

Last week we started talking about what the life of a maturing Jesus Follower looks like as they continue to grow in the Lord.

Let's continue today by looking at these areas of growth and maturity:

A growing and maturing understanding of God's purpose for their life

Each of us is placed on earth by God to serve a specific purpose. As we discover and walk out God's purpose for our lives, we can be truly effective. Too often Christians live with no purpose. We take life as it comes and hope for the best. Some Christians settle for the general and generic principles that apply to the whole Body of Christ and believe that there are no specific purposes that God has for them. Biblical discipleship encourages people to discover God's specific and unique purpose for placing them on the planet and then to live a life that seeks to fulfill that purpose.

God does have general and generic purposes for all Christians, but He also has a specific and unique destiny for each of us. His purpose for our life is integrated with how he "wired" us, and He has placed us in a particular time and place in history to fulfill that purpose.

Acts 13:36 *For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep...*

The task that God gave Paul was testifying to the gospel of God's grace. His goal was to fulfill that task. We need to discover what task the Lord has given us and make that the foundation of our life's purpose.

Acts 20:24 *However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.*

As followers of Jesus, we need to run everything we do, even the "mundane" things, through the filter of God's design for our life. As we live according to His will, we bring glory to Him. (**John 17:4** *I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.*)

Romans 12:2 *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

1 Corinthians 10:31 *So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*

Each of us has a responsibility to live our lives in a way that honors God's purpose for our existence. To effectively accomplish this we must, at least, have a fundamental understanding of His purpose for our life.

Ephesians 4:1 *As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.*

Paul realized that Jesus "took hold" of him for a purpose. His life was focused on pursuing that purpose. He chose to not let his disobedient past stop him from moving forward.

Philippians 3:12-14 *Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

God has a purpose for every aspect of His creation. His purpose is not determinate on anything we do. His purpose is consistent. The variable in the equation is us...we must make a choice to serve His purpose.

2 Timothy 1:8,9 *So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But 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...*

We need to develop the habit of lining up our plans, dreams, and desires with God's will (purpose). Too often we live our lives independent of His guidance in the "small" things of life and only look for His will in the "big" things or in times of chaos and crisis.

James 4:13-15 *Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."*

To understand and obey God's will provides for us a foundation of stability and security.

1 John 2:17 *The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.*

Hale Pule Question

Take a few minutes to think about your life. Think about how the Father has created you, "wired" you, and divinely called you into His Kingdom. As you meditate on the verses above, can you begin to identify His purpose for you? If you struggle with seeing the "Big Picture" of "Why I Exist", start with the baby steps of why He created you, called you as His child, and placed you where you are. Ask Him to show you the "why" to the "who" you are. Feel free to share your thoughts with Jesus Followers who know you well and seek their input.