

# **PETE BUMGARNER MINISTRIES**

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**GOD'S PURPOSE  
FOR OUR LIVES  
STUDY GUIDE**





# **GOD'S PURPOSE FOR OUR LIVES**

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

### **Proverbs 29:18**

Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

### **Jeremiah 29:11**

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.

### **Ephesians 1:11**

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.

## **THEME**

God has a plan and purpose for our lives. Too many people are searching for purpose instead of seeking God. In order for us to know our purpose in this life, we must first know the God of purpose. It is not enough to know God's works; we must also know God's ways. When we understand God's thoughts toward us, we can better understand what God is doing in us; when we understand what God is doing in us, we are less apt to become frustrated. God created us with purpose; He did not create us to look for a purpose.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. God is a God of purpose; He is not a hit-and-miss God.
- B. We are people of purpose; we must not be hit-and-miss people.
- C. God has a plan and purpose for each of our lives.
- D. People who think only of heaven lose sight of their purpose on earth; consequently, they become bored and try to satisfy their boredom with things and activities.

1. People seeking to satisfy boredom become workers without purpose.
  2. Many church-related activities have no legitimate purpose; they just keep people busy.
  3. Traveling around a religious circle serves no real purpose; it just keeps you busy.
- E. If you don't know your purpose, you may find yourself fulfilling other people's dreams.
- F. Purpose protects one from intimidation.
1. When one knows his purpose, he can overcome negative influence.
  2. Insecurity is closely related to lack or loss of purpose.
- G. We have been created for a particular purpose; we were not created to look for purpose.
- H. God knows the purpose for each of our lives; therefore, it is vital that we communicate with God regularly that we, too, might know God's purpose for our lives.
1. The closer we get to God, the more revelation we will receive.
  2. Revelation gives clarity to purpose.
- I. Abuse often occurs when the use of a thing is not known.
1. Everything has a purpose, but every purpose is not known.
  2. Misuse and abuse can be avoided when purpose is known.
- J. To be effective in this life, we must know our assignment for this life; to know our assignment, we must listen to the Teacher.
- K. Purpose is the original intent for the creation of a thing; if you want to know the purpose of something, ask its maker.
- L. Purpose is what causes a maker to make something.
1. Need and desire bring forth purpose.

2. Purpose precedes creation.
  3. Thought precedes action.
  4. Conception precedes birth.
- M. Purpose is the end which gives meaning to the beginning.
1. Meals are the purpose for recipes.
  2. Houses are the purpose for blueprints.
- N. Life without purpose becomes an experiment; life is too short for experimentation.
- O. Life without purpose is time without meaning.
- P. Time without purpose gets people into trouble.
- Q. Time without reason becomes a burden.
- R. Life's greatest tragedy is not death; it is life without purpose.
1. It is tragic when a tree dies in a seed.
  2. It is tragic when a man dies in a boy.
  3. It is tragic when a woman dies in a girl.
  4. It is tragic when a good idea dies in the mind.
  5. It is tragic when visions die unseen, or dreams die unfulfilled, or songs die unsung, or talent dies undeveloped, or a plan dies unexecuted, or success dies in failure.
  6. It is tragic when what could have been becomes what should have been.
- S. What will be is dependent upon what we do now.
- T. Today we stand in the present with the future weighing in the balance.
- U. Purpose is the most important pursuit in life.

- V. Don't frustrate yourself seeking purpose; do all you know to do with all you have wherever you are.
  - 1. It is sad to study for the wrong exam, yet many people are being educated for the wrong task.
  - 2. It is possible to be successful at the wrong thing.
  - 3. A man who doesn't know which harbor he seeks will think any wind is the right wind.
  - 4. A man without purpose is like a ship without a rudder; it drifts with the tide, unconcerned about the direction, and it is destined for trouble.
  
- W. Without purpose, good things can distract from right things.
  - 1. Good must not be substituted for right.
  - 2. What may be good may not be right.
  
- X. Where you are is not as important as where you are going.
  
- Y. People are born with purpose.
  - 1. Your purpose is in you, but timing is critical.
  - 2. Don't allow people to discourage you from fulfilling your purpose.
  - 3. God's purpose for our lives is not to be a morbid experience; one can obey God's purpose and actually enjoy the experience.
  
- Z. When one desires God as much as he desires life, he will find God's purpose for his life.
  - 1. In the first four verses of the third chapter of the Song of Solomon, we find an interesting passage of scripture which, I believe, is pertinent to our subject.
    - a. The Shulamite, which, I believe, relates to the Church, longs for and seeks her lover, who is symbolic of Jesus.
    - b. Seeking but not finding her lover, the Shulamite comes into contact with the watchman of the city, who is symbolic of the prophet ministry.

