

29. **Constantly Try To Find Your True Purpose in Life**

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

(Matt 22:36–40)

These days there are many voices telling us to seek after our true purpose in life. In order to discover what this purpose is, we are told to closely examine ourselves, to look for clues or indicators that are contained within our giftedness, personal experiences, inner motivations, and personality.

The hope conveyed is that through the realization of our purpose we will be able to live more meaningful and significant lives.

If we constantly seek to find our true purpose in life we can become, among other things, overly introspective and so earthly-minded that we are little to no heavenly good.

Although finding our true purpose in life appears noble and worthwhile, it may pose some dangers for us. For instance, due

to the subjectivity involved, we may never know what our giftedness is with absolute certainty. Also, our passions for certain pursuits commonly change during the course of our life.

In addition, this quest to find our purpose lends itself to an unwholesome exercise of self-centeredness wherein we become the focus of our lives. On top of this, disillusionment can easily happen because if we never discover any specific, overriding purpose for our life, we may feel as if there is none at all.

Finally, the primary pitfall of constantly attempting to find our true purpose in life is that *we as believers are never told in God's Word to seek for something within ourselves to indicate what our true purpose in life is.*

Instead, we are called to actively take hold of the purposes which the Lord has already given us to do. As we will see, it is by pursuing these clearly defined purposes, and not in trying to find one within ourselves, that our lives will have the overall purpose, meaning, and true significance God intends for them to have.

So what are these purposes which God has told us to pursue?

His Word is clear that these purposes are centered and grounded on loving him as well as our fellow human beings.

In light of this, here are some things that will help us to actually fulfill our true purpose(s) in life instead of somehow trying to find it.

Love God First and Foremost. When Jesus was asked what was the *greatest* single commandment he replied, *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment”* (Matt 22:36–38).

The type of love spoken of here does not relate to an emotion (although it certainly may include it) but rather to a

volitional choice to obey and serve God with all that we are and all that we have.

The Lord said to Israel, *“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to observe the LORD’s commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?”* (Deut 10:12–13).¹

A grand expression of truly loving God is by loving our fellow human beings. The Apostle John instructs us, *“Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen”* (1 John 4:20).² The next point elaborates on this truth.

Love Our Neighbor as Ourselves. Closely related to the greatest command of loving God first and foremost in our life is Christ’s command to, *“Love your neighbor as yourself”* (Matt 22:39).³ This love is also not defined by an emotion, but by a willful commitment to seek after our neighbor’s welfare just as we would our own. Such action is the essence of the “Golden Rule” which Jesus said is *“Do to others what you would have them do to you”* (Matt 7:12).⁴

It is through loving God, our fellow humans, and sharing the gospel with the unbelieving that we will fulfill the true purpose(s) which the Lord has for our lives.

Also, as shown by the Lord’s parable of the “Good Samaritan,” loving our neighbor is not fulfilled by only loving those

¹ Cf. Deut 13:1–4; Josh 22:5; Matt 6:33; John 14:15; 1 John 5:3.

² Cf. 1 John 3:14–18; 4:8, 10–12, 21.

³ Cf. Jas 2:8; 1 John 3:16–18.

⁴ Cf. Eph 2:10.

who are similar to us (ethnically, economically, socially, etc.) and thus seemingly more “likeable.”⁵ But truly loving our neighbor involves those who may even be hostile to us. Jesus said, *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you”* (Matt 5:43–44).

Share the Gospel with Our Neighbor. This should not be seen as a separate category from loving our neighbor as ourselves. Instead it should be viewed as the most wonderful expression of it. The greatest example of love ever demonstrated was when God sent his beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to die for humanity in order to make salvation available to whoever would trust in him.⁶

Proclaiming this truth to the world was the main driving purpose in the lives of the apostles and the early church, regardless of the sacrifice and suffering involved.⁷ Likewise, we as believers today are called to be active in spreading the gospel.

After Christ’s resurrection, the Bible informs us he appeared to his disciples and said to them, *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”* (Matt 28:18–20).⁸

⁵ Luke 10:25–37.

⁶ John 3:16; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rom 5:1–8; 6:23; 8:1.

⁷ Mark 16:20; Acts 4:33; 8:4; 11:19–21; 1 Cor 9:19; 15:1–11; Col 1:28–29.

⁸ Col 4:5–6; 1 Pet 3:15.

It is important to note that there are many great social causes that believers can and *should* be involved in throughout the world. These may include things involving the environment, the improvement of social conditions, as well as those regarding animals.⁹

However, humans are the most important part of God's creation¹⁰ and they are for who Christ died.¹¹ The greatest social cause is, therefore, to share the gospel with them. Unfortunately, it is our lack of love that often keeps us from doing so.

⁹ Gen 1:26–31; Prov 12:10; Matt 25:31–46; Jas 1:27; 2:14–18.

¹⁰ Ps 8:4–8; Matt 6:26; 10:29–31; 12:11–12.

¹¹ Titus 2:11–12; 1 Tim 2:4–6.



If we want to fulfill our true purpose(s)

for living which is much more than just being able to eat, paying the bills, pursuing our favorite hobby, or even in meeting the needs of those depending on us (as honorable as that is), we should ask the Lord daily for his grace to help us be people full of love for others, a love which starts with having a love for God first and foremost in our life.

Let's also take to heart the words of the Apostle Paul when he described what love looks like in practical, everyday living: *"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres"* (1 Cor 13:4–7).



HOW TO DESTROY YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Doesn't it seem like each and every week there is a book, article, or talking head telling you how to find out what the main purpose of *your* life is? Not only is this a little arrogant, but if they truly knew what they were talking about, why do so many of them seem to disagree with each other as to how to go about finding it?

Here is a clue to find out for yourself what your purpose in life is. If you rightfully believe the Lord has created you for a specific purpose as well as to be happy, then wouldn't it make sense to totally center your life on whatever it is that gives you happiness?

Thus, *God's purpose for your life is to be found in what solely gives you pleasure in life.* Therefore, if any so-called purpose or pursuit doesn't bring you happiness (and self-fulfillment), but instead some amount of difficulty, then you should consider that this is definitely not of the Lord. Otherwise, he would have wired you in such a way as to bring you enjoyment out of doing it.

By realizing this, you won't end up like the multitudes of bitter and confused people (especially believers) who are incorrectly involving themselves in things that make them uncomfortable simply because they haven't recognized how they have been uniquely shaped by God.

On a final note, you should avoid being a hypocrite by doing things for others that would indicate to them that they mean more to you than they actually do. Instead, let the good you do for them flow forth from your inner reservoir of emotional love for them. Thus, if the feeling of love isn't there, then save your charity for those that you truly have love for. This is the type of sincere love God desires his children to show for others.