



"Does Life Have a Purpose?"

Idea: Humanity's purpose is found only in the God who created and met the demands of redemption for them.

Intro: Everyone has a purpose on this planet. Do you agree with that last statement? According to the testimonies and responses of those in the video, it seems that there are as many ideas and answers to this question of purpose as there are people being asked.

Does life have a purpose? If so, what is the intrinsic purpose of life? And where do we find that purpose?

Inquiry: As we seek to answer this question, we must realize that the answer is contingent upon possession of the correct *worldview*. What exactly is a *worldview*? According to Ronald Nash, we can define *worldview* as the conceptual scheme that contains a person's fundamental beliefs and, thereby, the means by which he or she interprets and judges reality. Worldviews function much like eyeglasses. The right eyeglasses can put the world into clearer focus. Likewise, the right worldview will bring the world into greater focus. When people look at the world through the wrong worldview, reality doesn't make sense to them. Putting on the right conceptual

scheme, that is, viewing the world through the correct worldview, will greatly impact the rest of the person's thinking and acting.

Worldviews contain at least five clusters of beliefs, namely, beliefs about God, metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and human nature. Let's break them down. The most crucial element of any worldview is what it says or doesn't say about God. In dealing with metaphysics or ultimate reality, a worldview provides an answer to the question of the relationship between God and the universe. The epistemological side of a worldview deals with the theory of knowledge. It asks questions like: "Is knowledge of the world possible?, Can we trust our senses?, and What is the relationship between religious faith and reason?. In ethics the worldview is concerned with why an action is right or wrong. Then finally, a worldview seeks to explain human nature by investigating who and what a person is. Are humans free agents? Are humans material, spiritual, or both? Is there life after death? Are humans good or evil?

As we seek to discover the answer to the question of whether or not life has a purpose, it is imperative that we understand our own worldview as well as discover the proper and correct worldview. So what is the proper lens through which we should be viewing the reality of life?

A couple weeks ago, I did a Google search for books on purpose in life. A blog entitled The Meaning Movement by Dan Cumberland was listed. The link took me to one of his posts where he listed his picks for the best books on finding purpose in life. When I examined the books that were listed, I noticed that all of them related to people finding purpose in what they do. They encouraged their readers to discover their passions and to build a career that revolves around what they love. Now, I think it is important and wise to build a career in a field that you love and enjoy. I don't, however, believe that a person's career is where one gains a sense of purpose. I believe this way because of the worldview by which I see life.

The books on purpose listed on that blog, as well as most of the books and writings on finding purpose, view life with man at the center of it. Everything is contingent on what man does. They do that because of their presuppositions. Augustine noted that before humans can know anything, they must believe something. Presuppositions determine the method and goal of theoretical thought. You see, whenever we think, we take some things for granted. All human beliefs rest upon other beliefs that we presuppose or accept without support from arguments or evidence. These books presuppose that man is at the center of his life; thus, everything revolves around him.

The Bible's presupposition is that God is at the center of life and everything is contingent upon God. The Bible's depiction of purpose comes not from what a person does or has. Purpose is found solely in whose a person is. A biblical worldview understands that man was made by God and for God. As we seek to answer this question biblically, we see that the Bible begins with its own presupposition. It presupposes the existence of God. Then it describes how He created all that there is.

Does life have a purpose? The answer to that question is an emphatic, YES! Allow me to articulate this answer by sharing with you three biblical truths regarding purpose in life.

Truth #1: Your purpose is found in the God who created you.

Read Genesis 1:1, 26-27.

The language of verse one clearly reveals that the universe was created by God and for God (Col 1:16). God, therefore, was not created for the universe. Ultimate reality is that everything in creation finds its genesis in God. He created everything. God created the stars and planets in space. He created the land and the seas. He created the plants, animals, and birds. And He created man in His image and likeness. That is

there is an element of divinity in mankind. Man is not God, but he was created with the capacity to both relate to God and image God.

Here in this creation account we learn that God is a doer. He is a worker. He is a creator. As such, when God created Adam and Eve, He charged them with the responsibility of ruling over all that He had made (1:26b; 2:15). God gave mankind the responsibility of work, but it was never to be his identity. Work was never meant to be the place where a man or woman finds his or her purpose. Instead, their purpose and identity was always to be found in the God who created them in His own image.

Likewise, God never intended for Adam and Eve to derive a sense of purpose from their possessions (2:16). God gave them everything. They had an unlimited bank account to use as they pleased. They possessed the wealth of God, but it was not their identity. Purpose was not found in what they held in their hands.

In the same way, God didn't give Eve to Adam so that he would have a sense of purpose in life (2:18). Neither was Adam given to Eve so that she would have a sense of purpose in life. He gave Eve to Adam and Adam to Eve so that the two of them would perfectly reflect the community of the Godhead. Adam deeply loved his wife. He was absolutely astounded by her. But as Genesis 2 concludes, neither the man nor the woman lived for one another. They lived for God. They found their purpose in life in the God who created them for Himself.