- c. Soon after the Shulamite leaves the watchman, she finds her lover; this illustration seems to indicate God giving direction or instruction through the prophet ministry.
2. The Shulamite is overwhelmed with her desire for her lover; how much more should we long for Jesus?
  3. God's purpose for our lives is a three-dimensional process: desire; discipline; destination.
    - a. There is a story told of an instructor who held a student's head under water until he nearly drowned because the student had asked how he could better know the Lord. When questioned concerning his actions, the instructor replied, "When you desire God as much as you desire air, you will find Him." This can be seen as ultimate desire.
    - b. God is seeking slaves, not ministries. This can be seen as ultimate discipline.
    - c. Our destiny must be set **for** God, not **to** God. This is the ultimate destination.

## II. STEPS TO PURPOSE

- A. Salvation is not our purpose in life; it leads to our purpose.
  1. Salvation is not the end; it is the beginning.
  2. God has more in mind for our lives than "fire insurance."
  3. Salvation is the door that leads to purpose.
- B. Receiving the Holy Ghost and speaking in tongues is not our purpose in life.
  1. Receiving the Holy Ghost is certainly a step in the right direction, but it is not the consummation of all things.
    - a. Don't limit God to an experience!
    - b. Don't make an experience a doctrine!
    - c. Don't camp on your experience; go forward!

2. Speaking in tongues and living without direction will not take you where God desires for you to be.
  3. Feeling without vision or purpose is futile.
  4. Purpose goes beyond feeling good; it accomplishes something.
  5. The Holy Ghost gives vision and purpose to humanity, but the Holy Ghost must not become the end of our pursuit in God. (Joel 2:28)
- C. Discipline is a key ingredient in fulfilling purpose.
1. Vision and discipline must be united.
  2. Where there is no insight or purpose, people cast off restraint. (Proverbs 29:18)
  3. Purpose gives discipline reason; it sets a goal.
  4. Discipline without desire is inconceivable.
- D. Know where you are going before you make the journey.
1. If you don't know where you are going, any road will lead you there.
  2. If you don't know your purpose, someone will try to give you his instead.
- E. Joseph went through some unusual events to accomplish God's purpose for his life.
1. Joseph dreamed a dream that upset those around him.
  2. Joseph's life was threatened, then spared, only for the young man to be sold into slavery.
  3. Joseph was falsely accused and thrown into prison for a crime that he did not commit.
  4. Joseph interpreted a dream in prison which later got him audience with Pharaoh.

5. It wasn't until Pharaoh's dream was interpreted that Joseph was placed in the position that enabled him to fulfill God's purpose for his life. (Genesis 45:4-8)
  6. Joseph was destined to be a ruler, and he refused to allow circumstances to change his destiny.
  7. God used men and circumstances to train Joseph; the world-system paid for the training.
  8. According to Genesis 45:1-8, Joseph realized that God sent him to Egypt, and he recognized his purpose in life.
  9. Bitterness and hatred could not operate in Joseph because he knew his purpose.
- F. Events lead to purpose; consequently, we must not scoff or complain about the events.
1. Israel's complaints concerning the events caused the nation to miss God's purpose.
  2. David, the man after God's own heart, experienced many adverse circumstances before he made it to the throne, which was God's purpose for his life. We have no record of David becoming frustrated with God because of the circumstances.
- G. Training and events may involve more time than most people care for, but they are stepping stones to God's purpose for our lives; therefore, they are necessary.
- H. Eyes that look are common; eyes that see are rare; we must look beyond the circumstances and see the end result. (Hebrews 12:2)
- I. The pure in heart are the ones who see God. (Matthew 5:8; Isaiah 59:1-2; John 14:21)

### **III. KNOWING YOUR PURPOSE**

- A. Knowing your purpose precedes fulfilling your purpose.
1. We must set goals before we can reach goals.

2. Purpose unfolds through events; therefore, details are not usually available at the outset.
  - a. Purpose can be compared to an architectural drawing; the picture of the house is visible, but the details for building the house are not apparent.
  - b. Blueprints that give details are usually several pages long; consequently, all the details are not on the first page.
  - c. The vision placed in our hearts by God can be compared to the architectural drawing; we have a goal, but lack the details.
  - d. The details for attaining that goal can be compared to a blueprint; the subcontractor doesn't need the details until he is ready to do the job.
  - e. The blueprint must be followed explicitly!
  
