Paul says in **2 Timothy** (read **2 Timothy 1:8-9**). In **Genesis 1**, we read about the first purpose God gave man (read **Genesis 1:28**) God told man to rule the earth as His representative. In **John 17**, Jesus says (read **John 17:20-21**). His desire for us is to be at one with Him and the Father. Put simply, we were created to love, serve, and worship God.

What Went Wrong?

Of course, sin messed that all up. Our fallen human natures don't love, serve, or worship God. Our fallen selves love things as we see Houses are being built with more closet space, people rent storage units, and we still don't have enough space for our things. We serve power for we desire to be in control of our lives. We worship comfort as we are spoiled by conveniences.

The Remedy

For us to be able to fulfill our purpose we must get rid of the sin problem. But there's nothing we can do about it. That's why God sent His Son. Jesus died on the cross to take away our sins. He gave His life to reconcile us to the Father and while we still have our sin nature, He has given us the desire to love, serve, and worship God. That is what salvation is all about.

Everyone Who Calls on the Name of the Lord

Verse 21 of **Acts 2** says: *Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* How does one call upon the name of the Lord? We see the answer to that question at Pentecost. When the Holy

Spirit came upon the disciples, there were three signs. They heard a sound like wind; the Holy Spirit came in power; They saw tongues as of fire; the Holy Spirit purified them. They all spoke of *the mighty works of God (v. 11)* in other languages; the Spirit has brought salvation to everyone. There are no boundaries in God's love.

The Purpose of the Church

Last week, we learned that we are to be witnesses of Jesus to the world. The purpose of the church is to bring salvation to the world by proclaiming the Gospel. But we lack the power to do that. So, we look to Pentecost for the answer. The answer lies in the Holy Spirit.

Means of Grace

As the Holy Spirit works through Word and Sacrament to forgive our sins and strengthen our faith, He shows us our purpose and gives us the desire and power to work towards it. May we learn to follow the examples of the apostles and fulfill our purpose of spreading the Gospel wherever we are.

*And the peace of God,
Which surpasses all understanding,
Will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
