

WHAT ON EARTH AM I HERE FOR? God's Vision For The Rest of Your Life

Ask my family and they'll tell you that I watch some pretty boring TV shows. One of my favorites is "Ask This Old House," and one of the best parts of the show is the segment when they bring out a new gadget, or invention, or tool, and they ask the experts "What is it?" They look at the thing, then guess what it does, what it's used for. They come up with some pretty crazy – and funny – ideas. Then, they tell them what the inventor had in mind, what the thing was really created to do, and they all go, "OOOh, NOW I get it!" Suddenly, they understand the new gizmo's purpose.

Your life is like that. Everyone struggles to find out the purpose for their life, the reason they are here. The only way to know, is to ask the Inventor. God is the One who made you, and He is the one who can tell you what your purpose is. He wants you to have the joy of exclaiming, "Now I get it! Now I understand what I'm here for!" So for the next few weeks, we're going to discover what God says are the purposes of your life.

Notice this Bible verse. ***"Everything, absolutely everything, got started in Him and find its purpose in Him."*** You were made *by* God and you were made *for* God. Until you understand that life isn't going to make sense.

In other words, your life isn't about you. It's not all about you! You were made *BY* God and you were made *FOR* God.

So the question we're asking is, What are earth am I here for? And we are going to discover what God, your inventor, made you for. And when you understand it, life will all make sense.

You are a unique invention. And your inventor wrote an Owner's Manual for you. The Owners' Manual is the Bible. **The Bible says that God has five purposes for your life:**

1. God planned me for His pleasure.

Everything in the universe was created so that God could enjoy it. The Bible says this in the book of Revelation ***"You, God, created everything. And it is for Your pleasure that they exist and were created."*** Everything in the universe, including you, was created for God to enjoy.

Wednesday our grand-daughter, Miriam, spent the night with us. Before I went to bed, I quietly snuck into her room just to watch her sleep. I take pleasure just in looking at her. She doesn't have to do anything special. The same is true with God. The Bible says, ***"The Lord takes pleasure in His people."***

Many people think that the only time God smiles on you is when you're doing something "spiritual." Like when you're going to church. Or when you help a poor person. Or when you show kindness to somebody. Or when you're reading your Bible. You don't realize that God gets pleasure out of just watching you be you because He created you.

The Bible says ***"Long before He laid down the earth's foundations, God had us in mind and He settled on us as the focus of His love."*** Before God even created the universe He thought of you. The entire universe was created simply so He could create the human race so He could love us. We are the focus of His love unlike anything else in creation. You were created to be loved by God.

He didn't need you. God wasn't lonely. God's never been lonely. But He wanted you and the number one reason you were made was simply to love you. God IS love. And He wants to love you.

If you ever grasp the profound truth I just shared with you and you let it sink into your mind and heart you will never again have a problem with inferiority or insecurity or low self

esteem. You are valuable to God. That will take away all those feelings of insecurity. God created you in order to love you.

God says it this way, ***“I don’t want your sacrifices. I want your love. I don’t want your offerings. I want you to know Me.”*** Circle “know” and “love.” That’s the first purpose of life. The most important thing you can know in life is to know that God created you to love you. And the most important thing you can do in life is to know and love Him back. That’s the number one purpose in life.

The tragedy is most people go through their entire life missing the purpose of it. They know all kinds of other things. They know the stock quotes, the sports scores, who’s on the cover of *People* magazine. They know the latest tweet. But they don’t know God.

The Bible says, ***“Some people have missed the most important thing in life. They don’t know God.”*** You may know about God – “I know He exists.” Knowing *about* God is not the same thing as knowing God. Do you know Him personally. Do you have relationship, a friendship, a love relationship with God.

The first purpose of life is to know and to love God.

What does this mean? It means: It doesn’t matter how many deals you close, how many sales you make, how many achievements you rack up, how many awards you win. At the end of the day, if you don’t know God a little bit better and love Him a little bit more, you have wasted that day. Why? Because God did not put you on this earth just to mark things off your To-Do list. That’s a shallow way to live. God did not put you on earth just to get up in the morning, go to work, come home, watch TV, go to bed, and go party on the weekend. He created you first and foremost to know and love Him, to get you ready for spending eternity with Him. If you’ve missed that you’ve missed the first purpose.

When you get up in the morning you ought to do something like this. Sit down on the edge of your bed and say, “God, if I don’t get anything else done today I want to get to know You a little bit better and I want to get to love You a little bit more.” Because that’s the first purpose in life. To know and love God who created you to be loved by Him. If at the end of the day you have done those two things, it doesn’t matter how many things have gone wrong in your life, if you know God a little bit better and love Him a little bit more that day was a success.