- B. God, in His sovereignty, has placed us here in this time period for a particular purpose; therefore, we must give attention to God and learn our purpose.
  
- C. Many dreams have been shattered by parents without insight who assassinate their children's visions.
  1. Too many parents are trying to get their children to live out the dream of the parents.
  2. People discourage purpose by making remarks such as: "Get real! Wake up and stop dreaming! No one in his right mind would do that!"
  3. Jacob rebuked Joseph when he told of his dream, but Joseph refused to abandon his dream; consequently, Jacob's life was spared, and the posterity of Abraham continued. (Genesis 37:10; 45:7)
  4. Joseph was called a dreamer, but he saw his dreams come to pass.
  5. Hold fast to the dream that God has given unto you!

- D. Man's purpose for being on planet earth is to do what God created him to do, not what people say he should do.
- E. We cannot know God's purpose without knowing God's thoughts.
  - 1. We have the mind of Christ; therefore, we have access to God's thoughts concerning our purpose. (I Corinthians 2:16)
  - 2. When we know what a person is thinking, we can understand what he is doing; when we know what he is doing, we are less apt to become frustrated.
  - 3. We can alleviate many frustrations by learning the thoughts of God.

#### **IV. PREDESTINED OR FOREORDAINED**

- A. The following definitions should assist us in understanding God's mode of operation in our lives:
  - 1. The Greek definition for predestinate is to limit in advance, or predetermine.
  - 2. *Webster's Dictionary* defines predestine in this manner: to destine; to decree; to determine; to appoint; to settle beforehand.
  - 3. *Webster's Dictionary* defines predestination as the ordaining of events beforehand.
  - 4. The Greek definition for foreknow is to know beforehand, or foresee.
  - 5. The Greek definition for foreknowledge is forethought.
  - 6. *Webster's Dictionary* defines foreknow in this manner: to have previous knowledge of, or to know beforehand.
- B. According to Ephesians 1:4, we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.
- C. We were born with an assignment; consequently, we must fulfill our assignment.

- D. According to the Word of God, the following men were ordained before they were born:
1. Jacob was ordained as God's chosen line before he and Esau were ever born. (Romans 9:10-13)
  2. Samson was ordained **to begin** to deliver Israel from the Philistines before he was born. (Judges 13:1-5)
  3. Jeremiah was ordained to be a prophet before his birth. (Jeremiah 1:5)
  4. Cyrus was ordained to rebuild Jerusalem before he was born or Jerusalem was destroyed. (Isaiah 44:28)
  5. John the Baptist was ordained to be the forerunner of Christ before he was conceived. (Luke 1:13-17)
  6. Jesus was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil. (I John 3:8)
  7. Paul was separated to God from his mother's womb. (Galatians 1:15)
- E. God, in His foreknowledge, has the ability to set our destiny without tampering with our will.
1. God sees the end from the beginning; consequently, He can announce the outcome.
  2. God does not destine us to success or failure, but He can accurately predict the outcome.

## **V. SEASONS AND TIME**

- A. "To every thing there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven." (Ecclesiastes 3:1)
1. We must not allow the season to pass without fulfilling our purpose.
  2. Purpose and time must work together.
  3. The timing of God is as important as the will of God.
- B. Seasons cannot be stopped; they can be violated.

1. As it is in the natural, so it is in the spiritual; neither spring, summer, fall, nor winter can be stopped or delayed by man.
  2. Seasons do not come by man's invitation; they come because it is time.
  3. Seasons must be prepared for and heeded to.
  4. Seasons show no respect for persons; they affect all of us.
  5. Refusing to respect the seasons can be harmful to your health.
- C. Seasons can be related to changes in individuals' lives and ministries, as well as the ministry of the Church.
1. When change comes to our lives or ministry, we must adjust to the change.
  2. Preparation for the change makes adjustments to the change easier.
  3. God always announces before He acts. (Amos 3:7)
  4. It is easy to sacrifice present responsibility on the altar of past accomplishments.
    - a. We cannot live on yesterday's bread.
    - b. The older generation must not become preoccupied with a past season and refuse to accept a season change.
    - c. Seasons are not altered by what one thinks.
    - d. The "good old days" were only good in their season.
      - (1) The Pentecostal revival was good for its time.
      - (2) The healing revival was good for its time.
      - (3) The charismatic renewal was good for its time.
      - (4) The Word-Faith movement was good for its time.
    - e. This is a different time and a different season.

