

Purpose And Direction

Joe Slater

A certain company that provides internet service has been running a cute TV ad. It portrays the sales staff having a meeting to remind them of various desirable features of their company's service. The price is good. The service is fast. You can use it on your mobile devices. Then the team leader asks, "What else do people want?" A team member responds in a doubtful tone of voice: "A sense purpose and direction in life?"

Consciously or unconsciously, people do, indeed, want a sense of purpose and direction in life. Your friendly neighborhood internet company probably isn't the best place to find it!

Secular progressive society and New Age religion urge us to look within ourselves to discover our purpose and determine our direction. "Follow your heart!" Glaringly absent is any reference to God or the Bible.

Human beings need answers to three basic questions: 1) Where did I come from? 2) Why am I here? and 3) Where am I going? Only when the first question is answered correctly can there be solid answers to the second and third questions. If we are merely the end result of a blind process of organic evolution, then looking inward is our only option for finding purpose and direction. But since we are the creation of God, His word tells us our purpose as well as our destiny.

Most people routinely look to unreliable sources for their sense of purpose and direction. Human philosophy, secular "science," and even respected religious leaders give answers that sound good on the surface but fail in the final analysis. Faithful Christians have the assurance that our purpose is to serve God by serving other people under the direction of His word. We also have the privilege and duty to help others learn about their purpose and direction. May God help us to fulfill our purpose diligently!

Give God What's His

David so desperately wanted to build a permanent house (temple) for God, but God would not allow it, for David had shed much blood in various wars (1 Chronicles 17:1-10; 22:7-8). God revealed to him however, that David's son could build Him a temple at the proper time (1 Chronicles 17:11-12). So, David collected the plans from God and started gathering materials (1 Chronicles 22:1-5). He then made great financial contributions himself and, following his example, the people of Israel freely gave as well (1 Chronicles 29:1-9).

Then, in an emotional address before the assembly, David gave public praise to God (1 Chronicles 29:10-19). Looking at a few select sections should hold great value to us concerning our giving, as well:

* *"For all that is in heaven and earth is Yours"* (v.11) - Everything comes from God. God is the One who blesses us with all physical blessings (James 1:17).

* *"For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You"* (v.14) - When we give to God, we are only giving back what is His. When we give of our time, abilities, and financial blessings, we are only returning what God has allowed us to use. We are simply stewards (1 Corinthians 4:1-2).

* *"I have willingly offered all these things, and now with joy I have seen your people, who are present here to offer willingly to you"* (v.17) - We should give back to God willingly and joyfully. It should thrill us to be able to give to God because He has been so kind to us (2 Corinthians 9:7-8).

* *"Keep this forever in the intent of the thoughts of the hearts of Your people"* (v.18) - This is God's design for all of His people for all time. God's people should always be a loving, giving people - at all times (Acts 20:35).

"Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21)

--Edd Sterchi (Campbellsville, KY)

COMPLAINING

A group of alumni, highly established in their careers, got together to visit their old university professor. The conversation soon turned into complaints about stress in work and life. Offering his guests coffee, the professor went to the kitchen and returned with a large pot of coffee and an assortment of cups - porcelain, plastic, glass, crystal, some plain-looking, some expensive, and some exquisite - telling them to help themselves to the coffee.

After all the former students had a cup of coffee in hand, the professor said: "If you noticed, all the nice-looking expensive cups were taken, leaving behind the plain and cheap ones. While it is but normal for you to want only the best for yourselves, that is the source of your problems and stress. Be assured that the cup itself adds no quality to the drink. What all of you really wanted was coffee, not the cup; but you consciously went for the best cups and then began eyeing each other's cups."

Now consider this: Life is the coffee, and the jobs, houses, cars, things, money and position in society are the cups. They are just tools to hold and contain life, and the type of cup we have does not define nor change the quality of life we live. Sometimes, by concentrating only on the cup, we fail to enjoy the coffee.

Enjoy your coffee. Being happy doesn't mean everything's perfect. It means you've decided to see beyond the imperfections.

--Ron Bartanen via *Bulletin Gold*)

How Rude!

God thought you were worth dying for. How rude would you be to disagree with Him?

--Jon Rowe (via Facebook)