



## “Grace for a Purpose Driven Life” – Week 12

### Introduction:

1. This morning, we’re moving into our 3<sup>rd</sup> purpose in our study: Grace for a Purpose Driven Life
2. Review the Purpose #1 and Purpose #2:

**Purpose #1: You Were Planned for God’s Pleasure**

**Purpose #2: You Were Formed for God’s Family**

3. The 4 Rules of Communication are not just good to know, but commands to obey:
  - 1) Be Honest, 2) Keep Current, 3) Attack the Problem, Not the Person, 4) Act, Don’t React
4. Today, we’re moving into **Purpose #3: You Were Created to Become Like Christ**
  - THAT is God’s goal and objective for your life – to be like His Son
  - Before we do that, let’s ask a very important question:

### I. How is man put together (made)?

- Genesis 1:26 **Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."**

#### A. Four characteristics

- There are four things to keep in mind about the way man is made or put together:
  1. **We are spiritual beings** – our spirits are immortal and will outlast our earthly bodies.
  2. **We are intellectual beings** – we can think, reason, and solve problems
  3. **We are relational beings**– we can give and receive real love.
  4. **We have a moral consciousness** – we can discern right from wrong, which makes us accountable to God.
- According to Gen. 3, one thing is true about every aspect of the way man is made: *We are cursed by SIN!*
- Sin has had an affect on every aspect of the way man is made!
- In fact, the curse of sin leads us to want to play God in virtually every aspect of our lives

Quote:

*“This desire to be a god shows up every time we try to control our circumstances, our future, and people around us. But as creatures, we will never be the Creator: God doesn’t want you to become a god; he wants you to become godly – taking on his values, attitudes, and character.” – p. 172*

- That is an excellent statement: *God doesn't want you to become a god; he wants you to become godly!*
- Peter, the one who denied Christ 3 x's, curse and swore, repented and wrote:

- Peter 1:15 **but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior; 16 because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY."**

#### B. The ONE Person He wants you to become like: Jesus Christ.

- Hebrews 1:3 **And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,**

*"God's ultimate goal for your life on earth is not comfort, but character development. He wants you to grow up spiritually and become like Christ. Becoming like Christ does not mean losing your personality or becoming a mindless clone. God created your uniqueness, so he certainly doesn't want to destroy it. Christlikeness is all about transforming your character, not your personality."* – p. 173

- Romans 8:29 **For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren.**
- Matthew 3:17 **And behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."**

Q: *What does that look like?*

- Let's consider a few verses that would describe the character of our Lord:

- Galatians 5:22 **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.**
- 1 Corinthians 13:4 **Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.**
- 2 Peter 1:5 **Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, 6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, 7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Point: These verses describe the character of Christ and the purpose for which all things happen in our lives – ultimately to glorify God, but also for us to CHANGE and GROW!

- You might be asking q's: *Why is this happening to me? Why am I having such a difficult time?"*

- One answer is that life is *supposed* to be difficult! It's what enables us to grow.

- James 1:2 **Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, :3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.**

- And thankfully, Jesus left the Holy Spirit on earth to do just that (John 14:26) - help us to grow!

## II. God's Spirit Working In You

- But because God is a god of grace, He allows you to choose to please Him and walk in His truth
- 1 Timothy 4:7 . . . **discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.**

### A. We must COOPERATE with the Holy Spirit's work.

\* Paul explains in Ephesians 4:22-24 our three responsibilities in becoming like Christ.

1. We must "PUT OFF" – i.e. stop sinful behavior/actions – repent – forsake it!
2. We must change the way we THINK.

- Metamorphosis – used today to describe the amazing change a caterpillar goes through in becoming a butterfly

Point: Our thinking leads to our actions – if you don't change the way you think, you'll never change the way you act!

- Proverbs 23:7 **For as he thinks within himself, so he is . . .**

3. We must "PUT ON" the character of Christ by developing new, godly habits.

*"Your character is essentially the sum of your habits."* – P. 175

- Most people only put the focus on the put off – without making any effort to REPLACE a sinful action/thought with a BIBLICAL thought /action

\*\* [READ Eph. 4:22-29 – list the put offs / put on's]

### B. God uses His Word, people, and circumstances to mold us.

1. God's Word provides the TRUTH we need to grow

- John 17:17 **Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.**

2. God's people provide the SUPPORT we need to grow

Input: How does God use PEOPLE in our lives to help us grow?