5. Don't miss your season!
- D. When seasons come, the surroundings cooperate.
1. The animals do not dictate to the seasons; they cooperate with the seasons.
  2. Plants do not defy the seasons; they yield to the seasons.
  3. Even human beings yield to the seasons through dress and preparation.
  4. The surroundings cooperate with the seasons because it is time.
    - a. Egypt cooperated with Israel when it was time for Israel to leave Egypt.
    - b. When the army of Egypt tampered with God's timing, they were destroyed.
- E. We can know the time and season because God doesn't change the season without first announcing the coming change.
- F. We must submit to the seasons and move in God's time.
1. Purpose was the reason for Esther becoming queen. (Esther 4:14)
  2. Mordecai helped put purpose in perspective.

## **VI. PURPOSE USES TIME**

- A. **Purpose** is the original intent for the creation of a thing.
- B. *Webster's Dictionary* defines purpose as something set up as an object or end to be attained.
- C. **Time** is a specified period in which something occurs.
- D. *Webster's Dictionary* defines time as the measured or measurable period during which an action, process, or condition exists or continues.
- E. Purpose must always be synchronized with time.

1. Only “in the fullness of time” is purpose useful.
  2. Moses, Joseph, and David had to wait for the right time to fulfill their individual purposes.
- F. Purpose never wastes time; it uses time to take itself into the future.
1. Purpose uses time to prepare for the season when purpose is to be revealed.
    - a. I Kings 6:7 reveals a liberating spiritual truth.
    - b. The stones were hewn before they were brought to the temple area.
    - c. The stones were properly prepared before they were assembled together.
    - d. Solomon’s Temple was built by placing each stone in its proper place; no stone was forced to fit where it did not belong.
    - e. Finally, the stones were covered with cedar so that no stone could be seen. (I Kings 6:18)
    - f. It took seven years to build Solomon’s Temple.
    - g. Think of this! Joseph was finished before he was brought to the job site; he had already been prepared (trained).
    - h. Remember! Except the Lord build the house, those that build labor in vain. (Psalm 127:1)
  2. We must realize our purpose and prepare for the season when our purpose is to be revealed.
  3. The future is here today.
  4. Purpose is a glimpse of the future.
  5. Knowledge of the future gives meaning to the present.
  6. Make a note of what you have seen and walk toward it until it comes into plain view.

- G. History's theme is purpose, not time.
  - 1. Too often we give more attention to dates than to the purpose of the dates.
  - 2. The Church is making history today; consequently, we must give our attention to God's purpose for our lives. May the event of the day be more important than the date!
  
- H. Faith is the Bible principle that brings the future into the present and carries the present into the future.
  - 1. The secular world seems to be more proficient in this principle than the Church.
  - 2. Investors place pictorial signs on vacant lots to announce a soon-coming complex and urge you to rent now.
    - a. Contractors go to a vacant lot with a drawing and proceed to make a picture become reality.
    - b. Sub-contractors come to the site to do a specific job without knowing the full scope of what is going on; they know their purpose and time, and they do not busy themselves with the purpose and time of others.
  - 3. Legitimate visions have the necessary provisions; God always provides for the visions He gives.

## **VII. THE GOD OF PURPOSE**

- A. God had a plan before earth was ever created.
  - 1. Genesis is not the beginning; God is.
  - 2. Before anything was, God is.
  - 3. God's purpose produced Genesis; it did not start with Genesis.
  - 4. Ephesians reveals things about God before the creation of the world.
  
- B. God is more than a creator ; His purpose motivated Him to create.
  - 1. Purpose precedes creation.

2. Creator God is known by His works.
  3. The God of purpose is known by His thoughts.
  4. When we have only knowledge of the Creator, we are limited to His works.
  5. When we have knowledge of the God of purpose, we can understand His ways.
  6. Israel knew God's works; Moses knew God's ways. (Psalm 103:7)
  7. Israel knew God's handiwork; Moses knew the thoughts and intents of God.
- C. We must know the thoughts of God in order to understand the actions of God.
1. The God of purpose is known by His thoughts; therefore, we must know God's Word and His Spirit.
  2. I Corinthians 2:16 teaches that we have the mind of Christ; consequently, we have access to God's thoughts.
  3. We must not limit our knowledge of God to works only; it is to our benefit to understand His ways.
- D. God operates with a fool-proof principle; He wants to share His principle with us.
1. God never begins before He finishes.
  2. God finishes in His mind before He starts with His hands; the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world. (Revelation 13:8)
  3. God makes known the end at the beginning.
  4. God concludes what He wants before He begins to make it; when God starts, He has already finished.
  5. God finishes, then He begins.
  6. The beginning is not the end, nor is the end the beginning.

7. When one finishes before he begins, he need not experiment.
  8. God's principle is "faith and hope;" hope is the goal or end, and faith brings hope into reality.
- E. We were all born with a purpose, yet few realize their purpose because too few have too little insight into God's plan.
- F. Concentrating on the end result can be overwhelming; therefore, we must see the small goals as the avenue to reach the ultimate goal.
1. The purpose of the children of Israel leaving Egypt was to go and possess the "Promise Land," but their procedure was a city at a time.
  2. Most beginnings are small; therefore, we must start small, think big, and pursue with wisdom.
  3. Remember God's procedure: conclude; plan; begin; finish.
  4. Never stop until you are certain every detail of God's plan has been fulfilled in your life.
    - a. We must first settle God's plan in our hearts.
    - b. We must then follow the Word of God and the Spirit of God if we plan to succeed in God's plan.
    - c. Once we have direction, we must implement the plan.
- G. It is time to awaken the sense of destiny within us and begin looking for God in everything we do.
- H. We must center our lives around God; God is not to be centered around our lives.

## **VIII. PATTERN OF PURPOSE**

- A. The destination must be set before one begins.
1. Predestination sets the destiny before the journey begins.
  2. Disobedience can alter one's destiny. (Numbers 20:7-12)

3. Don't let bad decisions keep you from fulfilling God's purpose for your life.
- B. The end must precede the beginning; the plan must be drawn up that will produce the end; the plan must be followed explicitly.
  - C. God declares the end from the beginning, and He does what pleases Him. (Isaiah 46:9-10)
    1. Our purpose in life is neither to please self nor merely to take up space.
    2. We are created for God's pleasure. (Revelation 4:11)
  - D. To know our purpose in life, we must know the God of purpose.
  - E. God has a principle that will assist us with our purpose: conclude, then begin; God does not begin until He finishes.
  - F. All things work together (cooperate) for good to those who love God and who are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)
    1. God knows the thoughts that He thinks toward us—thoughts of peace and not of evil to give us an expected end. (Jeremiah 29:11)
    2. The following examples reveal a pattern concerning God's purpose for our lives:
      - a. Joshua began as Moses' servant. He became the leader of Moses' army; he succeeded Moses as leader of the nation of Israel.
        - (1) Joshua's purpose was to lead Israel into the "Promise Land" and to divide their inheritance among them.
        - (2) Joshua began as a servant, not a leader.
      - b. Elisha began as Elijah's servant; later he took Elijah's place as prophet.
        - (1) Elisha did not begin as a great prophet.

- (2) Elisha was anointed to be a prophet; his purpose was to be a prophet, but he began as a servant.
- c. David began as a shepherd. Then, after killing Goliath, he became Saul's armor-bearer. David was a captain in Saul's army, and he also served as a personal musician to Saul. Finally, David became king over Israel.
  - (1) David's purpose was to be king, but it took years of events to get to the throne.
  - (2) David served faithfully before leading successfully.
  - (3) David was trained by and at the expense of the very one he was anointed to replace.
- d. Each of these men was chosen and anointed for a specific purpose, yet it took each man years to reach his ultimate goal.
- e. We have a job to do in this world; some Saul's are going to be replaced.
- G. Where there is no vision (revelation, insight, or purpose), people are undisciplined and break in the hard times.
  - 1. When conditions become undesirable, many abandon God's purpose for their lives.
  - 2. God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor are His ways our ways; God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts and His ways are higher than our ways. (Isaiah 55:8-9)
  - 3. We must learn how God thinks; otherwise, we may not survive.

## **IX. PLANS-PURPOSES-PURSUIT**

- A. A **plan** is a method for achieving an end.
- B. **Purpose** is an end to be attained.
- C. **Pursuit** is the act of following in order to overtake or capture.
- D. Our plans must be taken from God's plan; otherwise, we will find ourselves in great difficulty. (II Samuel 6:1-17)

