

The “Why” of Life

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

Part I – God’s Story

It is such a blessing to be back with you this morning and to be worshipping God together. I enjoy preaching in other places in the world, but I love coming home and being in a church where you feel like you are family and each week we are growing in the faith together to know the Lord.

Yet one thing that I particularly notice as I travel and speak and preach to people and groups, is that for those who really know the Lord, there seems to be an understanding of a deeper, underlying “why” of life. Instead of a random, chaotic approach to life, there seems to be this internal sense that God is with us and God’s got this. Even when there are difficult situations and circumstances, for those who know Jesus there is a hope and a peace and a recognition of God’s glory, and that is most evident for those who are part of a church family or surrounded by strong Christian support.

Regardless of how or where Christians gather – whether it is two or three joining together in Bible study and prayer or whether it is an entire congregation coming together – the reason we come together to worship and pray and study the Bible together is because we have had this glimpse of God in all his glory and we want more. It is as if there is a hunger deep inside of us where we know that we want to know and experience God in all of his fullness.

The Bible is not only God’s Word, but more importantly it is God’s Story. Do you realize that? God in his glory and grace and mercy and mystery and love are on every page of the Bible...God is the main character. And everyone else who is mentioned in the Bible is a minor character and the only reason they are included is to give you a better understanding of who God is by the relationship or the events surrounding their lives. Supposedly there are over 3200 individuals named in the Bible. They are the good, the bad, and the ugly – and in

some way there is a relationship to God that helps us to better understand who God really is.

But God’s Story is not just confined to the pages of the Bible. Actually, Life is God’s story. Since God is the Lord God Almighty and Creator of the Universe, then everything or everyone who has ever lived or will ever live is just teeny tiny speck in God’s Story. God’s Story is still on-going, and you and I are a part of it.

Part II – Recognizing Who God Is

Now I know you and I have this tendency to see life from our own perspective. We have these amazing bodies that God has given us, and we have brains to think and we have been given free will to choose how we will live our lives, and because we look out of our eyes to see everything around us, then we have this perception that we personally are the center of our own little universe. We start thinking – life is all about ME, and we forget about the one who created us and formed us in his own image and knew us before we were born and knit us together in our mother’s womb.

And yet... what we really, really need is to step back and recognize who God is! And that understanding of God influences how we look at life and everything we do. I came to this church a year ago and about a month after I had arrived, I preached a sermon and shared with you that there is a sign that is both in my home and my office at church that says: *What I believe about God will determine what I do.* In fact, we made available that day some cards with that saying. Recognize that ‘how you look at God will impact how you live your life.’ If you live your life thinking that the world revolves around you, then you will probably miss God’s glory and all the blessings and experiences that God wants to share with you.

Do you recognize how big and mighty and glorious God really is? David did – and he lived his life dedicated to the Lord. It doesn’t

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mean he lived a perfect life, he was human and made mistakes, yet he tried to keep his focus on God and to do God’s will. And God himself describes David as a “man after my own heart” (Acts 13:22).

We get a good glimpse of what David believed about God in David’s Prayer from the last chapter in **1 Chronicles (29:10-13)**. Listen to what David said about God: *David praised the Lord in the presence of the whole assembly, saying, “Praise be to you, O Lord, God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name.* In fact, this is a wonderful prayer for us to hang on to and to read and pray so that we are reminded of many of God’s glorious attributes.

Part III – Our Relationship with God

If we are first able to recognize who God truly is, then it gives us a better picture of how we fit into this world. Our worth and value and achievements in life are directly connected to what our relationship is with God.

If we try to do life on our own, then we may stumble through life and there may be some good times and some bad times, but we will never fully be who God intended us to be. Plus, if we try to live life on our own then we are limiting ourselves to human wisdom and power. Yet when our focus and trust and faith is in God, then God guides our steps and gives us wisdom and power to be fully who God created us to be.

And it is not “what” we do in life that matters...it is “why” we are doing it and making sure that God is the center of that “why.” As we saw in the video earlier, when

there is a powerful “why” underlying how and what we do, then it changes everything. And the most powerful “why” we can ever have is to glorify God.

In fact, the whole reason God created humankind in the first place is so that we can be in relationship with the Lord and that we might both experience his glory and give him glory by how we live our lives.

