

GOD'S PURPOSE FOR US

KEY VERSE:

Rom. 8:28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.

What is the purpose of God's Word?

Rom. 15:4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

1 Jn. 5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

What does God's Word say about our own plans and purposes?

Ps. 146:4 ...their plans come to nothing.

Acts 5:38 ...For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail.

Prov. 16:9 In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps.

Prov. 19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails.

We may not know what God's purpose for us is. What is important is that He knows. For the prophet Jeremiah reminds us in Jer. 29:11

Jer. 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD...

What comfort do we have knowing God has a purpose and plan for us in our life?

Ps. 138:8 The LORD will fulfill His purpose for me.

God has a reason for everything He does. It is filled with promises and blessings.

It is for our own good. The Apostle Paul reminds us in:

Phil. 2:12for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose...

Eph. 1:11-12according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will...

And from our text, today, in Romans chapter 8, verse 28, we learn that **we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.**

One of the most common question we ask in life is this: What is God's purpose for us in suffering? There is so much hurt all around us. There is sibling rivalry, people lying, stealing, being taken advantage of, fighting, yelling, physical and emotional abuse, immorality, cheating, stealing, divorce, killing, doubts, fears, guilt and shame. Yet, even in the midst of all this, we are to give witness about our Lord, Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul reminds us in his second letter to Timothy, 2 Tim. 1:8-9: **So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord...Join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life--not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.**

What is so difficult – is to watch a loved one go through such pain, suffering, leading up to their death. What is so heart wrenching is dealing with and understanding the purpose for the suffering and death of a child. Recently, I was reminded, again, of what it must be like to be a nurse or a doctor that work in these children hospitals, ER, trauma centers or in hospice care. Can you imagine what it must be like working with physically and terminally ill children every day and every week of your life?

This past week, I just completed a poem written for families, nurses and doctors who see suffering and death on a regular basis. It is entitled: WHY? WHAT'S THE PURPOSE?

WHY? WHY MUST A FAMILY GO THROUGH IT?

Why illnesses and abuse? Why a child?
What are they thinking? Is this their life?
They feel so hurt, and some feel so defiled.
All they know – is suffering and strife.

When a child comes in, and gasping for breath
the family watch outside the door.
With all our technology – still there's death.
We battle for life, yet loose the war.

Fam'lies feel the emptiness and the hurt
when told, "There is no cure or no hope."
Gloom and death, the fam'ly cannot avert.
A death of a child? It's hard to cope.

One child talked about what clothes to wear
for their funeral, and their casket.
He was afraid to die, and showed despair,
as medicine flowed from his flasket.
He continued to talk and hold my hand.
He would cry until he'd fall asleep.
I left the room, I did not understand.

I just prayed the Lord his soul to keep.

I know! God has a plan for each of us.

I know one day this will all make sense.

I want to know and sit down and discuss –
To help others, and make a difference.

Crosses come in many shapes and sizes –

Some spiritual, some physical.

Some crosses are known, and some, surprises,
But Lord, WHY are they beneficial?

The question that runs through my mind is “Why”?

Why must a family go through it?

I cry when I need to – at church I cry.

With my faith — what is the benefit?

I wonder – What’s the purpose of all this?

Where is the comfort and the reward?

I see suffering and pain. Where’s the bliss?

I just don’t understand. Help me, Lord!

“My thoughts are not your thoughts,” declares the Lord.

And He said, “Nor are My ways your ways.”

(Is. 55:8)

“I laid down My life by My own accord

(Jn. 10:18)

for them, to see My glory always.”

(Jn. 17:24)

“My yoke is easy and My burden, light.”

(Mt. 11:30)

My cross lightens all burdens for sure.

“It’s not by power nor is it by might

But it’s by My Spirit is the cure.”

(Zech. 4:6)

Tribulations – it never comes alone.

I come with them. Do you understand?

I give kids eternal life. They’re My own.

No one can snatch them out of my hand.”

(Jn. 10:28)

“What, then, shall we say in response to this?

If God is for us, who’s against us?”

