

## The Purpose of Missions

### John 4:28 through John 4:42 (NKJV)

<sup>28</sup>The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men,

<sup>29</sup>“Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”

<sup>30</sup>Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

<sup>31</sup>In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”

<sup>32</sup>But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.”

<sup>33</sup>Therefore the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him *anything* to eat?”

<sup>34</sup>Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. <sup>35</sup>Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest’?

Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white

for harvest! <sup>36</sup>And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that

both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. <sup>37</sup>For in this the saying is

true: ‘One sows and another reaps.’ <sup>38</sup>I sent you to reap that for which you have not

labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.”

<sup>39</sup>And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I ever did.” <sup>40</sup>So when the Samaritans had

come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. <sup>41</sup>And

many more believed because of His own word.

<sup>42</sup>Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.”

### Introduction:

What is God’s will for our lives? Over the last four weeks I have shared with you there are five things God wants for all of us. As we began our examination of Jesus’ ministry to the Samaritan woman, we learned the first of those five purpose statements: “God wants us in his family.” God wants us in his family and is willing to go out of his way and put his reputation on the line to reach us.

In week two we learned the second purpose statement: “God wants to make me better.” God wants to make me better when I know better and do better. Last week we learned our third purpose statement: “God wants me to magnify his name.” God is looking for worshippers so he can show himself strong on their behalf. “God wants me to be a giver of his grace.” God wants us to give ministry away because Jesus has paid it all.

Today, as Jesus concludes his ministry to the Samaritan woman, we will see the ultimate purpose for the lives of every believer. We will examine three key points, share our final purpose statement, give you some action steps, and conclude for the day.

### **The Need for Purpose.**

#### **Nehemiah 4:6 (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup>So we built the wall, and the entire wall was joined together up to half its *height*, for the people had a mind to work.

#### **Nehemiah 4:10 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup>Then Judah said, “The strength of the laborers is failing, and *there is* so much rubbish that we are not able to build the wall.”

Nehemiah and the people built the walls around Jerusalem in 52 days. Half the work was done and the Bible says the people had a mind to work. Nehemiah had cast the vision before the people and they all believed in the vision and worked to make it come to pass. But something was happening. Their strength began to fail. They became tired. They were fatigued. Their work created rubbish that they had to step over and nobody was moving the rubbish out of the way. They had pressure from the outside as well. Half way through, less than thirty days, the people had lost sight of their purpose. Nehemiah had to reposition the people and then tell them to “remember the Lord.”

Over time, it becomes easy to forget our purpose. As we go through the daily and weekly tasks, we get bogged down in the doing. We get lost in the rubbish that we create. We get side tracked by the rules and regulations put in place to help us perform our tasks.

Last week I shared with you that the ushers don't hold the doors. The hinges hold the doors. Ushers are involved in ministry. Ushers have a purpose. They welcome visitors inside, which encourages people to fulfill the purpose of membership. They help maintain order so we can all hear and understand the word. This helps us to fulfill the purpose of maturity. They ensure the environment is suitable for worship. They actively look for opportunities to serve each of us. That's ministry.

But if they are not careful, if they are not reminded of their purpose, they may come to church and make plans for which door they will hold. They could get hindered by discussion about which uniform to wear. They could get caught up on preferences about when and when not to open the doors. The rubbish will get in the way and their strength to fulfill their purpose will begin to fail.

The same is true for the choir. They don't sing songs. They worship the Lord. If we reduce their purpose to mundane tasks, then we make room for mundane foolishness. Without purpose, they may get upset when they can't sing "their song". They may begin to bring songs to the choir that have no substance. The music sounds good but the lyrics don't magnify the Lord.

That goes for any ministry in the church. They all have a purpose. They all minister within our church purpose.

<sup>31</sup>In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." <sup>32</sup>But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." <sup>33</sup>Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him *anything* to eat?"

The disciples were so caught up in the tasks of the day that they lost sight of the purpose. It was in the heat of the day. They had been traveling a long way. Jesus was tired, and they were tired. They were in a place that they didn't like. They were taking a risk to go buy food that might be unclean. They were doing all of these tasks for the master, but were blind to the purpose. They were so blind to the purpose that Jesus told them something spiritual and they interpreted it as something physical.

