

Principles Of Spiritual Growth – 03/08/20

Purpose

TEXT – Rom 8:28-29 *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

INTRO – The Bible is filled with commands, warnings and principles by which we should live. How can to build upon our biblical foundation in Christ after we have been saved? There are basic principles that we must follow.

In Romans 8 He is telling us that He wants every believer to be like His Son.

IV. Purpose

A Scotchman demonstrated the new game of golf to President Ulysses Grant. Carefully placing the ball on the tee, he took a mighty swing. The club hit the turf and scattered dirt all over the President's beard and surrounding vicinity. Again he swung, and missed. The President waited through six tries and then quietly stated, "There seems to be a fair amount of exercise in the game, but I fail to see the purpose of the ball.

Abraham had a purpose – The father of a great nation
Moses – A special child to lead the Children of Israel
Samuel, David, Elijah, Daniel, John the Baptist, Paul etc.

A. God wants His image revealed on the earth.

A man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder. Have a purpose in life, and, having it, throw such strength of mind and muscle into your work as God has given you. - **Thomas Carlyle.**

Col 1:16 *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*

We are here on this earth for Him!

God made man in His image. Gen. 1:26

1 Co 10:31 *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

Eph 4:24 *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

Fallen man gave birth to a son after his image. Gen. 5:2

God sent His Son to reveal His image again on this earth Heb. 1:3

B. Man can reveal God's glory only after being Born Again.

1 Co 15:45-47 *And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.*

I want the whole Christ for my Savior, the whole Bible for my book, the whole Church for my fellowship, and the whole world for my mission field.
John Wesley.

C. God will work out our circumstances to help form the nature of Christ in us.

Rom 8:28-29 *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. . .*

Psalm 37:23 *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.*

Dan 1:8 *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank:*

2Co 3:18 *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

D. God uses failure in our lives

Failure is often used by God in order to turn us from ourselves to His source for our lives which is found in Christ, who never fails.

We tend to think that if Jesus Christ compels us to do something and we are obedient to Him, He will lead us to great success. We should never have the thought that our dreams of success are God's purpose for us. In fact, His purpose may be exactly the opposite. -- **Oswald Smith**

Mat 5:6 *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

We are conformed to that which we center our devotion and love!

Php 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

Php 1:21 *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

2 Co 4:10-11 *Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. 11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.*

E. We must keep our purpose clearly before our eyes

"More men fail through lack of purpose than lack of talent." **Billy Sunday.**

Zech 4:6 *Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.*

Psa 119:105 *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

CONCL-

It's very human to begin looking for something and then forget what you're looking for. Tennessee Williams tells a story of someone who forgot -- the story of Jacob Brodzky, a shy Russian Jew whose father owned a bookstore. The older Brodzky wanted his son to go to college.

The boy, on the other hand, desired nothing but to marry Lila, his childhood sweetheart -- a French girl as effusive, vital, and ambitious as he was contemplative and retiring. A couple of months after young Brodzky went to college, his father fell ill and died. The son returned home, buried his father, and married his love. Then the couple moved into the apartment above the bookstore, and Brodzky took over its management.

The life of books fit him perfectly, but it cramped her. She wanted more adventure -- and she found it, she thought, when she met an agent who praised her beautiful singing voice and enticed her to tour Europe with a vaudeville company.

Brodzky was devastated. At their parting, he reached into his pocket and handed her the key to the front door of the bookstore.

"You had better keep this," he told her, "because you will want it some day. Your love is not so much less than mine that you can get away from it. You will come back sometime, and I will be waiting."

She kissed him and left. To escape the pain he felt, Brodzky withdrew deep into his bookstore and took to reading as someone else might have taken to drink. He spoke little, did little, and could most times be found at the large desk near the rear of the shop, immersed in his books while he waited for his love to return.

Nearly 15 years after they parted, at Christmastime, she did return. But when Brodzky rose from the reading desk that had been his place of escape for all that time, he did not take the love of his life for more than an ordinary customer. "Do you want a book?" he asked.

That he didn't recognize her startled her. But she gained possession of herself and replied, "I want a book, but I've forgotten the name of it."

Then she told him a story of childhood sweethearts. A story of a newly married couple who lived in an apartment above a bookstore. A story of a young, ambitious wife who left to seek a career, who enjoyed great success but could never relinquish the key her husband gave her when they parted. She told him the story she thought would bring him to himself.

But his face showed no recognition. Gradually she realized that he had lost touch with his heart's desire, that he no longer knew the purpose of his waiting and grieving, that now all he remembered was the waiting and grieving itself. "You remember it; you must remember it -- the story of Lila and Jacob?"

After a long, bewildered pause, he said, "There is something familiar about the story, I think I have read it somewhere. It comes to me that it is something by Tolstoi." Dropping the key, she fled the shop. And Brodzky returned to his desk, to his reading, unaware that the love he waited for had come and gone.

Tennessee Williams's 1931 story "Something by Tolstoi" reminds me how easy it is to miss love when it comes. Either something so distracts us or we have so completely lost who we are and what we care about that we cannot recognize our heart's desire.