

What is God's purpose for my life?

You are significant!

Each one of us is unique in God's eyes; in His infinite creativity He has made us in His own image (therefore not descendants of apes!) yet as diverse as snowflakes – no two of us are alike. This should cause us to feel a deep sense of significance, even though many experiences in our life would tell us otherwise.

Psalm 139 gives us wonderful insight into the ways in which God our Creator has perfect knowledge of us. In **verse 6** David says: ***“Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it.”***

It is beyond our natural ability to comprehend how the God who created the universe and upholds all things should love us and know us in such an intimate way. We may feel like just a little speck in creation, but God has set His love upon us for the purpose of enjoying a relationship with Him as our heavenly Father.

“See what an incredible quality of love the Father has given (shown, bestowed on) us, that we should (be permitted to) be named and called and counted the children of God! And so we are! ...” (1 John 3:1 – Amplified Bible)

Walking in the Light

God's primary purpose for our lives is that we walk in His ways and live by His truth.

Read 1 John 2:3-6

How does God measure our love for Him?

The first epistle of John stresses the themes of love, light, knowledge and life with a strong emphasis on love. John warns against heresies (false teaching) and reinforces the certainty of our standing as children of God. He tells us the ways in which we can ensure that we remain in God's truth:

- Confess sin and be cleansed by the Blood of Jesus Christ – **1 John 1:7**
- Keep His commandments (those given by God throughout all the Scriptures) - **1 John 5:2-3**
- Love our Christian brothers and sisters - **1 John 2:10**
- Do not love the world; the passing values of this world are deceptive – **1 John 2:15**
- Let the Spirit of truth abide in you – **1 John 2:4**

We need to do a regular spiritual 'check-up' on ourselves to see if we are really walking in the light. It is also necessary to 'test' those who come into our midst who call themselves Christians; not to be judgmental but to guard us from deception. There are those who seemingly accomplish great things for God, prophesying and working miracles in Jesus' Name, but the Lord Jesus said those who 'practice lawlessness' will be banished from His presence. This is not in any way to detract from the importance of seeking to prophesy and pray for miracles – these things are an integral part of kingdom living, when issuing from a purified heart and a God-centred life.

Becoming like Jesus Christ

Jesus Himself lived a perfect life on earth, fully pleasing to His Father. As John baptised Him in the River Jordan the heavens opened, the Holy Spirit descended on Him like a dove, and God affirmed His Son:

“And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.’” (Matt.3:17)

Jesus took on human flesh, fully man and fully God, and as the Mediator between God and man, He lived and died in perfect obedience to His Father. (**1 Tim. 2:5**)

When His accusers brought Him before Pilate, the Roman governor, he could find no charge to bring against Him. Pilate said: ***“... I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him.”***

2.

Read 1 Pet. 1:17-19 and Exodus 12:1-14

Why did the Passover lamb have to be perfect?

In **Romans 8:29** we come to a very important verse which will help us to understand more fully God's purpose for our life:

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Here we are referred to as 'younger brothers' (this includes sisters!) of Jesus. We have been born into God's family through the work of the Holy Spirit in our life, and God intends that we should bear His family likeness (or image). The verse above tells us that God decided this long ago!

How does it make you feel when you realise that you have been chosen by God long before you were even born?

What would Jesus do?

Becoming more and more like Jesus involves not only our character (though this is of major importance) but also our works. We will look more closely at 'good works' in our next study, but for now let's consider the question '**What would Jesus do?**' Some young people have taken to wearing a wrist band inscribed '**WWJD**' to remind them, amidst the pressures and temptations they face, to act and react in a God-directed way.

We need to be daily filled with the Holy Spirit and to pray that we may approach every situation and relationship in a Christ-like way. Many times we will fail but God's grace and forgiveness are always available to us.

In **Matt. 5:1-7:27** Jesus taught His disciples the primary attributes of people who receive the rule of His kingdom. If we desire to know: '**what would Jesus do?**' then this is the passage to read.

Read Matt.5:1 – 7:27 this week. Did Jesus uphold the Law? (v.17-18) Do you find the standard Jesus preached hard in any way? How do you think it is possible to live the life Jesus requires?

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

We saw earlier that the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus at His baptism. He was then led by the Spirit into the wilderness and was tempted by the devil (**Luke 4:1**) and afterwards '**returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee.**' (**Luke 4:14**)

All the gifts of the Holy Spirit were fully operating in Jesus' life – the gifts of healing, miracles, prophecy and words of knowledge and wisdom. If we are to be conformed to His image we also need to seek those wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit so that we might contribute to the growth of others.

Overcoming opposition

In His wilderness temptation Jesus overcame the devil by the Word of God. He completely defeated Satan and all his demons by His death on the Cross and resurrection. (**Col.2:15**)

To each of the churches in **Revelation 2:1 – 3:22** He gives a message through John, and promises a reward 'to him who overcomes'.

As we overcome (prevail over, master, be victorious) over sin, the world and the devil in our lives, we are becoming more like Jesus, and we can be assured that He has given to us everything we need to be an 'overcomer'.

For further reading on this see: Luke 10:19; 1 John 4:4; 1 John 5:1-5; Rev. 12:11

