

# ON PURPOSE

GOD BLESSES ON PURPOSE

On Purpose | *The Seek-ret* | Chad Bruegman | 1.8.17

LG Weekly

## START.

To get things started, go around the circle and answer this question:

**Do you have any New Year's resolutions? If so; what are they and why?**

## SHARE.

Welcome to our series "On Purpose."

*God blesses with a purpose. What we have in life was given to us for a reason. Think for a moment about what God has given to you (besides a relationship with Him, which is the best thing). He has given each of us time, abilities, and resources that we get to choose how to use.*

*There is a purpose behind the blessing of time. God has granted us a window of time to walk upon this earth, to get to know Him better, and to make an impact with our lives. We can 'on purpose' use our time for things that matter, or we can choose to waste it away.*

*There is a purpose behind the talents and abilities you have. You have been hard-wired with abilities that are unique and special. For some, abilities to teach, discern, write, paint, design, create music ... for others, abilities to devour books, make money, run companies or excel in sports. These are all God-given, and He allows us to choose whether we use those abilities to build His kingdom or our own kingdoms.*

*Finally, we have been blessed, 'on purpose,' with resources. It can sometimes be difficult to see that our resources are God-given, but when we really think about it, how did we earn those resources? The answer is: by our God-given talents, abilities, and time! Through these, God made us able and capable to earn a*

*living, which enables us to purchase the things we enjoy. When we look around at what we own – our homes, cars, bank accounts, bikes, boats, furniture, etc.; these are amazing things that we get to steward. It's our prerogative to choose if and how we purposefully bless others with what we have been given. We can open our homes, pick people up in our cars, bike with others, or give away things someone else might need. We can honor God in giving our resources toward building His Kingdom, or we can hoard them for ourselves. It is our choice.*

This week, Chad kicked off our series talking about seeking God first in all things. As we enter a new year, some of us made decisions on what to put first. Eating more healthily, working out, going on social media fasts, reading more, emailing less ... Having resolve to do these things is a good and God-honoring thing to pursue, but without first seeking God, these achievements are a hollow victory. Forgetting to seek God's face and to know Him better is the first thing we all need most. In John 10:10, Jesus says that he came that we might have life and life abundantly. Let us not seek the abundant life on its own, but the giver of abundant life. Only when we do that can we truly have it.

Let's read Matthew 6:25-34

**What would you say you tend to worry about most? Why?**

**Jesus is teaching us about the ineffectiveness of worrying about things we need, and says, “your heavenly Father knows that you need them.” Jesus tells us to do something else first. What is it and why is it so important?**

## **G R O W**

*It is only when our hearts are on the chief thing that secondary things yield pleasure ... One of the first and most clearly recognized rules to be observed is that happiness is most likely to be attained when it is not the direct object of pursuit.*

The Kingdom of God is not set in opposition to the things in the world for which men seek; it is simply set above them. God already knows our needs and the things in which we need; He just asks that we seek Him first. In no way is God telling us to throw off responsibility, work-ethic, or resolve. That would be contrary to Scripture. He is saying that we need to put first things first. In fact, it takes 'resolve' to continually seek God on a daily basis. Resolve is good.

A.W. Tozer once said, "As God is exalted to the right place in our lives, a thousand problems are solved at once." Putting God first changes our perspective on everything else. We see more clearly through different lenses when we spend time with God. There is no substitute.

*Have a few people read aloud the following verses:*

Psalms 119:2, Psalm 34:8-10, 1 Chronicles 16:11, Hebrews 11:6 and Matthew 6:31-34

In Weber, S. K. (2000). *Matthew Commentary* we read about what God's kingdom and righteousness are defined as:

If our life is not to be preoccupied with fretting over basic needs, what is our concern to be? The answer is, **his kingdom and his righteousness**. Those two terms are almost synonymous. God's kingdom means his sovereign rule in heaven and on earth, most particularly in and through the life of the individual believer. To seek his kingdom is to seek to ensure that his righteousness is done in heaven, on earth, and, most particularly, in and through our lives.

We are to seek *first* God's kingdom and righteousness. Everything starts here. This is to be our consuming priority. So it is important to remind ourselves of some basic kingdom realities. How does a person find God's righteousness that characterizes his kingdom? Jesus started his sermon by pointing out our utter spiritual bankruptcy. We have no righteousness of our own. Even our best attitudes and actions do not procure it. Righteousness comes as a merciful gift, grace through faith (Eph. 2:4-10).

**After reading these verses and commentary, what stands out to you most?**

**How can putting God first help us enjoy all the other things in life most?**

## **M O V E**

The spiritual life always flows into the practical life. They are not mutually exclusive, but are designed to work together. God's heart for His people is that we would trust Him and His word. For instance, when Jesus taught the people in the Sermon on the Mount, what He said was not just good ideas for self-improvement. God Himself, the Truth and the Life told us how life is designed to be lived so that we might

flourish. As we get to know and seek God, we change. And it changes the way we view and live life. The inner transformation we experience is naturally reflected in the daily life we live. It is spiritual and practical.

When God transforms our hearts and minds and we begin to view how valuable and special we are, it will change how we treat people. As we pray for our enemies, it will change how we feel about them. As we seek God daily to speak to us, we will more likely have a word of encouragement for someone else. What is spiritual, flows into the practical.

*In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success.*

*Proverbs 3:6*

**What gets in the way of you seeking God first?**

**Take some time and share some ideas on what it practically looks like to daily seek God and put Him first.**

*(As you hear ideas, consider how you could incorporate them into your own life this week.)*

## **P R A Y**

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles we all face.

## **T O G O**

**I Chronicles 16:11**

*Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face continually.*