Part IV – Purpose Statement

God created each of us with unique gifts and talents and skills and he puts us in different places and times and situations. For such a time as this, you were created, and God has a purpose that is special for you. Deep down in all of our purposes is that central spark which is to glorify God. So we have a variety of talents but through everything we do it is an opportunity to point to God’s glory. Santhia and Jeremy have incredible musical talent, so they are using that talent as well as the deeper part to point back toward God and glorify God. Oceana teaches and ministers to people and it glorifies God. Anything you do, can be done in a way that glorifies God. Whether it is cooking, or taking pictures, or flying airplanes, or selling insurance, or whatever – it is not the “what” you do that is most critical, or even really the “how” you do it. The most critical part is to make sure you understand your “why” in living life and that God is the center of that “why.”

If you focus on the “why” of your life first and you make sure God is the center of that why, then it impacts what you do and how you do it... because you realize what is truly important.

It may be helpful to write out your own “purpose statement” so that it helps guide you in your life. If it is helpful, I’ll share with you my purpose statement that I put together about 15 years ago. I keep tweaking it, but it helps me to remember what is most important for me. *My purpose in life is to use the inner-joy and perseverance that God has given me to love,*

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encourage, and inspire others into a closer, real, and more personal relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, so that their greatest desire is to know, worship, obey, and love God, and to love and care for all of God’s children. If you are interested in developing your own Purpose Statement, I’ll be glad to share some information that was helpful for me. But regardless of whether you have a written Purpose Statement or not, you still need to make sure that God is the center of your “why” in life.

Part V – Uzziah

Scripture is full of those individuals who made God the center of why they were living, and we also have examples of those who tried to do it on their own.

In 2 Chronicles 26 it tells about Uzziah King of Judah. It says in *verse 3 that he became king when he was sixteen years old and reigned in Jerusalem for fifty-two years. Verse 4 says, He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just as his father Amaziah had done. Verse 5 goes on to say, He sought God during the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God.* So the priest Zechariah was helping to instruct him in seeking God. And when it says “instructed him in the fear of God” that word fear really means to have “awe” or awareness of God and recognizing how holy God is. I’ll also point out that in some Hebrew manuscripts that word “fear” is “vision” – in other words – he was instructed to keep God as his main focus. The rest of that verse 5 goes on to say, *As long as he sought the Lord, God gave him success.*

When we make God our focus and we are seeking to obey him and to live out the Lord’s purpose and plan for our lives, then God gives us the wisdom and the power to move forward. And God has a way of opening doors for us so that we can be successful in doing the Lord’s will.

But notice what happened when Uzziah stopped keeping his focus on the Lord and was

unfaithful to God, *verse 16 – But after Uzziah became powerful, his pride led to his downfall.* He started thinking he could do things on his own and doing what was right in his own eyes instead of what God said was right. *He was unfaithful to the Lord his God,* - so God was still his God, but he was not being obedient in how he lived his life. It goes on to say that he *entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense.*

I think he just decided since he was king of Judah that he could do anything he wanted to do. And actually, he never actually burned the incense because the priests stopped him, but just his decision to do whatever he wanted to do instead of God’s will, was enough that God struck him with leprosy. *And verse 21 says King Uzziah had leprosy until the day he died. He lived in a separate house – leprous, and excluded from the temple of God.*

Notice, as long as his focus was on God and he was living his life for the Lord, things were good and successful. And yet without God, and thinking he was the center of the universe, is when he got himself into trouble.

Part VI – For the Glory of God

The best thing we can do is just make sure that in all that we do – that we bring glory and honor to the Lord. Whether it is the work that we do, or how we treat other people, or how we use our resources and possessions, or anything we think, say, or do – it should be for the glory of God.

Our Memory Verse this week is from 1 Corinthians 10:31 and even says *So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*

What if we stopped ourselves several times throughout the day just to ask ourselves is what I am doing or about to do, glorifying God? If you realize “why” you have been given life in the first place and you seek to glorify God in everything you think you do – then it will impact everything you think, say, and do.

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Part VII – Your Life

We only have one life to live, so why would we want to just stumble through life. Instead if we make the Lord the “why” of our lives and the center of our lives, then we can live it to the fullest.

God has called each of us for a purpose in this life. And hopefully we will live our lives glorifying God so that we are “worthy of his calling.”

So, allow me to wrap this up with a prayer that was to the Thessalonians from Paul, Silas and Timothy. It is from **2 Thessalonians 1:11-12** and it is my prayer over each of you. *With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.* Amen.