- E. Our purpose must coincide with God's purpose for our lives.
- F. Our pursuits must be the goals that God has for our lives; consequently, our attention must be centered on God, not man.
- G. God's purpose for your life may be for you to set up so that someone else can finish. Don't become resentful. Just follow the plan and pursue God's purpose.
  - 1. Pursue what you have seen in your heart, no more or no less.
  - 2. If God has given you a vision, He will grant you the ability to accomplish it.
  - 3. When one knows why he is living, people's opinions will not move him from God's purpose.
  - 4. Criticism is ineffective when true purpose is realized.
  - 5. It is time to discover or rediscover our purpose in life.
  - 6. The revelation to fulfilling one's purpose may be disclosed one step at a time.
  - 7. Everybody has a purpose; therefore, jealousy must be disallowed in the Body of Christ.
    - a. Jealousy must be replaced with purpose.
    - b. Each of us must fulfill his purpose, disregarding the magnitude of the mission.
    - c. Old men should not be jealous of young men.
    - d. Young men should respect old men and their accomplishments, being cautious not to criticize their work; it may have been the purpose for the time.
- H. All of our labors should be directed toward God's temple, which He is building with the assistance of men. (Psalms 127:1)

## **X. GOD'S PURPOSE FOR MAN**

- A. Redemption is not God's purpose for man; it is the means God uses to get man back into position to fulfill God's purpose.

1. Adam, through disobedience, failed and got off course, thus missing God's purpose for his life.
2. The purpose of redemption is to get man back on course and to place him into a position to fulfill God's purpose.
3. *Phillips Modern English* translates Romans 3:23 as follows: "Everyone has sinned; everyone falls short of the beauty of God's plan."
4. Heaven was never intended to be the end of man's pursuit; it, too, is a means to fulfill God's purpose. (Revelation 21:1-2)
5. God's purpose for man is to fill the earth with the glory of the Lord by expressing the character and actions of God; consequently, purpose, not heaven, is the destiny of man.

B. Man is redeemed to benefit God, not self. (Isaiah 43:25)

1. Man seems to be more aware of what God does for him than he is of what God wants to do through him.
2. Our emphasis must be on what we should do for God, not what God can do for us.
3. We must move from man-centeredness to God-centeredness.
4. We have a revelation of the cross **for** us; we now need a revelation of the cross **in** us.
5. God makes us "to be;" we must choose "to become."
6. The emphasis must not be on God for man's use; we must emphasize man for God's use.
  - a. The religious world can be categorized into three basic categories: liberal; fundamental; and holiness.
    - (1) The liberals see the desperate needs of mankind and emphasize the social work that needs to be done **by man**.
    - (2) The fundamentalists recognize social needs, but they place the emphasize on what God has done **for man**.

- (3) The holiness recognize the needs of man and realize what God has done for man, but they emphasize the work God must do **in man**.
- b. Each of these groups places the emphasis on man rather than God.
- c. When the Church centers on man, it gravitates toward man.
- d. When the Church centers on God, it gravitates toward God.
- e. We need revelation of God, reconciliation to God, and realization of God's purpose for our lives.
- f. God works with man progressively; consequently, He leads man through various stages of spiritual growth.
  - (1) Conviction causes man to see his need for God.
  - (2) Salvation leads man to God.
  - (3) Revelation reveals God to man.
  - (4) Realization of God's purpose causes man to understand his reason for being.
- g. Once purpose is realized, man will place his attention upon God rather than trying to get God's attention.
- h. Man proceeds from God and will return to God if he follows the proper course.
- C. God desires to express Himself through man.
- D. God's purpose for man is multiplication and dominion, not redemption.
- E. Genesis 1:26-28 reveals God's purpose for man.
  - 1. God's purpose for man is two-fold: be fruitful and multiply, and exercise dominion in the earth.
    - a. Although we mention dominion as part of purpose, we must be cautious not to make dominion our pursuit.

- b. Dominion must be exercised as we fulfill God's purpose; therefore, we have considered it to be a distinct part of purpose.
  - c. It is imperative that we understand that dominion is not to be an object of pursuit; it is incorporated in expressing God's character and actions.
- 2. Man, who was made in the image of God, was to fill the earth with the expression and character of God.
- 3. Adam missed God's purpose when he disobeyed and followed his senses.
- 4. We have no record of Adam carrying out God's purpose before he disobeyed God.
  - a. It appears that Cain and Abel were born after Adam's disobedience; consequently, the expression and character of God were not reproduced.
  - b. The Adamic nature, not God's character, began to multiply and reproduce.
- 5. The "sex drive" in man was placed there by God to lead man to purpose.
- 6. "Sex drive" was given for purpose, not pleasure; the purpose of pleasure is to give one the incentive to fulfill God's ultimate purpose.
- 7. Man has devised a way to have pleasure without purpose; feeling good has been substituted for purpose.
- 8. Homosexuality, lesbianism, man-animal relationships, incest, and adultery will not produce a godly offspring; consequently, these actions are contrary to God's purpose for man. They are, therefore, forbidden. (Leviticus 18; Deuteronomy 27:20-23; Malachi 2:14-15)
- 9. Birth-control and family-planning are contrary to God's purpose for man; consequently, they are wrong.
  - a. In Biblical days it was disgraceful for a woman to be barren; our society often sees barrenness as a blessing.