Application: For us who live on the backside of Genesis 3, our purpose is wrongly tied to everything in this world but God. God created us to be workers, but our sinful nature has confused the pleasure we derive from our work with identity and purpose. Our flesh

then strives to find purpose in performance and prestige rather than finding it in God.

God has blessed us with many wonderful things. He gives us land, houses, vehicles, money, and recreational opportunities. In our sin we have turned possessions into the litmus test for success and purpose. We think that if we can get the next big promotion, a bigger house, a new car, the latest gadget, or go on another exotic vacation than we will finally find purpose. The problem with that is purpose always evades us. Possessions promise much but deliver little.

For those of you who are married and have a family, you have been greatly blessed by God. Unfortunately, even as Christians, our sinful nature leads us to find purpose in our spouses and children. The truth is they can't bring purpose into your life. They don't have the capacity to do that because you were not created for them. You were created for God.

Man's purpose is found in the God who created him not what he does, what he owns, or who he sleeps beside each night.

Truth #2: Your purpose is experienced in the God who redeemed you.

The Bible teaches that man's purpose in life is only found in God, yet sin has destroyed both the desire and ability to find purpose in God. Therefore, it is impossible for man, on his own, to experience purpose in God.

The fall of Adam in Genesis 3 plunged mankind into total depravity. God's warning to Adam that he would die if he ate from the forbidden tree was immediately experienced in the garden when he sinned. Adam's relationship with God was severed. This death was

illustrated when Adam hid from God and blamed God for his sin. Adam's sin plunged every subsequent generation of man into sin. So now every person born into this world is totally depraved...totally cut off from God. The Bible refers to sinful man as rebels, haters, and enemies of God.

The purpose we were created to find in God is evasive to us because of our sin. We are cut off from it. We cannot obtain it. In fact we don't want to find it in God. We want to find it in ourselves. That is what the sin of Genesis 3 was all about. Adam believed the lie that he could be like God if he ate from the tree. He desired to find purpose in himself apart from God.

Mankind is in a mess and under the curse of death. This is where Jesus Christ enters the story. You were created by God and for God. Your sin has destroyed the relationship God desires to have with you. God, however, has never stopped loving you. Even in your rebellion and sin, God has never stopped loving you. He loves you so much that He willingly did what you could not do for yourself.

Read 2 Cor 5:21.

God the Father sent God the Son to bear your sin and experience the wrath meant for you so that you might be clothed in His righteousness once again.

God loves you and created you to find purpose in Him, but that purpose and relationship was lost due to your sin and rebellion. God the Son, however, has purchased your redemption. He has paid the price for the penalty of your sin. He has purchased your forgiveness. Therefore, in Jesus Christ, you can find and experience purpose in God. Only in Jesus will you find and experience purpose in life.

Truth #3: Your purpose is lived out as you seek to glorify God in your life.

Why did God create the universe and mankind? It wasn't because He was lonely and needed a friend. It wasn't because He needed servants to care for Him. And it wasn't to feed His ego. The reason God created man was solely because of His great love and glory. Our God's beauty, glory, and love are so great it necessitated that it be shared with someone else. God created you and I so that we might share in His glory.

Illust: We might relate this idea to that of a great artist, sculptor, or musician. The artist's skills are so spectacular that it would be unthinkable to not showcase his paintings. The sculptor's work is so lifelike and beautiful that it would seem criminal to not showcase them for the world to see. And the musician has such wonderful talent that her musical abilities must be showcased for the world to enjoy.

In creating the universe...in creating man, God was showcasing His greatness. In creation, however, we must not think of man as just a trophy setting on a shelf. No, God deeply loves each individual and demonstrated that love on the cross. Mankind is not a beautiful creation that God has placed on a shelf and forgotten. Instead, God constantly has His eyes fixed on His beautiful creation, and He is constantly working in the lives of those He has created for His glory.

That is your purpose in life. Man's purpose is to bring glory to God. You and I have been created to showcase the greatness and beauty of God. And God the Son, Jesus Christ, bore the penalty for our sin on the cross so that we would be able to experience the purpose for our lives. He purchased our redemption through the shedding of His blood in order that we might be

forgiven and brought into a right relationship with our Creator.

11 To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, 12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

– 2 Thess 1:11-12

Your purpose is found in showcasing the glory of God, and there is not a greater honor in the entire universe than that.

Conclusion: You are precious to God. You are valuable. The idea of purpose is all about value. People want to find their purpose because they want to know that their lives matter...that they make a difference in this world. They want to feel valued. You want to feel value in your life.

I think the passage that most beautifully pictures our value to God is found in [Matthew 6:25-33](#). Here Jesus explains how much He loves and cares for His creation. But Jesus has placed a special value on humanity (vs.26). He reminds the people that there is no need to pursue riches and the things of this world to find value. They are valuable to God because they were created with intrinsic value that comes from God Himself. Therefore, all they needed to do was seek God first in their lives. Jesus instructed them to value God above everything else, and His instruction came with a promise. Jesus promised that He would meet all their needs, which included their greatest need...a right relationship with God from which comes purpose.

Does life have a purpose? It absolutely has purpose, and that purpose is found in God who created you, loves you, and desires to redeem you.