

In-Sync with God's Purposes and Plans

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I. Introductory Remarks.

One of the greatest lessons I've learned in the last 20 years or so is that my life has been designed by a God who created and designed me to function in harmony with His will and purpose. *(Mess with the wiring and you short circuit)*

How's your life going? Do you sense that most of the time your life is in sync and operating smoothly or is it out of sync with things constantly going wrong? I believe that God has created us to function in harmony with Him.

Our lives, for the most part, should be operating smoothly under His control and guidance.

If our lives are out of control, it's a good sign that we are not in sync with what He has purposed for our lives.

I recently watched a video on Facebook or somewhere of this contraption that was quite complicated. It had all of these little balls shooting out everywhere in perfect order and harmony with the way the machine was designed to operate.

Every ball was perfectly designed to land at a designated spot which then caused the contraption to continue to move forward shooting out even more little balls in the way it was designed to do.

It was an awesome example of how something could function in perfect harmony according to its intended purpose! Every part was in-sync.

- **It really made me think about the way God has designed each one of us to operate in relationship to His overall purpose on earth.**

***Ephesians 4:16** from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*

- **In the Book of Genesis we have the accounts of how God began to establish and accomplish His purposes through mankind.**

For example, we have the account of God accomplishing His purposes through Abraham. **God used Abraham as the seed for the nation of Israel.**

Genesis 12:1-3 *Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

- **The focus of God's relationship was not on Abraham's walk with God, but rather God accomplishing His purpose through Abraham.**
- **The focus was on God, not necessarily on Abraham. Can you see the difference?**

In this message today, I want us to see what it means to live in sync with God and His purpose for our lives and what it means to have a God-centered lifestyle vs. a self-centered lifestyle.

Lifestyle is the operative word here. If we are **double minded** and continue to revert back to a self-centered lifestyle, our lives will constantly have short circuits and be out of order.

Paul said he died daily and that's what it takes to have a God-centered lifestyle.

When we continually yield to the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, He will lead us into a God-centered lifestyle.

- **The focus of the Bible is God.**
- **The essence of sin is a shift from a God-centered Lifestyle to a self-centered lifestyle.**
- **We see this in the fall of Adam and Eve – *Genesis 2:16-17, 3:1-7.***

God placed Adam and Eve in a beautiful and bountiful garden. He told them not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Eve saw that the fruit was pleasing to the eye and desirable for gaining wisdom, so she ate it.

- **Eve chose to look to self rather than to God.**

Genesis 3:6 *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.*

At that point in time there was a major short circuit in the plan God had for mankind. There was a cause and effect.

They were no longer in-sync with God and his purposes. God had to re-wire them. Thankfully, He re-wires us every time we have a short circuit.

What kind of effects are your short circuits causing? Think about it!

- **The essence of salvation is the denial of self, not an affirming of self.**

We see this in the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife. Potiphar's wife daily begged Joseph to come to bed with her. He told her he could not do such great wickedness and sin against God. When she tried to force him, he fled the room and went to prison rather than yield to temptation - Genesis 39.

Genesis 39:7-9 Now it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. "There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

- **If we are to see God accomplish His purposes through us in the world today and bring forth the revival we all long for, then we must come to a denial of self just as Joseph did.**
- **We must have a God-centered lifestyle that glorifies God and not self.**
- **What would have happened to the purposes of God if Joseph would have given into his fleshly desires instead of looking to God and being in sync with what God desired to do?**
- **The Nation of Israel was birthed because of Joseph's obedience to the purpose of God for his life.**
- **Just as God accomplished His purpose through Abraham and used him as the seed for the nation of Israel, He accomplished His purpose in bringing that seed to fruition through Joseph's obedience.**
- **Just as the focus of God's relationship was not on Abraham's walk with God, but rather God accomplishing His purpose through Abraham the same was true for Joseph. The focus was on God, not necessarily on Abraham**

and Joseph. Can you see the difference?

