

## January 15, 2023 Pastor James. Preparing for Purpose 02.

Pastor James explains the process of finding the purpose in a piece of wood. After selection, the process of planing begins to expose more of the character of the piece. For each of us, our purpose is not to create something with our lives on our own but to discover what God created us to be. God placed a purpose in each of our lives. Our responsibility is to submit. In woodworking, the wood becomes a blank canvas to be developed and discovered.

**Isaiah 46:10** *Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, 'My plan will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure'. Since God has purpose for us, we should go to Him to discover that purpose.*

**Romans 12:1-3** *Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.*

The Book of Romans is a letter from Paul describing his understanding of the Gospel. Romans explains grace, redemption, the pathway to salvation, our being set apart for His good works, eternity... **Romans 11:33-36** *Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him, that it would be paid back to him? For from Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen... Therefore...* **Romans 12** then starts to describe the how of discovering our purpose.

**1) Submit to God. Verse 1** "Parakaleo" or "Urge" is a word Paul used a lot that means a pleading, an invitation. Paul knows their challenges and difficulties and appeals to them - He urges. Do we get caught up in the process or the cost to become a living sacrifice? Do we try to get away from the process?

Consecration is to be declared holy; it is to take our hands off of what God already owns and yield to Him - all - not just a portion. As a living sacrifice, God wants us to offer our whole self first before something we do or give. God wants our heart and our submission. Fulfilling the purpose of God requires us to yield to God. "Yield" means to give up, to surrender, to submit.

**2) Transform. Romans 12:2** It is hard for people today to commit. God's Word tells us to not conform to the world. Conform means to scheme together. Paul is telling us to not scheme together with the world. Some churches even want to scheme in worldly ways to be more attractive to the world. A common way today is to deconstruct faith to make life more palatable. Faith requires complete trust in and abandonment to our creator. Paul says instead to transform. Renewal comes from God's Word as we allow it to penetrate our whole self. **2 Corinthians 10:5** *We are destroying arguments and all arrogance raised against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.* **1 Corinthians 9:27** *but I strictly discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.*

The only way to not be conformed is to be transformed. It is not passive. **Psalm 119:9-11** *How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word. With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments. I have treasured Your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against You.*

How do we live a life of purpose that God has called us to? Offer our lives as a living sacrifice and allow the Word of God to transform our thinking, our speaking, our emotions. Allow God the authority to achieve His purpose that He has called us to. It is not our picking and choosing. Allow the Word to speak to us, reveal to us, uncover sin, renew us, and transform us. If God's Word is not changing us, then we have made ourselves God. Let His Word challenge us.

**3) Stay humble. Romans 12:3** *For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.*

Do we see ourselves in light of God's Word? Or do we make excuses as to why our lives are different and don't apply to this light? Or do we tend to believe it's not the right meaning? **1 Corinthians 10:13** *No temptation has overtaken you except something common to mankind; and God is faithful, so He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.* Nothing is new. We need not say, "yeah, but."

There is a plan and purpose on every one of our lives. It requires a surrender. **Romans 12:3** *For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.* We want to tell others to do what God desires for them. Have we asked God what He has for us? What are His desires for us?

- Give up control of our lives - submit.
- Transform through scripture.
- Be humble.

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Do you have something offered to God in portions that you need to change to giving it all?

What do you need to turn from, to repent of, to let go of a failure identity, to let go of trying to change another?

How has God's Word transformed something in your life? How can this encourage others?