

“MADE FOR A MISSION”
by Rom A. Pegram (9/25/16)

Today is the finale of our study of the Purpose Driven Life...a life controlled, guided, and directed by *God’s* purposes...

- The *first* purpose was we were “Planned for Pleasure”—not for us, but for God. How can we please God through every act of worship, not just on the weekends when we gather together, but all week long?
- The *second* purpose was we were “Created to Be Family”—the family of God is a family that loves, belongs, and experiences life together...
- The *third* purpose was we were “Created to Be Like Jesus”—not being God, but ‘Godly.’ We share in Jesus’ values, goals & directions in life...
- The *fourth* purpose was we are being “Shaped to Serve God.” I Corinthians 3:5-6 says “We are simply God’s servants...each one of us does the work which the Lord gave him to do.” We heard about that last week... And, finally...
- The *fifth* purpose is ... YOU WERE MADE FOR A MISSION...

Listen to this scripture verse as we begin...

“In the same way that you gave me a mission in the world, I give them a mission in the world.” – John 17:18 (*The MSG*)

So, each and every one of us was made for a mission! Yes, we were called to serve God by serving one another. But, *we were also made for a mission—to reach out into the world we live in for the sake of Christ!* Listen now to our main scripture verse for today (Acts 20:24, NCV)...

“I don’t care about my own life. The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work that the Lord Jesus gave me.”

God is at work in the world ... and he wants you & me to join him! *This* assignment can be called your ‘mission.’ Now, I want you to understand the difference between last week ... and this week: *God wants you to have a ministry in the Body of Christ ... but also a mission to the world!* Your ministry would be your service *to believers* ... in the Body of Christ—serving God by serving one another. Your mission is your service or outreach ... *to unbelievers*—beyond these walls! And that’s God’s *fifth* purpose for your life...

Now, just to clarify further ... your mission—what we’re talking about this week—is both *shared* and *specific*. It’s *shared* in the sense that all believers have a mission; it’s *specific* in the sense that it’ll be an assignment unique to *you* ... and *your* gifts...

The English word ‘mission’ comes from the Latin word for ‘sending’. Being a Christian, then, also means being *sent* into the world as an ambassador for Christ! Jesus said (John 20:21, NIV), “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” So, WE ARE MADE FOR A MISSION—made to be sent—and *Jesus is sending us!* His mission is now *our*

mission ... because *we are his Body*. What is that mission? In a nutshell ... *it's introducing people to God!* And, **here're some biblical reasons why your mission is so important to God's Kingdom:**

YOUR MISSION IS A CONTINUATION OF JESUS' MISSION. Matthew 28:19-20 tells us, "Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age." This, folks, is known as THE GREAT COMMISSION—not *the great suggestion*, but THE GREAT COMMISSION. Jesus has commissioned all of us—everyone who's a disciple of Jesus Christ—to go out & make more disciples. As a part of God's family, your mission is mandatory and *God is going to hold each & every one of us accountable for the unbelievers around us*. Did you know that? *You* are the only Christian some in this world may ever know; *your mission* is to share Christ with those who do not yet know him. Also...

YOUR MISSION IS A WONDERFUL PRIVILEGE. 2 Corinthians 5:18 (TLB) says, "All these new things are from God who brought us back to himself through what Christ Jesus did. And God has given us *the privilege* of urging everyone to come into his favor and be reconciled to him." Yes, it's a great responsibility to carry on the work Jesus began ... but it's also *a wonderful privilege!* Actually, we have *2 great privileges* when it comes to this fifth purpose of our lives:

- First, *we get to work with God*; we get to partner with God in the building of his Kingdom; God's 'let us in on the fun!' so to speak, and...
- Secondly, *we get to represent God*...

Jesus has secured our salvation, put us in his family, given us his Spirit, and made us agents or ambassadors for him in this world!

"We're Christ's representatives. God uses us to persuade men and women to drop their differences and enter into God's work of making things right between them. We're speaking for Christ himself now: Become friends with God; he's already a friend with you." – 2 Corinthians 5:20 (*The MSG*)

So, we're ambassadors for Christ, with a mission to share him with the world...

I just want to mention a real problem that arises sometimes with those who've been walking with God for a long time—long-time church members to be exact. Sometimes we forget how *hopeless* it felt to be without Christ! We forget the urgency of leading others to know salvation through Christ...

