



## GOD'S PUPOSE FOR THE AGES

For many years after I was born again and baptized in the Holy Spirit, I prayed the same prayer every day. "Lord bring into my life, today, everything needful to cause me to walk fully in the calling to which I am called." I have learned over the years that, when God is dealing with me in some way, He almost never lets me know what He is doing. I realize that, if I knew, I would try to take control of it, measure it, and do it myself. Paul in Gal 2:2 relates that he submitted to the Apostles in Jerusalem in case he had been running in vain. He wanted confirmation that he was walking fully in the calling to which he was called. If a Christian does not know God's purpose for his life, he is at risk of not fulfilling his calling. A specific calling on a Christian's life will always be in harmony with God's overall purpose. It follows that each of us needs to understand the purpose of God, His plan to fulfill that purpose, and the process He takes us through in accomplishing it.

Sometime in early 2002, while reading my bible and praying, my eyes fell on the phrase "eternal purpose". I looked in the margin of my bible and learned the literal translation of this expression is "purpose of the ages". Immediately, the Holy Spirit fell on my heart with a flood of anointing as if to say "PAY CLOSE ATTENTION - THIS IS IMPORTANT"! Little did I realize, at that time, that the Holy Spirit would issue forth an almost endless flow of ever expanding understanding and revelation, things which might be overlooked by many, but which God will not let me put down.

Shortly after this process began, I was at the Africa House of Prayer in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo teaching some of these things. The response was wonderful and my host, Samuel Diakaniakina, who has written a number of books himself, insisted I write a book on the subject. I was a bit overwhelmed as I had never written a book and considered myself more of a teacher than a writer. My background as an engineer puts me squarely in the "left brain" category and makes me especially adapt at putting most people to sleep. My prayer, however, is that you will be as intrigued with this material as I, and be challenged to press deeper into God than ever before. Let us consider this article as a first step toward this goal.

Each of us has, at some point in his life, has wondered: "What is the purpose of my life?" "Why was I born?" "Why did God create the earth?" "Is there a reason why the events of men have unfolded the way they have for the last six thousand years or so?" While searching for meaning for this life, each of us has struggled to answer these questions. Surprisingly, so have the prophets, angles and demons. Their interest in the affairs of men goes well beyond mere speculation.

*(1Pe 1:10) As to this salvation, the **prophets** who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries,(1Pe 1:11) seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.(1Pe 1:12) It was revealed to them that they*

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*were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things into which angels long to look.*

Periodically, throughout man's existence on this earth, God has called men and women as prophets to bring His word from the heavenly realm and release it as seed (Mat 13:19) in the natural realm. This seed lies dormant in the earth until its appointed time when it sprouts and becomes substance, fulfilling God's purpose in sending it (Is 55:11). Though they made "careful searches and inquiries", these prophets of old were caused to understand the answers to their questions were not for them to know, but were to be revealed to those of us who are part of the body of Christ. Oh, what a thrill to be alive today, as God reveals His purpose for the ages and moves to fulfill it in the earth. I am sure the prophets of old would love to trade places with us.

Heaven contains myriads of angels (Heb12:22). In my mind's eye, I see millions of them carefully watching the affairs of men unfold on the earth trying to get a clue as to what God is doing. All these, even those who stand before the throne, in the very presence of the God of the universe, must wait for understanding until God's purposes are fulfilled in the earth.

God has also hidden his purposes from the powers of darkness. But His plan to educate them is incredible!