- b. Abraham's blessing was "seed," not material things; things were only benefits to enhance the blessing. (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-6 17:1-9; Romans 4; Galatians 3:29)
  - 10. God gave the same mandate unto Adam, Noah, and the Church; be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth (with the expression and character of God).
  - 11. The earth must be filled with the glory of the Lord; therefore, it is imperative that the Church be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth with the expression and character of God. (Psalms 72:19)
- F. If man's purpose is not right, other things will also be wrong.

## **XI. GOD'S PURPOSE FOR THE CHURCH**

- A. Adam failed to produce godly offspring.
- B. Noah failed to produce godly offspring.
- C. God cut a covenant with Abraham which allowed God to produce, through Abraham, a godly seed.
- D. Jesus is the godly seed that is to fill the earth with God's character and actions.
  - 1. Jesus, in His earthly life, exemplified the character and actions of God in such a way that He said to Philip, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (John 14:9)
  - 2. The "Body," which is the Church, must follow the example of the "Head," Jesus.
  - 3. Jesus illustrated the character and person of God at all times, thus fulfilling God's purpose as a man.
- E. God has chosen the Church as the vehicle to get purpose back into perspective; consequently, Jesus must always be seen as the Head, and we must give Him complete control of the Church, which is His "Body."
- F. The purpose of the Church is not to save the world, but to fill the world with the expression and character of God.

1. The Church has failed to produce godly offspring; we have made converts instead of disciples.
  2. We have produced the offspring of man instead of the offspring of God.
  3. We have been filling the earth with man's glory instead of God's glory.
  4. The Church must think, talk, and act like God; otherwise, God will not be made manifest to the world.
  5. The Church must be fruitful and multiply, being cautious to produce disciples of Jesus, not disciples of men and denominations.
    - a. Only disciples of Jesus produce the expression and character of God.
    - b. The Church must produce the fruit of the spirit in order to produce the character of Jesus.
      - (1) Spiritual fruit can only be conceived in the spirit.
      - (2) The Church must be led by the Spirit in all of her endeavors.
      - (3) Every Church service must be under the control of the Holy Spirit.
    - c. The Church must disciple men to follow Jesus; otherwise, spiritual fruit will not be produced.
- G. Another aspect of purpose as it relates to the Church is to be a holy habitation of God's presence.
1. The Church, both individually and collectively, must be a place where God can express Himself as He desires.
  2. The Church exists for the purpose of God, not man.
  3. The Church has portrayed man as the benefactor when, in fact, God is the benefactor.

- H. The Church is God's vehicle to fulfill His purpose, which is to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth with the expression and character of God.

## **XII. FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE**

- A. Man cannot live beyond his vision; consequently, we need more insight into God's plan.
- B. What God has asked us to do is impossible to accomplish through natural abilities; therefore, He has provided spiritual equipment that will make the impossible possible.
- C. Our actions must be for God, of God, and with God; we must not act for self, of self, or with self.
- D. We must die daily, whereby we allow Jesus to live through us daily. (I Corinthians 15:31; Acts 1:8)
- E. Dying, not doing, produces spiritual fruit. (John 12:24)
- F. At some point in everyone's life, the path of man will intersect with the path of God and man will be called upon to make an eternal decision. (We often refer to this point as a crossroad.)
- G. Yielding to God's purpose can be compared to a operating dimmer switch, which is used for the purpose of dimming a bright light.
  - 1. Always remember that natural laws and principles originate from spiritual laws and principles.
  - 2. Voltage passes through and is controlled by the dimmer switch.
  - 3. Resistance to voltage decreases the amount of current allowed through the switch.
  - 4. The source of voltage can be high, yet, because of resistance, a light may barely glow.
  - 5. The dimmer switch is controlled by the operator, not the power source.

