

CROSS TRAINING – ESSENTIALS 2, CLASS 2

UNDERSTANDING THE CHRISTIAN’S PURPOSE

“Clearly formulate why you exist and what would be missing if you didn’t. You will never know what a distraction is until you know what your goal and purpose are. You must enunciate what your final goal is. It is imperative that somehow, before God, you take that time to write out on a blank sheet of paper why you exist. How wonderful it would be to clearly write out what the purpose of your life is really about and in light of that determine what will refresh and rejuvenate you as you pursue that purpose.”

- Ravi Zacharias

1. **The fact that you are a Christian carries with it a job description.**
 - a. Many Christians have ignorantly believed that the world’s idea of purpose is also their life calling – the 5 C’s (cash, cars, careers, condos and cuties).
 - b. The Christian has a new identity and specific purpose. It is your responsibility and opportunity to know and live God’s purpose for your life. **If you don’t have a daily relationship with Him and if you aren’t actively fulfilling the Great Commission, you are not walking in your life purpose.**
 - c. The Christian’s life purpose is a life of meaning, accomplishment and fulfillment.
 - d. If you do not understand your new identity and if you have not articulated a well-defined purpose, in line with His Word, you will experience little of the abundant and fulfilling life God has planned for you. Some stats and notes:
 - Written goals improve productivity at least 30%.
 - You can only plan 60% of your time. 20% is un-controllable, 20% is spontaneous.
 - 80% of the value of a set comes from 20% of the activities.
 - **Conclusion: Your most effective accomplishments will arise out of a well defined, written out purpose, and strict adherence to that.**

Relevant Note: Harvard followed a graduating class for 25 years to see what impact a written purpose statement would have on an individual’s accomplishments. Only 3% of that class had written out their life goals and purposes. At the end of 25 years the 3% who had written out goals had more net worth than the other 97% combined. John F. Kennedy was one of the 3% who had a written out purpose. He was killed before the 25 years were finished but the main goal of his written purpose statement was to become president of the United States of America.

2. **God has a wonderful, elaborate plan for your life. Will you follow it?**

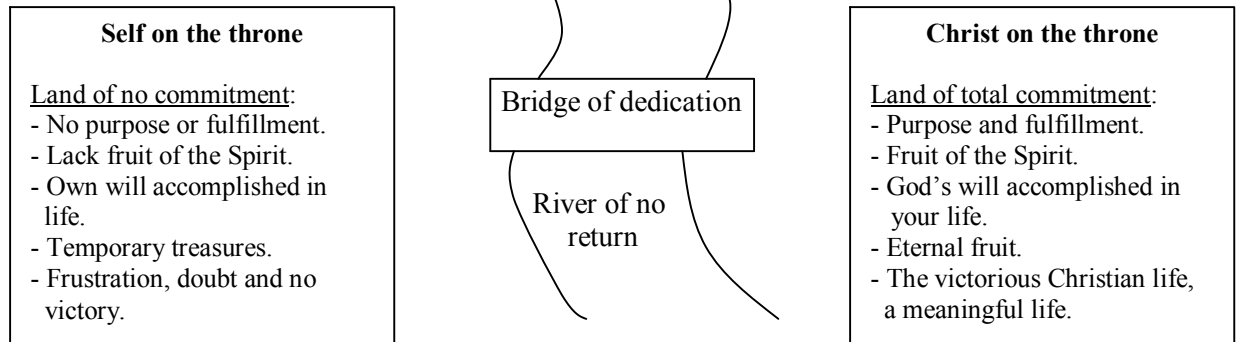
Verses: Jer.29: 11 – *“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”*

Eph.2:10 – *“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

 - a. There are a few main callings every Christian is called to, and created for. They are:
 1. To know God personally.
 - a. This is a personal, daily relationship.
 - b. It affects every other aspect of your life.
 2. To make Him known, to glorify Him in all you do.
 - a. You are called to be active in making Him known.
 - b. This is your job description – not a matter of opinion!
 3. To develop relationships, illustrating His love to others.
 - a. The kingdom of God is founded on relationships.

- b. There are individual callings inside the context of the 3 listed above. These callings will always work towards those listed above.
1. It is important to realize these more individual callings by learning to walk in the Spirit, knowing His will (Rom. 12:1-2).

Figure 1. Commitment to purpose.



3. **Set short and long range goals to keep on target.** Pray about these goals.
 - a. The secret of good goals: S.M.A.R.T is a great goal-making acronym; it stands for **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ction oriented, **R**ealistic and within a **T**imeline. Periodically evaluate your goals in light of your purpose.
 - b. Pick goals, which will help facilitate your purpose. Some examples:
 - This week I will begin memorizing a scripture each week.
 - This month I will witness to at least 10 people.
 - This semester, I will make a habit of having a 45-minute quiet time every morning.
 - This year I will learn to prepare and present my testimony in a public setting.
 - Over the next four years of college I will read through the entire Bible and be committed to growing in my knowledge of the Word.
 - c. Periodically evaluate yourself to determine whether these goals are being met.
 - Have a friend keep you accountable to these goals.