- We are now living in an era in which the final culmination of all the plans and purposes of God are at hand and God is looking for men and women like Abraham and Joseph who will be conduits for His purpose to fill the earth with the fullness of Him.

All things may be lawful or permissible, but all things are not beneficial and constructive. I believe much of today's Christianity is too focused on what is lawful or permissible rather than what is beneficial. If we truly desire revival, we must determine to live in the beneficial realm of God's grace rather than the permissible realm that focuses on self rather than God.

1 Corinthian 10:23 *"I have the right to do anything." You say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but not everything is constructive.*

- What purpose does God want to give birth to in your life that relates to His overall purpose and will here on earth before the coming of the great day of the Lord?
- We may not lose our salvation over our fleshly desires, but we will definitely miss out on what God wants to do through our lives in relationship to His purpose and destiny He has for each one of us.

II. God-Centered Living vs. Self-Centered Living.

1. Self-Centered Traits.

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| • Life focused on self | • Affirming self |
| • Proud of self and self's accomplishments | • Seeking to be acceptable to the world and its ways. |
| • Self confidence | • Looking at circumstances from a human perspective. |
| • Dependence on self and your own abilities | • Selfish ordinary living |

Self-centeredness is a subtle trap. It makes sense (humanly speaking). You can avoid it at one time and fall right into the trap at another time. God-centered living requires a daily death of self and submission to God.

2. God-Centered Traits.

- Confidence in God
- Dependence on God and His ability and provision
- Life focused on God and His activity
- Humble before God
- denying self
- Seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness
- Seeking God's perspective in every circumstance
- Holy and godly living

Keep in mind that none of are perfect and live in God-centered traits all the time.

The question is: Is your lifestyle based on God-centered traits or Self-centered traits?

III. Concluding Remarks.

To live a God-centered life, we must focus our lives on God's purposes and not our own plans. We must seek to see from God's perspective rather than from our own distorted human perspectives.

- **When God starts to do something in the world, He takes the initiative to come and talk to somebody. For some divine reason, He has chosen to involve His people in accomplishing His purposes.**
- **What was God about to do when He came to Noah and asked him to build an ark?** (Genesis 6:5-14? *God was about to destroy the world with a flood.*)
- **What was God about to do to Sodom and Gomorrah when He came to Abraham –** (Genesis 18:16-21; 19:13)? *He was about to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah*
- **What was God about to do when He came to Gideon -** Judges 6:11-16? *He was about to deliver the Israelites from the oppression of Midian.*
- **What was God about to do when he came to Saul (later called Paul) on the road to Damascus –** (Acts 9:1-6)? *He was about ready to release the gospel message to the Gentiles around the known world.*

At each of these moments the most important factor in each situation was what God was about to do, not what the individual wanted to do for God.

2 Timothy 1:9 ...who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began...

What is God about to do in your marriage? With your children? With the people you work with? In your business? In your church? In your ministry?

Are you in-sync with His purposes in all of these areas?

What is God about to do now in your harvest field? Will you be ready to respond to His initiative as Abraham, Joseph and many others have done through the annals of time or will you be too focused on self to discern what it is He wants to do.

John 4:35 "Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

When we are truly living God-centered lives rather than self-centered lives we find ourselves in the right position to be used by God for His kingdom purposes. God has purposes all around you in your field of labor every day of which He is waiting to use you as you yield your life to Him.

The pattern in Scripture is that we submit ourselves to God and allow Him to reveal to us what He is about to do in our field of labor. We watch and see what God is doing around us and join Him in the process.

What is God about to do now in your harvest field? Will you be ready to respond to His initiative as Abraham, Joseph and many others have done through the annals of time or will you be too focused on self to discern what it is He wants to do. The choice is yours.

Will you choose to be in-sync with God's purposes and plans or will you fritter your life away being too focused on self? The choice is yours.

Prayer