*(Eph 3:8) To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, (Eph 3:9) and to bring to light what is the administration of the **mystery which for ages has been hidden in God** who created all things; (Eph 3:10) so that **the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places.** (Eph 3:11) This was in accordance with **the eternal purpose** (LIT. PURPOSE OF THE AGES) which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord*

God has kept His eternal purpose, or His purpose for the ages, secret throughout all the ages until this present church age. Calling it a mystery, He has kept it "hidden in God" until a time of His choosing. The Apostle Paul mentions this fact often, in the epistles:

*(Rom 16:25) Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of **the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,***

*(1Co 2:7) but we speak **God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God predestined before the ages to our glory;** (1Co 2:8) the wisdom which **none of the rulers of this age has understood;** for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;*

*(Col 1:26) that is, the **mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations,** but has now been manifested to His saints, (Col 1:27) to whom God*

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*willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of **this mystery** among the Gentiles, **which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.***

At the time God first began speaking to me out of Eph 3, it hadn't even occurred to me that He wanted us to know what His reason was for creating the earth and placing mankind on it. Yet, it had been right there, under my nose, for the entire 30 years or so I had been a student of the Bible. Why did he create mankind and place him on the earth? What is your purpose for living, and mine? His purpose for us is "TO REVEAL THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD". The manifold wisdom of God is the sum total of all his attributes and qualities. It is who He is, His character, nature, love, mercy, grace, power, etc. The very thought that the church, consisting of people like you and me, could show forth all the attributes of God seems, not only to be impossible, but even ridiculous. Yet, all things are possible with God - and this is His idea.

Human logic would assume that heavenly beings would be fully aware of all of God's attributes, but scripture indicates otherwise, and, for His own reasons, God has chosen to use people like us to show forth exactly who He is. According to scripture this is God's "purpose of the ages".

The first place in scripture where God states an intent or purpose is in Gen 1:26.

*(Gen 1:26) Then God said, "Let Us make man **in Our image**, according to **Our likeness**; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."* *(Gen 1:27) God created man **in His own image, in the image of God He created him**; male and female He created them.*

What does "in the image of God" mean? Some might say it means that the creation is to look like God. This can't be the meaning since we all look different, male, female, tall, short, black, white, etc. I submit for consideration that it means that GOD'S PURPOSE IS TO HAVE A PEOPLE WHO HAVE HIS NATURE (2 Pet 1:4), a people through whom He can reveal His character and nature as well as all of His other attributes.

*(Rom 8:28) And we know that God causes all things to **work together for good** to those who love God, to those who are called according to **His purpose**. (Rom 8:29) For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become **conformed to the image of His Son**, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; (Rom 8:30) and these whom **He predestined, He also called**; and these whom He called, He also **justified**; and these whom He justified, He also **glorified**.*

Being a teacher and a linear thinker, I am particularly fond of scriptures like this one (please humor me a little). It contains a promise, shows that promise to be consistent with His purpose (there's that p-word again), and outlines a process for its completion. The promise is that God causes all things to work together for good for us as Christians. We must be careful not to apply our own definition of "good". God gives us His definition in the next line. God's good for us is that we be conformed to the image of

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Christ. This is also His **purpose** for calling us. The essence of this passage is “God causes all things to conform us to His image and He has called us for this purpose”.

He also gives us a sequence of events He plans to accomplish His purpose: Predestined - Called - Justified - Glorified. Notice that this sequence places full responsibility on God, who is both the author and finisher of our faith (Heb 12:2). Concerning this, we will let the scriptures speak for themselves:

*(Joh 15:16) "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.*

*(Eph 1:5) He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,*

*(Act 13:48) When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as **had been appointed to eternal life** believed.*

*(2Th 2:14) It was for this He **called** you through our gospel, that **you may gain the glory** of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*(1Pe 5:10) After you have suffered for a little while, the **God** of all grace, who **called you to His eternal glory in Christ**, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.*

*(2Pe 1:4) For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them **you may become partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.*

*(2Th 1:10) when **He comes to be glorified in His saints** on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed--for our testimony to you was believed.*

*(1Jo 3:2) Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, **we will be like Him**, because we will see Him just as He is.*

### IN SUMMERY:

For reasons of His own, God has made His “purpose of the ages” to show forth, to men, angles, and demons the fullness of exactly who He is. His incredible choice is to do this through weak, vulnerable vessels such as you and me. This is something He alone must accomplish, from conception to completion.