'iron sharpening iron'

- Romans 15:14 **And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another.**

*"In many religions, the people considered to be the most spiritually mature and holy are those who isolate themselves from others in mountaintop monasteries, uninfected by contact with other people. But this is a gross misunderstanding. Spiritual maturity is not a solitary, individual pursuit! You cannot grow to Christlikeness in isolation. You must be around other people and interact with them. You need to be a part of a church and community. Why? Because true spiritual maturity is all about learning to love like Jesus, and you can't practice being like Jesus without being in relationship with other people. Remember, it's all about love – loving God and loving others."* – P 176

- 3.. Circumstances provide the ENVIRONMENT we need to practice Christlikeness.

- James 1:2 **Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, :3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.**
- Many people assume all that is needed for spiritual growth is Bible study and prayer.
- But some issues in life will *never* be changed by Bible study or prayer alone – God has designed trials to help you grow and mature

- Trials don't make or break us so much as they REVEAL our true colors / character!

- We need to keep in mind:

### C. Becoming like Christ is a long, slow PROCESS of growth.

- Ephesians 4:13 **Until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.**
- 1 John 3:1 **See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.**

\*\* God is far more interested in what you ARE than in what you DO.

True / False – Our world/culture has that backwards (more concerned about what you DO than what you ARE)?

- Paul made it very clear:

- Romans 12:1 **Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.**

- Some of you may be asking the question:

### III. How We Grow?

#### A. God's part and your part.

- Philippians 2:12 **So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.**

\* Two parts of spiritual growth

⇒ *Work out* – is YOUR responsibility

⇒ *Work in* – is GOD'S role

*“Spiritual growth is a collaborative effort between you and the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit works with us, not just in us.” – P. 180*

Q: Does God tie your shoes? Make your bed? Drive your car? – NO

- He expects you to put forth some effort – under grace, you get to choose to obey or disobey, but you do have to make a choice

- You don't get to choose the consequences, but you do get to choose!

> THEN God bless you:

- James 1:22 **But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25 But one who looks intently**

at the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

## B. Changing the way you think – changing the HEART!

- Proverbs 4:23 **Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.**
- Matthew 15:19 **For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.**
- Matthew 15:19 **For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:**
- To be like Christ you must develop the mind of Christ.
  - Philippians 2:5 **Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus . . .**

*repentance* = to change your mind”

\* Two Parts

### 1. Stop thinking IMMATURE thoughts

- 1 Corinthians 14:20 **Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature.**
- Romans 8:5 **For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.**

### 2. Start thinking BIBLICAL, which focuses on others, not yourself.

- 1 Corinthians 13:11 **When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.**  
*“The Christian life is far more than creeds and convictions; it includes conduct and character. Our deeds must be consistent with our creeds, and our beliefs must be backed up with Christlike behavior.” – P 183*
- Christianity is not primarily a religion or a philosophy, but a relationship and a lifestyle.
  - 1 Corinthians 2:12 **Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,**
  - Matthew 3:17 **and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."**
  - Romans 8:28 **And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren**

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##### **B. The ONE Person He wants you to become like: \_\_\_\_\_.**

*Quote – p. 173*

#### **II. God’s Spirit Working In You**

- 1 Timothy 4:7 . . . **discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.**

##### **A. We must \_\_\_\_\_ with the Holy Spirit’s work.**

1. **We must** “\_\_\_\_\_” – i.e. stop sinful behavior/actions – repent – forsake it!

2. **We must change the way we** \_\_\_\_\_.

3. **We must** “\_\_\_\_\_” **the character of Christ by developing new, godly habits.**

*“Your character is essentially the sum of your habits.” – P. 175*

**B. God uses His Word, people, and circumstances to mold us.**

1. God's Word provides the \_\_\_\_\_ we need to grow

2. God's people provide the \_\_\_\_\_ we need to grow.

**Input:** How does God use PEOPLE in our lives to help us grow?

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3. Circumstances provide the \_\_\_\_\_ we need to practice Christlikeness.

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2. **Start thinking \_\_\_\_\_, which focuses on others, not yourself.**

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- **Peter 1:15-16**

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- **Hebrews 1:3**

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- **Romans 8:29 ; Matthew 3:17**
- **Galatians 5:22-23; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8**
- **2 Peter 1:5-8; James 1:2-3**

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