Let me describe it this way: If your neighbor were deathly ill ... with cancer or AIDS or some kind of a disease that you knew would take their life if something wasn't done soon and YOU KNEW THE CURE ... *what would you do?* Keep it to yourself? Or, would you go to them ASAP and share with them *the way* to save their life?

You already know where I'm going with this, don't you? What I want to remind all of you long-time followers of Christ out there today is this: YOU HAVE THE CURE! You have the answer—the Good News—regarding *what will help save them for eternity* and what a privilege that is, which leads me to the next reason your mission is so important...

YOUR MISSION HAS ETERNAL SIGNIFICANCE. John 9:4 (NLT) shares, "All of us must quickly carry out the tasks assigned us by the one who sent me, because there is little time left before the night falls and all work comes to an end." (*Jesus' words, folks ... to US!!!!*) There are *two things* I want to share about the eternal significance of your mission:

- *The consequences of your mission will last forever!* The consequences of other work you do in this life may not, but the work of your mission is eternal. Nothing else you do in this life will matter as much as helping others establish an eternal relationship with God, through a faith in Christ!
- *The clock is ticking ... on your life mission!* Don't waste one more day of your life ... just doing what YOU want to do! Get started on your mission to reach out to others now!

The truth is ... neither you nor I know when Christ will return; even Jesus said that only the Father knows for sure! That's not our business; completing the mission that God's given us is our business ... so we need to be about that, don't we?

Some time ago I heard a story about Dwight Moody, the founder of Moody Bible Institute down in Chicago and one of the greatest preachers of all time. The story goes like this: One night after he'd already turned in to bed and was preparing for a good night's sleep after a long, long day ... he suddenly remembered that he'd forgotten something very important. So, he got up out of bed, put back on his street clothes, along with his outerwear, and headed out the front door. As he was about to leave, his wife asked him what in the world he was doing this late at night! His reply? Every day, he made sure he took the opportunity to tell at least one person about Jesus. He'd failed to do so on this particular day. So, he was going out to find someone who might be walking the Chicago streets late at night ... to share with them the greatest news they would ever hear in their lifetime!

Dwight Moody didn't want to miss even one chance at fulfilling God's fifth purpose for his life—to be about his mission to the world, sharing Christ with others. How 'bout you? *Do you realize that you may be the only Christian that some in this world will ever have a chance to know?* And, if that's the case, you may be their only hope of hearing the Good News about how God saves—that they have a life beyond this one, not *void* of God ... but lived *with* God! Finally, *one more important reason for fulfilling this fifth purpose is this:*

YOUR MISSION GIVES YOUR LIFE HERE INCREDIBLE MEANING! Acts 20:24 (NLT) is where Paul shares this: "But my life is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work

assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about God's wonderful kindness and love.”

William James once said, “The best use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.” The truth is, only the Kingdom of God is going to last beyond this life; everything else will eventually vanish...

This is why we must live PURPOSE-DRIVEN LIVES! This is why we must live lives committed to worship, fellowship, spiritual growth, ministry and fulfilling our mission on earth! The result of these activities *will last forever* and that gives our life incredible meaning. Let me close with this thought—a thought about *the cost of your mission*...

Folks, to fulfill your mission will require that you abandon *your* agenda ... and accept God's agenda for your life! You can't just tack the mission God calls us to onto all of the other things *you* want to do with your life. You must be willing to say, like Jesus (Luke 22:42, NLT): “Father ... I want your will, not mine.” *Are you willing to say that today?*

The truth is, *being a disciple of Jesus Christ ... will cost you everything!* You yield your rights, expectations, dreams, plans, and ambitions ... to him. You have to stop praying selfish prayers like, “Lord, please bless what *I* want to do!” And, you start praying prayers like this: “Lord, help me to hop on board with what *You're* doing ... and with what *You* want to bless!” In other words, you hand God a blank sheet of paper ... with your name signed on the bottom ... and tell God to fill in the details. Scripture says (Rom. 6:13b, TLB), “... give yourselves completely to God—every part of you—for you are back from death and you want to be tools in the hands of God, to be used for his good purposes.” *Are you ready to do that? Are you ready to sign that blank sheet of paper (picture this in your mind) ... and let God fill in the rest? That's TOTAL COMMITMENT—what Christ expects of us ... and NOW'S THE TIME...*