We need purpose. We need to be reminded of our purpose. We need it spoken to us over and over again. We need to see it written down. We need to hear it out loud. We need to say it for ourselves. We need to internalize it. We need to personalize it.

I believe knowing and striving for our purpose will eliminate many of the problems we face when working in the church. I believe fewer of us will get bent out of shape when things don't go our way. I believe our service to God will be more meaningful. I believe we will begin to view our sacrifices as privileges. I believe every accomplishment will bring us heavenly rewards.

### **The Goal of Purpose**

<sup>34</sup>Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."

Jesus recognizes the disciples can't comprehend what he is saying, so he explains. He basically says "My meat, my substance, my food, my daily supply, is to do the will, or to do what has been determined, or what has been purposed by God. I have to finish or complete God's work."

What can we do that would make Jesus full?

### *DeVonti Example*

When DeVonti was about four years old he could get full from fun. If fun was happening, he wouldn't eat. We had a birthday party for him where we made all of his favorite foods. He had presents and his cousins came over. But DeVonti wouldn't eat. Even when everybody else was eating, DeVonti was looking for someone to have fun with. He was so excited. He was so beside himself. He was full from fun.

What could we do as a church or as individuals that would cause Jesus to be so excited that he would forget his hunger? It's simple: lead someone else to salvation. That was the work Jesus needed to finish. Saving the world was the goal of all that Jesus came to do. Jesus did many things here on earth, but it was the mission that was most important. Jesus healed the sick and raised the dead. He ministered to the needy. He taught and he worshipped. But Jesus didn't come down through 42 generations just to heal people. The healings, the miracles, the signs, and wonders were all designed to prove that he was the Messiah.

### **John 20:30 through John 20:31 (NKJV)**

<sup>30</sup>And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup>but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Yes, Jesus performed many miracles. He can still do miracles for us today. But his greatest miracle is the miracle of eternal life. The goal of Jesus' work was to seek and to save that which was lost. Even when he ascended he told his disciples they would be witnesses for him in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the world. He tells the church to go and make disciples. Today, he performs that miracle by the work of the Holy Spirit through us in life missions.

This is our last and most important purpose statement: "God wants me to tell his story."

If you want God get excited, tell his story. If you want to do his will, tell his story. Tell his story about how he created you and loves you. Tell his story about how he is holy and just. Tell his story about how he sent his Son to die for us. Tell his story about how he has helped you to overcome sin. Tell the part about how he delivered you and healed you. Tell the part about how he changed your heart and forgave you.

The beautiful thing is, sometimes when we tell his story, a person may give their lives to Christ. At that moment, the angels in heaven will rejoice. We can do many good deeds but none of them will set a party off in heaven unless we lead someone to salvation. That's when we know the Lord is so excited that he can't eat. The Samaritan

woman believed in Jesus and he got full. She went to tell her friends and many of them believed. The angels in heaven rejoiced and Jesus got full again.

### **The Blessing of Purpose**

<sup>35</sup>Do you not say, 'There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

Harvest time was four months away, but Jesus said "lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!" When it comes to fulfilling our purpose, any time can be harvest time. God wants us to tell his story whenever we can and however we can.

Each time we perform our purposes and tell his story we are doing one of three things: we are planting, we are watering, or we are harvesting. When we exercise our membership and seek to belong to God's family, we are planting, watering, and harvesting. We plant the idea that **God wants us in his family**. We water the people who are in need of fellowship. We harvest those who are inspired by the love we share with one another.

When we seek spiritual maturity we are planting, watering, and harvesting. **God wants to make us better**. As we practice the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, worship, and reading of God's word we become more like God. Our lives change in a way that causes us to be better models of his holiness. People see us doing better and seeds of belief are planted in their lives. Some of the people who watch us daily are watered with hope and encouragement. Still even more are ripe to be harvested because they too want to make a change for the better.

**God wants us to magnify his name**. As we lift him up, our worship plants seeds in the lives of those who may not realize God is real. Our praises serve as a reminder to those who have already heard of God but haven't made a commitment just yet. As we magnify his name and sing songs that tell of his goodness, there will some people who see our joy and want to have it for themselves. They are ready for the harvest.