2. Here’s the second purpose of life. The Bible says God formed me for His family.

In other words, God wanted a family. He wanted more than creatures. He didn’t want just angels and animals and plants. He wanted a family. The Bible says the whole reason you exist is God wanted you to become a part of His family, which makes you unique. And that family is going to last forever.

The Bible says this ***“God’s unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into His own family, by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. This gave Him great pleasure.”*** God wanted a family and He wanted you to be a part of it.

Your spiritual family, God’s family, is going to even outlast your physical family. Physical families don’t last. They grow up, they move away, they die, there’s divorce, there’s death. Physical families don’t last. But the spiritual family of God is going to go on and on and on for eternity.

God never meant for you to go through life alone. In fact, God hates loneliness. When God created man, He put him in the Garden of Eden, and the first thing God said was ***“It is not good for man to be alone.”*** He’s not talking about whether you get married or not. That is irrelevant. Whether you marry or not is not the issue. The issue is God wants to put you in a spiritual family and that family is the family of God.

What is God’s family? ***“That family is the church of the living God. The support and the foundation of the truth.”*** This is very important. The church is not an institution. The church is

not a bureaucracy. The church is not an organization. It's not a social club. The church is God's family.

God says: ***"Love your spiritual family."*** **The second purpose of life is to learn to love others.**

You're going to have some troubles in your life – personal troubles, financial troubles, health troubles, emotional troubles. You may have marriage troubles if you get married. You're going to have relational troubles. You're going to have career troubles. When these tough times come along in life if you don't have a spiritual family you're going to collapse. You cannot fulfill God's purposes by yourself. God wired us to need each other. We need each other in the family of God.

Number one, you were planned for God's pleasure. So the first purpose of life is to get to know and to love God back. Second, God formed you for His family so the second purpose of life is get in a spiritual family and start learning to love other people. Love God and love other people.

3. God created me to become like Christ.

God wants you to grow up spiritually. When you grow up physically, that's automatic. You grew up automatically physically. But God wants you to grow up spiritually too. I know people who are 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 years old physically. And spiritually they're still babies. God says I want you to grow up while you're on earth, grow up spiritually.

The Bible says ***"From the very beginning God decided that those who came to Him -- and all along He knew who would -- should become like His Son."***

Don't misunderstand – God's plan is not for you to become a god but to become godly, with godly character. You're never going to be a god. There's some cults out there that teach you're divine, you're god. You're no god. If you were a god you'd have all your problems solved by now. You're not god.

Philippians says ***"In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus."*** So the question then becomes if God's third purpose in my life is to grow up spiritually and to become like Jesus, what is Jesus like? The Bible calls being like Jesus the fruit of the Spirit. It says, ***"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control."*** These are the qualities God wants to build in your life.

How does God then produce those qualities in my life? How does God grow character and help you grow up spiritually? By putting you in the exact opposite situation. He teaches you love by putting you around unlovely people.

How about peace? It's easy to be peaceful when you're out fishing by the lake. No. God teaches you real peace in the middle of chaos. When everything in your life is falling apart and you say, "God, I need Your peace," and He puts you full of peace.

How does God teach us patience? Bureau of Motor Vehicles! Traffic jams. Waiting for the pandemic to end.

The third purpose of life is: **To grow up spiritually not just physically.** He wants you to grow up and become like Christ -- to develop spiritual depth.

God is far more interested in what you are than in what you do. Why? Because you're not taking your career to heaven. You are taking your character. He's more interested in you than your job.

This year with all the troubles we are facing, people ask, "Why is this happening?" I'll tell you why. It's to help you grow up spiritually. Everything in life is designed to help you grow up spiritually – the good, the bad, the ugly, the stuff you bring on yourself, the stuff that other people do to you. God is not the author of evil. God never does evil. But God can bring good even out of bad.

Anybody can bring good out of good. Anybody can do that. But God specializes in bringing good out of bad. That's what Easter is all about. He turns crucifixion into resurrection. He takes a terrible thing – the death of His Son – and uses it to save the whole world. God brings good out of bad.

So the problem you're going through right now, every problem has a purpose. Every problem. And the purpose is to help you grow up spiritually. And the model of perfection is Jesus Christ.

God planned you for His pleasure. So the first purpose is to get to know and love God. God formed you for His family so the second purpose is to get in His family and start learning to love other people. The third purpose, God created you to become like Christ. He wants you to grow up spiritually, not just physically. There's a fourth purpose.