4. **Be motivated to accomplish your purpose.**
 - a. You can be incorrectly motivated by rewards (extrinsic motivation).
 - b. You can be correctly motivated from the heart (intrinsic motivation).
 1. Motivation builders: Scripture, walking in the Spirit (Christ on the throne), daily quiet times, prayer, obedience, faith, hope, grace, appreciation, love (agape), thankfulness, etc.
 2. Motivation barriers: Excess baggage (Heb.12:1-2), incorrect expectations, past failures, fear and unbelief (1Jn.4:18), goals that are too small, motivated by feelings and emotion not Truth, negative circumstances, poor balances, etc.
 3. Give these barriers to God, focus on Him.

5. **Avoid distractions and anything that will hinder you from accomplishing your purpose.** Evaluate your activities in light of your purpose and determine whether those activities are distracting you from your purpose or helping to accomplish that purpose.
 - a. Your daily choices will determine your lifetime effectiveness for Jesus Christ.
 - Determine to make good choices about your activities, choices that will energize you towards accomplishing your purpose.

6. **Manage your time wisely.** The Bible reminds us to “number our days.” Your time on this earth is limited, be wise about what you spend your time on.
 - a. I’ve heard many people say, “I’ll start this or that later on.” If you put it off now you may never start.
 - b. Make detailed schedules (daily, weekly, yearly), compare plans with your defined life purpose, learn to say no to activities that won’t benefit you.

7. **Jesus is the best example of someone who knew His purpose, planned for His purpose, was motivated for His purpose, avoided distractions, and managed His time wisely – all at the Father’s direction.** We are to imitate Him – Phil.2:5.
 - a. Jesus prepared for His purpose (Luke 2:52).
 - b. Jesus planned for His purpose (Mark 11:1-7, 14:13-15).
 - c. Jesus did only what the Father directed – He avoided distractions and managed time effectively, in order to accomplish His purpose.
 - d. Jesus accomplished His purpose by living daily in relationship with His Father, and by applying some of the basic principals we discussed today.

8. **Write out your life purpose.** Evaluate your activities in light of this purpose statement to determine whether they’ll help facilitate your purpose or distract you. Keep answers to 1 or 2 sentences to keep your purpose statement short, to the point and easy to remember.

What is your life purpose as it relates to knowing and having a relationship with God?

Verses: Mat.22:37-40, Mark 12:29-30, Jn.14:15. **Example summary:** *My relationship with Jesus is my utmost purpose – I will spend time with Him daily, growing in my relationship with him.*

What is your purpose as it relates to fulfilling the Great Commission? Verses: Matt.28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Romans 1:16, 1Cor. 9:16, 2Cor.5:18-19, Col.1:28-29 and Philemon v.6. **Example summary:** *I will be continually involved in evangelism and multiplication oriented discipleship, devoting my life to His service.*

What is your life purpose as it relates to having a family (note: not all Christians are necessarily called to this)? Verses: Eph. 5:22-31, 1Peter3:7, Prov.31, Eph.6:4, Col.3:21, Prov. 22:6 and 23:13, Deut.4:9 and 6:6-7. **Example summary:** *I will love my wife as Christ loved the church, serving her, respecting her, living in understanding with her and putting her good above my own. I will love my children, train them in God’s ways and develop quality relationships with each of them.*

What is your purpose as it relates to relationships with other people? Verses: Pr. 11:13 and 15, 15:1, 16:28, 17:17, 26:20, 27:10, Mt.6:14, Col.3:13 and 1Jn. 4:21. **Example summary:** *I will be a committed friend, forgiving those who wrong me, not gossiping, but keeping my word and letting God use me to bless others.*

What is your life purpose as it relates to your work (full time ministry, career, college, etc. – note: every Christian is called to be continually and actively involved in the ministry even if they hold an 8-5 job). Verses: Mat.28:18-20, 1Cor.3:13, Col.3:23, 1Thes.4:11 and 5:12.

Example summary: *I will work diligently at every task God gives me; I will live my life to further His kingdom.*

Summarize each answer into a final purpose statement. Add 3 lifetime goals you have. Include anything else you know you are called to which was not listed in those answers.

Application Points (start applying this principal now).

1. **Write 3 areas you think might be distracting you from your purpose. Also think about and write how knowing your purpose will affect your relationship with God.**
 1. _____.
 2. _____.
 3. _____.

2. **How will a knowledge of your purpose affect your relationships with others (include what changes it will produce in how you treat others - i.e. your spouse, children, friends, etc.)?**

3. **How will a knowledge of your purpose affect how you view and participate in the Great commission (what influence will it have on how you reach the lost)?**

Remember: *Your weaknesses and inability present no challenge to His plans for your life – your willingness does.* Choose today to accomplish all that God has planned for your life, through His power. Decide now that you will know your purpose, plan for your purpose, be motivated to accomplish your purpose, avoid distractions and manage your time wisely. God does have a wonderful plan for your life. Don't settle for the mundane.