Every time we do an act of Christian service we are planting seeds of gospel kindness into the lives of others. **God wants us to be givers of his grace**. Our helping hands will always water the hearts of people who don't believe anyone cares about them. And whenever someone asks us why we are displaying unconditional love through our service to others we should be ready to give an answer for the hope that lies within us. Our baskets should be ready to receive the harvest.

More than anything else, "God wants me to tell his story." On any given day, any of us could be a sower. We may tell God's story and seeds may be planted in the lives of the hearers. Any of us could be a watering pot. God can pour in his love, grace, and mercy so that we may lavishly pour it out in the lives of those around us. On any given day, we may tell his story and find that the word has been planted, the spirit has been watered, and the soul is ready to be born again.

God wants me to tell his story so the world will know him. God wants me to tell his story so he will be pleased with my life. God wants me to tell his story so he can change the world one soul at a time. God wants me to tell his story because he doesn't want anyone to be lost.

When we tell God's story blessings are released all around us. Godliness will explode in our community. Families will get on one accord. Broken relationships can get mended. Work conditions can change because our co-workers and employers would be saved. Our streets would be safer. He who stole would steal no more. We wouldn't have as much of the greed that caused this nation to go into recession. Racism would be on the decline. Our civic leaders would become servant leaders. Educators would care about our children instead of just clocking in to get a pay check. People would be set free from the bondage of addictions. Others would be set free from the bondage of un-forgiveness. All of these blessings are ours when we fulfill our purpose. All we need now is a plan of action to make it a reality.

## **The Plan**

What is God's will for your life? First, he wants you to become part of his family. Next he wants to make you better. He also wants you to magnify his name. God has purposed that we join in his work and be givers of his grace. All of these things lead to our ultimate purpose of life missions. Here is what you do to fulfill that purpose in your life:

1. Secure your membership. Be sure that you are in God's family. You need to make your safe calling and election sure. There are many people who are connected to the church, but are not connected to God. The only way to connect to God is through salvation. Do you know that you are saved?
2. Get equipped. Get involved in ministries that are designed to help you grow. Do the Spiritual Disciplines of reading, praying, worship, and fasting. Sometimes we fail to tell God's story because we don't know God's story. If we haven't matured with Jesus, we don't have a testimony to tell of how he made us better.
3. Become a servant. Serve each other in ministry. Christian service is a non-threatening way of practicing for missions. When Jesus sent his disciples out to

share the gospel in Matthew 10, he sent them to the house of Israel first. They were to reach within before they reached out.

4. Live a life of worship. Get into the habit of praise and worship. Acknowledge God for every victory and every challenge in your life. Recognize his sovereignty over your life. Praise God beyond these four walls. Every song of praise is a testimony of the goodness of God.
5. Tell your story. Testify and tell others about the changes God has made in your life. Be deliberate about sharing your belief and your faith. Tell about the goodness of God and share hope with those who are hopeless. Let God use you to lead others into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Simply tell the story and leave the results up to God.

### **Conclusion:**

Here is an excerpt from the book *“Winning With People”* by John Maxwell.

*In the crypts of Westminster Abbey, the following words were written on the tomb of an Anglican Bishop who lived in the eleventh century:*

*When I was young and free my imagination had no limits, I dreamed of changing the world. As I grew older and wiser, I discovered the world would not change, so I shortened my sights somewhat and decided to change only my country. But it, too, seemed immovable. As I grew in my twilight years, in one last desperate attempt, I settled for changing only my family, those closest to me, but alas, they would have none of it. And now as I lie on my deathbed, I suddenly realized: If I had only changed my self first, then by example I would have changed my family. From their inspiration and encouragement, I would then have been able to better my country and who knows, I may have even changed my world.*

God can use us to change the world. As we move through the purposes he has for us and fulfill our ultimate purpose in life missions, we too can begin to impact those closest to us. Then we can impact those around us. And in the end, who knows, perhaps we can change a neighborhood, a community, a city, or even the world.

God bless you.