

ON PURPOSE

GOD BLESSES ON PURPOSE

On Purpose | *From Perfection* | Shawn Johnson | 2.4.17

LG Weekly

START .

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

When was the last time you did something for the first time?

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.

Throughout this series, we want our church to be known as a church family that flat out seeks God. We know the promises of God: that when we seek him, he will guide, equip, empower and enrich our lives. Week by week we have really talked practically about how we spend our time with God, the ways we are to be generous and obedient with our resources and last week we talked about how we can use our talents to make a difference in the world we touch. Let's revisit the foundational verse for this series.

Matthew 28:18-20

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

Sometimes, when we try to put God first in things we will fall short and it can feel very discouraging. We can then doubt our authenticity and the faith we profess. But, look again at this verse. Notice the very intentional wording Jesus used ... we are to seek 'his righteousness.' Righteousness means blameless, sinless, spotless, faultless and perfect in the sight of God. This is crucial in the life of a believer. Without his righteousness, we have nothing. If we are followers of Christ, we are complete and perfect in him, even though we fall short.

Let's read Romans 3:21-24

If you are a follower of Jesus, you have been made righteous. Do you ever struggle with mind games regarding this? If so how/what/why?

According to scripture, how do we receive God's righteousness? Is it something to be earned?

G R O W

As Shawn mentioned repeatedly throughout the message, we have been made perfect by the sacrifice Jesus Christ made on the cross. We are now faultless in the eyes of God, even though we are in a process of becoming more like Jesus. Our being made perfect had nothing to do with our best efforts. Throughout the Old Testament, God pursued his people and made a way to restore their relationship. He sought out Adam and Eve in the garden and covered their shame with the skin of an animal. In essence we see the first sacrifice where something had to die to cover what would live on. What was put into motion was that God made a way to deal with our sin. Eventually, in God's perfect timing, he implemented a system of sacrifices that were to be made to cover the sins of the people, a foreshadowing of the one and only perfect sacrifice yet to come that would free the people once and for all. But until that day would come, they lived by the sacrificial system led by priesthood.

Let's read Hebrews 10:11-18

In Lea, T. D. (1999). *Hebrews, James* (Vol. 10, pp. 184-185) we see the significance of the specific language used regarding the comprehensive finality and completeness of Christ sacrifice for us.

Christ's sacrifice lasted because it offered permanent pardon to those who had offended God. Priests presided over an endless round of ineffective sacrifices. Some sacrifices were offered annually at the Day of Atonement. Priests also officiated at the daily sacrifices. The sheer futility of the whole process is evident in this verse.

Standing was a position of continuous work. Sitting was a position of accomplishment. The priests continued to stand because their work was never done. Christ sat (v. 12) because he had made payment for the price of sin. The standing priest performed **his religious duties**, doing what he was commanded but without permanent results. **Again and again** translates a single Greek word which stands in contrast with Jesus' **once for all work** (v. 10). The work of the priest was ineffective, offering repetitious sacrifices which could **never take away sins**. By contrast, Christ's single offering effectively removed sins **for all time**.

These words close the doctrinal section of Hebrews. Christ's new covenant makes Old Testament sacrifices obsolete. When God erases our sins, we no longer need a sin offering. The entire sacrificial system is unnecessary. The single offering of Christ has wiped out the need for the old sacrificial system and has introduced a new era. Christ himself fulfilled the message which God intended the sacrifices to proclaim.

Anyone who wants forgiveness of sin can find access by placing a repentant faith in the completed work of Christ. Christ's sacrifice was God's final answer to the universal problem of human sin.

What are the life implications for a believer that Jesus laid out?

Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, we are now under the new covenant. The Lord will remember our sins no more as those who are in Christ are completely forgiven. If we don't truly believe this, how could it negatively impact our faith and walk with Jesus?

Does anyone have a personal story of having a hard time accepting forgiveness and overcoming those mind games with God's help? What made the difference for you and how would you encourage someone who is struggling right now?

M O V E

For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

Hebrews 10:14

It is explicit in this verse that we are made perfect and we are also in a process of being made holy. Christ's once and for all sacrifice brings us to the place God has always intended for us; we are forgiven and righteous in his sight. God also has the power to make us progressively holy as we live our lives on earth. It is a beautiful picture of our spiritual journey with Christ. As a believer, when we ask for forgiveness and ask Jesus to come into our lives to be the leader of our lives, we are made perfect in God's sight. ***So by being made perfect forever, we actually start our journey of following Jesus from the finish line.*** We start from perfection, but that doesn't mean God's done with us. It is just the start as the Holy Spirit works in our hearts and empowers us to live more like Jesus day by day. When we fall short, we don't get discouraged because we remind ourselves of these truths found in Hebrews.

Let's finish by reading Hebrews 10:19-25

Why should we be confident to approach God?

Consider how you can specifically encourage someone. Maybe it's today or later this week, but make a point to pray about it and go do it. Here are some ideas:

- Encourage someone today in your group, either now or after group.
- Ask how you can be praying for someone this week and write it down where you can see it. Post-it notes on the mirror work well.
- Think of a leader, boss, teacher or someone in authority and encourage them in what they do and why it matters.
- Lastly, if you can't think of anything because you really need to be encouraged, ask the group to pray for you.

Prayer Nights: *In the rhythm of life groups, every campus has a monthly prayer night that lots of groups attend. If you haven't joined us, come check it out as a group. It is a great way to change things up and such a needed time for people. Kids care is available!*

P R A Y

As a group, spend some time praying for each other. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

T O G O

Romans 10:17

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.