

FULFILLING A PURPOSE

By

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You would not be reading this if you were one of the millions who believe, as evolutionist Stephen Jay Gould, that life is meaningless. He wrote, “We are here because one odd group of fishes had a peculiar fin anatomy that could transform into legs for terrestrial creatures, ... We may yearn for ‘higher’ answer — but none exists.”

Of course, there is an answer. Astronomer Fred Hoyle wrote, “As biochemists discover more and more about the awesome complexity of life, it is apparent that the chances of it originating by accident are so minute that they can be completely ruled out. Life cannot have arisen by chance.”

Life has a designer. The Psalmist knew this, when he wrote, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”¹ God himself indicated His purpose when He said, “Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness.”² This is the purpose for every person, to live, think and act in a way that reflects the Creator.

God designed a creature with whom He could fellowship, as expressed by John: “and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”³ By “fellowship” is meant a relationship in which our wills are attuned to His, to love what He loves and hate what He hates. It is a mind-to-mind relationship in which we think His thought’s after Him and bring our desires into harmony with His.

THE EXAMPLE. Such harmony is exemplified in Jesus, who is “the image of the invisible God.”⁴ Everything He did was in keeping with the Father’s desires, so that He could say, “I do always the things that are pleasing to Him,”⁵ and God could say, “This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.”⁶

He never used temptation as an excuse to act contrary to God’s will. “In all points (He was) tempted like as we are,”⁷ but never once chose to follow a course that displeased God. Even when called upon to give His life for sinful man, Jesus’ response was, “Not my will, but thine be done.”⁸ In every way He reflected the Father’s image.

Salvation is not an end in itself, as many seem to think. God’s purpose is not merely to have man believe in Him, but to have man in His image and in fellowship with Him. John wrote that every one that hopes to be like Him, “purifies himself, even as he is pure.”⁹ Of all things that are sought after today, purity must be at the bottom of the list. When Vice-President Dan Quayle criticized the immorality of a TV character he became the object of national scorn! Moral purity is not a popular commodity. Yet, God is pure, and it is His purpose to make us pure. If that is not our purpose as well, then we are not followers of Christ, and must be pursuing some purpose that will never be realized, for only the purpose of the Creator will ever be brought to perfection.

PURPOSE MISPLACED. In much modern religion little attention is paid to God’s purpose. The thing that counts is *what works* with regard to large congregations. Biblical demands are replaced by counseling based on psychology. The faith is less God-centered and more attuned to meeting people’s “needs.” Instead of people seeking to purge themselves of sin, they seek a church that has been purged of such old-fashioned concepts, where they can “feel good about themselves,” without the agony and discipline

of repentance. Too many think of God as a powerful tool to be used in gaining their own designs, rather than as One to transform them to His own design. Such transformation may be painful, and thus resisted rather than embraced in faith.

Some may believe that they are pleasing God because they continually pray for Him to meet their demands, but such attempts to use God are a rejection of His purpose, and will fail.

From the beginning the adversary has sought to defeat God's purpose by lies and deception. He convinced Eve that she would not die for disobeying God, as God had said, but that she would become "as God, knowing good and evil,"¹⁰ another way of saying that she could make her own rules and disregard the Creator's instructions.

This deception has borne abundant fruit in our century, with the effort to push God out of public education, out of government and out of our very lives. But God is not to be pushed. God Himself is the Pusher, not the pushee! In the final consummation of things, He will have man in His image, pure and immortal, in a happy fellowship with Him.

And what of the great majority who reject His purpose? "There was found no place for them."¹¹ Eternal life is not promised to those who spend their years demonstrating that they do not want the kind of life for which God created us. They have traveled the "broad way that leads to destruction,"¹² and death and destruction will be their end.¹³

INEVITABLE. Jesus "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,"¹⁴ revealing what it is to have life through a resurrection from death, and immortality in God's image. He is a demonstration of God's purpose.

Nothing in the world can change, diminish, or stop God's purpose. It is immutable. Paul calls it His "eternal purpose," because it is fixed and unchanging. John reminds us that it will be fulfilled in each Christian at the coming of Christ: "We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is."¹⁵ Paul explains it this way: "We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."¹⁶

Today, as in Paul's day, the whole creation aches for the day of judgment and removal of all sin and death, that once more things may be good in God's eyes, as they were in the beginning. We Christians also "groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."¹⁷

The problems of the world will not be fixed by congressional mandates, peace conferences, treaties, military force, nor by the efforts of the social engineers and political idealists. The only solution is a return to the design and purpose of the Creator.

The world obviously does not desire that solution. But Jesus said that His disciples are not of the world, even as he is not of the world,¹⁸ and we still can pursue God's purpose in spite of the direction of the world.

Paul wrote that we are to "put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him that created him."¹⁹ It is not within our power to make ourselves into the image of God — He is still the Maker; rather it is as we consider that we are the glory of the Lord that we are "transformed into the same image from glory to glory..."²⁰

It is ours to seek His face, to learn and do His will; it is His to transform us, and in the day of resurrection, to bring us forth in His image.

Not all can pursue the same occupation, but all can pursue the same purpose. One doesn't have to be wealthy, nor imperfect health, nor have a high I.Q., nor live in some particular place, nor have outstanding talent. Neither sickness, poverty, opposition, persecution, nor any other adversity can keep one from choosing God's purpose and pursuing it all one's life. "We know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE."²¹

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19. Colossians 3:10
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