4. God shaped me to serve Him.

The Bible says in Psalm 139 *"You shaped me first inside and then out, You formed me in my mother's womb."* You are unique. You're not one in a million. You're one in 8 billion. God doesn't want you living up to the expectations of other people. God didn't create you to live to be what your parents wanted you to be, or what your husband or wife wanted you to be, or what your boyfriend or girlfriend wanted you to be. God wants you to be what He made you to be. You are unique. When you die and get to heaven God isn't going to say, "Why weren't you more like somebody else?" He's going to say, "Why weren't you more like you. I uniquely shaped you in your mother's womb for a purpose."

By the way, this is why we don't believe in abortion. If you had been aborted it would have short-circuited God's purpose for your life. Because God planned you before you were born.

God says there are accidental parents but there are no accidental babies. God had a plan for you.

The Bible says *"God made us what we are and in Christ Jesus God made us to do good works which He planned in advance for us to live our lives doing."* *"God made us to do good works."* Before you were even born God decided in advance what contribution He wanted you to make with your life. He wants you to serve Him on this planet. God didn't put you on this planet just to take up space, to breathe, to use resources, and to die. No. He put you on this planet to make a unique contribution, to serve Him.

Another name for "good works" is "ministry." Any time you use your talents and abilities to help somebody else you are actually ministering to them. You know the talents that you've got? I hate to tell you this, but they're not for your benefit. God gave you your talents for the benefit of helping other people. God gave me my talents not for me. They're for you.

God wired the universe so that we would need each other. Nobody's got it all together. That's why we need each other.

The fourth purpose of life: To serve God by serving others.

You serve God by serving others. On earth it's impossible to serve God directly. You can't serve Him directly. The only way you can serve God on earth is by serving other people. So anytime you help somebody else God says it's like you're doing it for Me. When you are unselfish, when you stop living self-centered and say, "I'm going to help other people with my life," God says, "Now you're getting the point." We serve God by serving others.

5. God made me for a mission.

Jesus said this *"In the same way that you gave me a mission in the world I give them a mission in the world,"* God has a unique mission in the world that He has for you and only you can fulfill it. If you do not fulfill it the world gets cheated.

God's plan has always been to love you and bring you close to Him forever. That's what God wants for ALL people. He wants all to be saved by knowing and trusting His Son, Jesus

Christ. And God is actually the One who works to bring people to faith now, and heaven to come. You can always say, “No!” and turn away. But God is the One whose great love compels and draws people to faith in Jesus.

Now, the moment I am brought to faith, God wants me to share the good news with others.

If I have the cure for cancer, and I kept it a secret and I didn't tell anybody that would be criminal. In fact, they ought to put me in prison. If I had that good news and didn't tell people, I should be locked up. But God has given us an even greater message – how to have our past forgiven, how to have a purpose for living, how to have a home in heaven. To not share that would be criminal.

So my fifth purpose and calling in life is: I'm sent to bring others into God's family.

The Bible calls it the ministry of reconciliation. You and I were born into a broken, sinful world. That means our default setting is that we are selfish, prideful, and we say “No” to God. And we are accountable for this wrong, this sin. It's like a slap in the face of the very God who loves you, and made you, and wants you.

What's worse is we can't fix this ourselves. We can't go back in time to undo the wrongs we have done. Instead they have to be paid for. And Jesus is the only perfect, sinless person, who CAN pay the penalty for your wrongs. And Jesus has paid with His life to bring you back to God. By His gift of love, Jesus chose to give up His life and die a horrible death for you. He has reconciled you to God the Father.

Now, you have a purpose of reconciliation. As long as you live on this earth – 30, 50, 80, 90 years – as long as you live you have a purpose to bring others into God's family. To share with others the greatest news, that they need also.

The 5th purpose God has for your life is to help other people so that they don't miss out on heaven. You can't do this after you've died and gone to heaven. But you can do this now, in this life. This is what on earth you are here for.

So friends, have you been trying to live by your own plan long enough? Are you tired of your plan for your life not working out? Have your plans for living only brought you stress, fatigue, heartbreaks, and dead-ends? That's because you weren't put on this planet to live by your plan. So I pray, that today and over the next 6 weeks, you will switch to God's purposes for which you were created. Embrace God's vision for your life. The Bible says, **“Those who embrace My ways are most blessed.”** And you will be blessed! He has loved you forever, given you a spiritual family to love, empowers you to grow up to be like Jesus, fulfills you as you use your abilities to serve others, and has given you the mission to share this amazing God. Amen.