(Rom. 8:31)

What’s the spiritual analysis?

Eternal blessings, so numerous.

“Present sufferings are not worth comparing

With the glory that will be revealed.”

(Rom. 8:18)

Good News to people you should be sharing.

Jesus Christ is “our rock and our shield.”

(Ps. 28:7)

**“Though outwardly we are wasting away,
We don’t dare or should ever lose heart.
Inwardly, we are renewed day by day.
That was God’s plan – for us – from the start.”** (2 Cor 4:16-17)

**Faith, not fatalism or disaster,
in Christ, forgiveness you will obtain.
“Our purpose is to live for the Master,”
said apostle Paul, “...to die is gain.”** (Phil. 1:21)

**We share in His sufferings – as His child.
As His child, we share in His glory. (Rom. 8:11; Jn. 17:24)
The reason and hope that patients have smiled —
Jesus Christ’s resurrection story. (Phil. 3:10)**

**It is written, we face death all day long;
As sheep to be led to the slaughter. (Rom. 8:36)
If we die with Him, to Him we belong. (2 Tim. 2:11-12)
His love for ev’ry son and daughter.**

**Instead, see the sickbed as the altar
Where the pray’rs for these souls may arise.
“Come and sing and rejoice,” said the Psalter. (Ps. 9:2)
The afflicted in Christ – win the prize.**

**You’re here by God’s appointment and keeping.
You’re here under God’s training and time.
Whether you’re working, playing or sleeping,
The Lord’s favor lasts for a lifetime.**

**“Our struggle is not against blood and flesh,
but against powers of this dark world.” (Eph. 6:12)
You are called for God’s purpose. Keep this afresh.
“WHY NOT?” must be the question unfurled.**

Our readings for today help us to understand God’s purpose for us. We learn from the Old Testament reading from Deut. 7?

Dt 7: 6 The LORD your God has chosen you...⁸...the LORD loved you and kept the oath...He brought you out...and redeemed you...⁹...He is the faithful God.

From our Gospel reading, Jesus teaches us God's purpose for us in Matthew 13, which is **"the kingdom of heaven."** You see, God's purpose and plan – all along – is to give us the kingdom of heaven... Listen, again, to what it says in verses 44 to 46:

"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it."

What does this parable mean? Does it mean that we are to go out with joy, and sell everything we have and buy the kingdom of heaven? NO! You and I cannot buy heaven. We cannot buy God's grace either. As most of you well know, the kingdom of heaven and grace is a gift from God. THIS IS GOD'S PURPOSE FOR US. God paid the price for our sufferings, pains, sins, and death by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to experience the same thing for us – the suffering, pain, and death. However, it His resurrection that gives us PURPOSE IN LIFE.

So, what does Jesus' parable mean to us? "To sell" everything means to give up everything, to expose all of our sins. To admit that you and I did not keep the Law of God very well at all. And what it means to "buy up" is "to make the most" of something. What is that something? Make the most of FORGIVENESS – forgiveness which is experienced in Christ Jesus. To "buy up" means to make the

most of the time you have, as a forgiven child of God, to make the most of the opportunities that God has given you to follow Him and proclaim Him – TO CARRY OUT HIS WILL AND PURPOSE IN LIFE.

The Apostle Paul tells us, in Eph 5:15-16

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity...

The Apostle Paul put it well what God's purpose is for us in our reading from Romans 8. It should be a great comfort for all of us that God's purpose for us is that we are predestined, called, justified and glorified through Christ Jesus. He chose us. He is for us. Jesus loves us and intercedes for us.

What is God's purpose for each of us?

1) Seek God's Kingdom

Mt. 6:33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

2) Complete the Course God set out for you

Acts 20:24complete the task the Lord Jesus has given....

3) Attain Christlikeness

Phil. 3:13-14 ...one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and

training toward what is ahead....

JESUS CHRIST MAKES IT EASY FOR YOU TO BUY INTO THAT. MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TIME AND OPPORTUNITIES IN LIFE KNOWING THAT

NOTHING...will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ

Jesus our Lord.