6. Our will is like the dimmer switch; the Holy Spirit is the power source. We regulate the amount of power flowing through us according to our resistance. We can burn as brightly as we choose.
  7. The flesh or carnality of man tries to persuade him to resist the Holy Spirit.
  8. The body of man can be compared to the light bulb; the body is what people see and evaluate.
  9. The body can only radiate light in proportion to the power flowing to it.
  10. The resistance between the Holy Spirit and the body is removed when the carnal nature is disallowed.
  11. God's Word instructs us to let our lights shine that God might be glorified through us. (Matthew 5:16)
  12. The brightness of our light is no greater than the power flowing through us.
- H. We must always keep things in their proper perspective, realizing loss of purpose produces weakness and discontentment.
1. Israel forgot her purpose and died in the wilderness. (Numbers 13 & 14)
  2. Esau did not look beyond the present; consequently, he sold his future, much to his regret.
  3. Where there is no purpose, there is no discipline.
  4. Jesus, for the joy set before Him, kept things in their proper perspective. (Hebrews 12:1-3)
  5. Where there is purpose, there is discipline.
  6. Things in the distance look small from our vantage point, but, when we arrive at the thing we were looking at from a distance, the point where we were seems small.
- I. We have a mandate from God and a revelation of His purpose; therefore, we must become God-minded and fulfill His plan.

- J. It would be beneficial to look at Romans 5:17 and focus on the phrase, “shall reign in life, by one, Jesus Christ.”
  - 1. Our purpose in life is to rule through Christ, not over or aside from Christ.
  - 2. Our external authority is no greater than our internal power.

### **XIII. SUMMARY**

- A. God is a God of purpose; we are people of purpose.
- B. We must know the God of purpose in order to know our purpose.
- C. There are many steps to purpose; one does not arrive overnight.
- D. Events are not purpose, per se; they lead to purpose.
- E. Determine where you are going before making the journey. Will it be the path of your choosing, or will it be God’s way?
- F. Know your purpose, then fulfill it.
- G. Setting one’s destiny before birth is predestination.
- H. The ability to announce one’s destiny before birth is foreknowledge.
- I. God, in His foreknowledge, declares our destiny (purpose) without tampering with our will.
- J. Disobedience can change destiny.
- K. To everything there is a season and a time.
- L. Seasons cannot be stopped; they can be violated.
- M. When seasons come, surroundings cooperate.
- N. God operates with a fool-proof system; He finishes before He begins, then begins in order to finish.
- O. God’s fool-proof system is identified as faith and hope.
- P. There is a pattern for purpose: conclude; plan; begin; and complete.

- Q. Knowing God the Creator only reveals His works; knowing the God of purpose reveals His ways.
- R. Each of us has a purpose; we must be aware of the season and move at the right time.
- S. Man's purpose is to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth with the expression and character of God.
- T. The purpose of the Church is to make disciples, not converts, thereby filling the earth with the expression and character of God.
- U. Fulfilling God's purpose requires desire, discipline, and destination.

#### **XIV. CONCLUSION**

- A. One searching for himself will never be satisfied with what he finds; seek God!
- B. Every generation has a purpose. Do not replace your vision with a dream; rather, take your dreams and make them visions.
- C. Preoccupation with the past is irresponsibility.
- D. Leaders without vision are not worth much.
- E. Those in charge must know where they are going.
- F. The Church must stop being "busy" and become effective.
- G. Individuals, nations, churches, and businesses all need purpose.
- H. Our country reels and rocks today because the Church has lost its purpose; the Church has lost its purpose because its leadership has lost its purpose.
- I. In order to know what God is doing, we must know His mind; to know His mind requires spending time with the Lord.
- J. Religion produces bondage; purpose produces results.
- K. God provides for every vision He gives.

- L. Not trying is worse than failing; the only time you cannot afford to fail is the last time you try.
- M. Let's not be so intent on preaching the gospel that we forget to preach the gospel that Jesus preached.
- N. Jesus preached about the Kingdom of God and taught Kingdom principles; we must do the same.

## **XV. ADDENDUM**

- A. The call and purpose of one's life may not always be "glitz, glamour, and glory."
  - 1. Jeremiah spent much time in prison fulfilling God's purpose in his life.
  - 2. God called Isaiah to prophesy until the cities were wasted, the houses were empty, and the land became desolate; he was sent to a people that would not listen to him. (Isaiah 6:8-12)
  - 3. God sent Ezekiel to a rebellious people who would not listen. (Ezekiel 2:5)
- B. Elijah's purpose was not to produce miracles; it was to turn the hearts of the people of Israel back to God.
- C. Solomon's purpose was not to be rich and famous; it was to build a temple for God.
- D. Our purpose is not to make a name for ourselves; our purpose is to obey God's plan.
- E. Only the pure in heart see God; consequently, we must purify our hearts if we intend to see God and learn our purpose. (Isaiah 59:1-2; Matthew 5:8)

