

The Pilgrim's Purpose

Sunday, 02 Mar 2013 | Church on the Park
01 - The Pilgrimage

Text: “Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’; Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.” (Isa. 46:10-11)

Intro: In the last book we studied, 1 Peter, we saw that life was a pilgrimage. A pilgrim is someone that leaves their comfort zone to go on a journey to a more spiritual place. In 1 Peter we learned that there are three essential items for us to take on this journey: faith, hope and love. Faith enables us to put one step in front of another; hope renews our strength throughout the journey and keeps the end goal always at the fore-front of our minds; love keeps us on a straight path and takes others with us. One other thing that every pilgrim has is purpose. Pilgrims know where they are going. Like Abraham, they have stepped out of their home town with purpose. Today, I want to talk about living with purpose. I also want to talk about the purpose of our church.

Part 1: Our God is a God of Purpose

1) Our God is filled with purpose

- Our God is a God who has purpose. He doesn't just do things randomly. The Scripture teaches us that he knows **the end from the beginning**. He knows exactly where he is going and how we are going to get there. (Scriptures on God's purpose).
- The **Psalms of Ascent** teach us about the pilgrim way
 - **Psalm 120** begins the Psalm of Ascent, the Psalms of Pilgrimage. Interestingly, God puts **Psalm 119** before the start of the pilgrimage. This tells me that you won't get anywhere without a passionate love for the Word of God, Scripture.
- Christian in **Pilgrim's Progress** is an example of Psalm 120 and having a purpose
- Christian and Hopeful going by the wayside and getting trapped by the **Giant Despair** and locked in **Doubting Castle**. Here Christian wants to commit suicide. He is in despair, trapped in a dungeon and exhausted from constant beatings. But then he remembers he has the key that will unlock any door—the **key of promise**.

2) When we each have our own purposes rather than God's purpose we become ineffective

- “Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, **intent on one purpose**.” (Phil 2:1-2)

- Is that even possible for all of God's people to be intent on one purpose?
- What often happens in the body of Christ is that each member has their own purpose. We all are going in **different directions** and therefore there is no coordination. The legs want to go north and the arms want to go south. Consequently, it's hard for us to get anywhere.
- God's pilgrims **lay down** their own purpose for God's purpose.
- One of the popular messages people are preaching today is **pursue your dreams** and visions. When you read the Gospels, you do not read this type of preaching. Instead, it's all about pursuing God's dream and vision. What is God's purpose? And how can you get in line with it?

Part II: How can we be united in purpose? (Col. 2:19)

What is God's purpose for each one of us? What is God's purpose for us as a church? We all have a three-fold purpose. As a church, this is what we are about. These are our core purposes while here on earth.

1) To Glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31)

- We are all called to live a life that worships and praises God. Through our eating, drinking, working, playing and relating. Obedience and purity of heart glorifies God.
- My example of setting up the church

2) To Grow in God (*1 Cor. 9:24-27; *Rom. 8:28-30)

- Our life's purpose is to grow in God, becoming more like Jesus

3) To Go and Make Disciples (Matt. 28:18-20)

- To lead people to Jesus and enable them to grow

Conclusion: Our God is filled with purpose. When we are saved we are called to lay down our lower purpose for God's higher purpose. When we do this we will be united in purpose to glorify God, grow in his likeness and help others to connect and grow in God. Our goal is to get to the heavenly city and take as many people with us as possible.