

CREATED TO BECOME LIKE CHRIST

The Purpose Driven Life, Part 4

May 17th, 2009

Romans 8:29 (LB) "From the very beginning God decided that those who came to Him... should become like His Son..."

My 3rd Purpose In Life Is To Become Like Christ

This doesn't mean you will become a god, but you are to become godly

"Godly" – develop His character: way He thinks, acts, feels, His values, His moral character
Ephesians 4:15 (TM) "God wants us to grow up... like Christ in everything."

This process is called discipleship, and it takes an entire lifetime

How Does God Make Me Like Christ?

1. God uses the Bible

2. God uses people

Rom. 8:28 (NIV) "In all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."

This verse doesn't say all things are good, but God uses all things to make me like Christ

Three Unexpected Tools God Uses To Make Me Like Christ

Problem – These things don't automatically help you grow

If your heart isn't ready for these things, you can become bitter not better

1. God uses trouble to teach us to trust Him

Troubles, often called trials, are situations designed by God to draw us closer to Him
Rom. 5:3-4 (NCV) "...troubles produce patience. And patience produces character, & character produces hope."

God is far more interested in who you are than what you do

Remember: The goal of life is character, not comfort

Every problem has a purpose - to make me like Christ

Jesus needed friends when He went through troubles

Mark 14:32-34 "They came to a garden called Gethsemane & Jesus said to His disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.' ... Distress and anguish came over Him, & He said, 'The sorrow in My heart is so great that it almost crushes Me.'"

Mark 14:36 (NLT) "'Father,' He said, 'everything is possible for You. Please take this cup of suffering away from Me. Yet I want Your will, not mine!'"

You must learn to trust God completely - even when things don't make sense

• **Keep a spiritual journal - to record what you learn in life**
Numbers 33:2 (NLT) "At the Lord's direction, Moses kept a written record of their progress."

• Remember the reward

2 Cor. 4:17 (NIV) "Our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."
2 Cor. 4:17 (TM) "These hard times are small potatoes compared to the coming good times, the lavish celebration prepared for us."

2. God uses temptations to teach us to obey Him

Temptations are situations designed by Satan and are intended to harm us

Jesus faced temptation; Remember: It's not a sin to be tempted
Matthew 4:1 (LB) "Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil."

Remember: We are tempted in the same ways (see 1 Corinthians 10:13)

Remember: You will never outgrow temptation
Matt. 4:10 (LB) "[Jesus said] 'Get out of here, Satan. The Scriptures say, worship only the Lord God. Obey only Him.'"

Temptation tests whether you love God more than the temptation

• Keep focused on good thoughts

Philippians 4:8 (LB) "Fix your thoughts on what is true and good and right."

When tempted, don't Resist - Refocus on something else

• Get a spiritual partner

Ecc. 4:9-10 (CEV) "You're better off to have a friend than to be all alone... If you fall, your friend can help you up."

3. God uses trespasses to teach us to forgive

Trespasses are situations designed by other people to hurt us

Matthew 27:39-44 (GN) "People passing by shook their heads and hurled insults at Jesus... and the elders made fun of Him... Even the bandits who had been crucified with Him insulted Him in the same way."
Luke 23:34 (NLT) "Jesus said, 'Father, forgive these people, because they don't know what they are doing.'"

If you are going to become like Christ, you have to learn to forgive

• Remember that God has forgiven you

Ephesians 4:32 (CEV) "Forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ."

God will never ask you to forgive anybody more than He's forgiven you

• Remember God is in control

Genesis 50:20 (NCV) "[Joseph to his brothers] You meant to hurt me, but God turned your evil into good to save the lives of many people, which is being done."

Your greatest testimony as a Christian is how you handle hurt

Romans 8:17 (TM) "We go through exactly what Christ goes through. If we go through the hard times with Him, then we're certainly going to go through the good times with Him."

Philippians 2:5 (NIV) "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus."