

LESSON 11 ~ LIVING ON PURPOSE

SEPTEMBER 13, 2020

Background Scripture: Psalm 37

Lesson Passage: Psalm 37:3-7; 23-26 (KJV)

Introduction: One day a man visited his doctor because he was in excruciating pain. The doctor asked him, “Where does it hurt?” The man answered, “All over.” The doctor told the man to touch his shoulder. The man touched his shoulder and cried out in pain. Next, the doctor told the man to touch his forehead. The man touched his forehead and cried out in pain again. The doctor told the man to touch his knee. The man touched his knee and winced in pain. He said, “Doctor, everywhere I touch, I’m in pain.” The doctor thoroughly examined the man and concluded, “No wonder you are in pain everywhere you touch – you have a dislocated finger!” We may laugh at the ridiculousness of this man’s situation, but many of us are doing the same thing, just in a different way. Many of us feel like everything in our lives is wrong, yet in fact just one thing in our lives is wrong. However, this one thing affects everything. This one thing is that many of us are living a life without purpose. We are simply going through the motions – existing day by day, weighed down by the emptiness of a life without meaning. We’re all searching for something in life. Whether you want to call it significance, purpose, meaning or something else, there is an innate desire in each of us for our life to matter — to have significance and purpose. One of the biggest questions is not, what is my purpose for my life? but, what is God’s purpose for my life?

Are you confident that you know and are fulfilling God’s purpose for your life? In our chaotic and unsettling world, it is sometimes hard to understand how God’s purposes are being worked out in our lives. Whatever your case, in the midst of the confusion, fears, anxieties, and distractions of this present world, all of us can benefit from a firmer confidence that God is indeed working out His plans in our lives.

How can we gain this confidence? Let’s begin by reminding ourselves that the God of the Bible is a God of purpose. And not just general purposes but specific ones. He is the supreme, long-term strategic planner of the universe. He does nothing in a random or haphazard manner. And His purposes extend from eternity past to eternity future, encompassing not only the ultimate destiny of His creation, but our personal lives, as well.

Scripture Reference: Psalm 37:3-7; 23-26 (KJV)

3 Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. 4 Delight thyself also in the Lord: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. 5 Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. 6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. 7 Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. 23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. 24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. 25 I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. 26 He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.

Topic Explored: *“Living on Purpose”* ~ Like many people, maybe you’ve wondered how you can live a meaningful and significant life. The truth is that we are living significant lives simply because we have been made in the image of God — and He is the One who gives us purpose. We asked people to share with us one word they would use to describe how they live with significance and purpose each day, and their answers were as varied and vibrant as the people themselves. Purpose is not measured by what you have done compared to what someone else has done, but by what you have done compared to what you are supposed to do. The only way to know your purpose is to experience and walk closely with the One who has created and destined you for it. If you are a Christian, you do not need to be running around trying to discover your purpose. Rather, it is in experiencing God that your purpose will be made known. Experience God, and you will experience your purpose.

Memory Verse: *5 Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass* (Psalm 37:5 (KJV)).

Lesson Focus: Psalm 37:3-7; 23-26 (KJV)

Verses 3-7 ~ "Commit" — This word has various meanings in the Bible. One meaning is that of consignment. We commit something for safe keeping, we put it into the hands of somebody, trust that person with it, then we leave it with that person, knowing it is well.

Our assurance that all is well, safe and secure, depends upon the person to whom we have committed or consigned a matter. If the character of the person is questionable, anxiety and worry would rightly disturb our peace because our committal might miscarry and result in our loss. If the person is trustworthy, reliable in every way, able and mighty to handle our affairs, we give the matter no thought whatever and say, "It is safe in his hands."

The meaning of the word, "commit" in Psalm 37:5, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him." Consign your ways, all your burdens, all your cares, all your little and big troubles, and everything else, your failures and mistakes, unto the Lord. Place them into His hands. He is more than trustworthy; He loves us and His interest and mercy are infinite. He has all power. He knows how to handle everything. He has given us the assuring promises that He will care for us, that He will honor us as we honor Him by our implicit trust. All is safe in His hands; there is no reason why, as we commit all unto Him, we should not have perfect peace. And such was the blessed life of our Lord in His humiliation. All was put by Him into the Father's hands. *"When He suffered, He threatened not but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously."* (1 Peter 2:23) He could rest in perfect peace as He slumbered in the little ship while the storm raged and the ship filled with water. He knew He was in His Father's hands, under His care, as He lived that holy life of trust. And when He had finished His work the Father gave Him to do, He committed His spirit into the Father's hands. But if we commit all into His hand, we must be restful about it, never questioning His love, nor His wisdom. Let us remember that in the thirty-seventh Psalm the command, "Commit thy way unto the Lord," is followed by "rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him." (Verse 7) We must not doubt. *"He that waivereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed."* (James 1:6).

What a great truth! If I give God the work, He will carry its burden, complete it beyond my capabilities, and give me rest as I walk. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord.* We must remove it from ourselves, not worry and perplex ourselves with thoughts about future events; but refer them to God. By prayer spread our cases and all our cares before the Lord, and trust in Him. The promise

is very sweet: He shall bring that to pass, whatever it is, that you have committed unto Him. God knows the believer's days. Not one day's work shall go unrewarded. Their time on earth is reckoned by days, which will soon be numbered; but heavenly happiness shall be forever. This will be a real support to believers in evil times. Those that rest on the Rock of ages, have no reason to envy the wicked.

Lesson Focus: Psalm 37:23-26 (KJV)

Verses 23-26 ~ By His grace and Holy Spirit, God directs the thoughts, affections, and designs of good men. By His providence He overrules events, so as to make their way plain. He does not always show them His way for a distance, but leads them step by step, as children are led. God will keep them from being ruined by their falls, either into sin or into trouble, though such as fall into sin will be sorely hurt. God forsakes not His saints in affliction; and in heaven only the righteous shall dwell forever; that will be their everlasting habitation. A good man may fall into the hands of a messenger of Satan, and be sorely buffeted, but God will not leave him in his enemy's hands.

Let's talk about it. . .

- **From whom does the psalmist expect relief? What part does the psalmist have in making his relief possible?**

Making it personal:

- If you want to experience God's purpose for your life, experience God. Don't go looking for His will, look for Him. It is in the close, abiding intimacy with the Father that you will not only discover, but you will also; live out the destiny He has purposed for you.
- One of the greatest benefits that arises out of a close relationship with our heavenly Father is in His ability to guide, direct and prepare us for the purpose He has for our lives. When you truly embrace the principle found in the book of Psalm, "Be still, and know that I am God," you will experience the abundant joy that Christ has promised you. Because you will no longer be spending your energy trying to see if this plan will work, or if this relationship will work, or if this job will work, or if this path will work because when you know that God is God – and you seek to get close to Him – He will show you your path, your job, your mate, your relationships, meaning and purpose.

Closing Prayer: *"Dear God, we pray to focus our eyes on You and commit our way to You. Today, be with us so that our words, actions, and thoughts all point to You and give You glory. Guide us and give us wisdom along the way. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen!"*