



Hope
for the
Heart

Purpose in Life

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

An Excerpt from the *KEYS FOR LIVING*

What Is My Purpose in Life?

- Your purpose in life is that which gives you a reason for living, the reason why God put you here on earth.
- Your purpose in life is an expression of your personal significance to God.
- Your purpose in life will be unique to you, based on God's personalized plan for you.

*"The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me;
your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever.*

Do not forsake the works of your hands."

(Psalm 138:8 ESV)

What Is My Significance?

- Your significance means your importance.
- Your significance refers to your personal value, your individual worth.

*"I cry out to God Most High, to God
who fulfills his purpose for me."*

(Psalm 57:2 ESV)

Characteristics of Misplaced Purposes

Externally focused

Materialistic

Pleasure seeking

Task oriented

Insecure

Negative thinking

Escaping reality

Sexually promiscuous

Status seeking

Thoughts of Meaninglessness

- "Life has no meaning."
- "Life's not worth living."
- "I have no sense of purpose."
- "I can't count on anything."
- "I feel insignificant."
- "Nothing is worthwhile."
- "Nothing really matters."
- "What's the point of it all?"

"When I surveyed all that my hands had done

and what I had toiled to achieve,

everything was meaningless,

a chasing after the wind;

nothing was gained under the sun."

(Ecclesiastes 2:11)

Seeking Significance in "All the Wrong Places"

- Seeking to be happy—vs.—seeking to be holy
- Seeking to be religious in a church—vs.—seeking to grow in a relationship with Christ
- Seeking cultural Christianity—vs.—seeking biblical Christianity
- Seeking external dos and don'ts—vs.—seeking internal obedience of the heart
- Seeking human approval—vs.—seeking God's approval
- Seeking your own will—vs.—seeking God's will
- Seeking to live for present gain—vs.—seeking to live for eternal values

"So we fix our eyes not on what is seen,

but on what is unseen,

since what is seen is temporary,

but what is unseen is eternal."

(2 Corinthians 4:18)

Root Cause for Not Finding Purpose in Life

- **Wrong Belief:** “I’ll feel significant if my possessions, popularity, and power increase.”

Right Belief: “My significance is based on God’s fulfilling His purpose for me by conforming my character to Christ’s character.”

“The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me.”
(Psalm 138:8 ESV)

Key Verse to Memorize

“We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”
(Romans 8:28)

Key Passage to Read

The book of Ecclesiastes

How to Develop a Life Plan

- Discern the eternal meaning of your life.
“Those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son” (Romans 8:29).
- Discover the earthly purpose of your life.
“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10).
- Discover God’s leading through your circumstances.
“Many are the plans in a person’s heart, but it is the LORD’s purpose that prevails” (Proverbs 19:21).
- Discover opportunity through obedience.
“If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good things of the land” (Isaiah 1:19).
- Discover how to wait for God’s timing.
“Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord” (Psalm 27:14).
- Determine the essential goals for your life.
“We make it our goal to please him” (2 Corinthians 5:9).

Myths and Truths

- **Myth:** “The mistakes of my past have destroyed my chance for a meaningful life.”
Example: a sexually promiscuous past
Truth: When you became a Christian, God forgave you for all of your sins. God erased your past, and He sees you as righteous.
“If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

- **Myth:** “The purpose for my life is gone, and I now have no sense of fulfillment.”
Example: the death of a spouse
Truth: Every true Christian is complete in Christ and is being conformed to the character of Christ.
“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness” (Colossians 2:9–10).
- **Myth:** “The purpose for my life has changed. What will I do now?”
Example: a mother whose children are grown and gone
Truth: When God brings a major change into your life, He also provides you with a new purpose.
“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing!” (Isaiah 43:18–19).
- **Myth:** “I am disabled and unable to be useful and productive. What purpose could I possibly have?”
Example: a paraplegic
Truth: God has a plan and a purpose for every life He has created ... perhaps making you into a faithful prayer warrior.
“In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will” (Ephesians 1:11).

Questions and Answers

“I don’t feel like my life has any purpose. Is there any hope for me?”

Yes. You have hope—you were created by the God of hope. In the Bible, God says that He created you with a specific plan for your life. Your life can be filled with hope and purpose when you choose to follow God’s will.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”
(Jeremiah 29:11)

“Do I have only one purpose in life?”

No. You will have several purposes, depending on the major roles in your life.

For example, a teenager’s purpose may be:

- To grow in Christlike character
“For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son” (Romans 8:29).
- To bring honor to his parents
“Honor your father and your mother” (Exodus 20:12).
- To be the best student he can possibly be in order to bring glory to God
“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters” (Colossians 3:23).

“Are purposes and goals the same?”

No. Purposes are different from goals; however, they are related. Your purposes answer, “Why am I here on earth?” Your goals answer, “What do I want to do here on earth?”

For example, one of your purposes could be to “*honor your father and your mother.*” Yet, if your father is painfully critical, your short-term goal could be to pray for him every time you are around him and every time you think of him.

“Pray for those who persecute you.”
(Matthew 5:44)

“What is God’s purpose for my life?”

God’s highest purpose for your life is to conform you to the character of Christ.

“For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.”
(Romans 8:29)

“What should my highest purpose be?”

Your highest purpose—and that of all creation—is to bring glory to God.

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”
(1 Corinthians 10:31)

“How do I choose goals that are right for me?”

Define goals that will help you achieve your purposes:

- Goals that are specific
- Goals that are reachable
- Goals with a deadline for completion
- Goals that are not dependent on others for success
- Goals that benefit others
- Goals that do not contradict the will of God

“We make it our goal to please him.”
(2 Corinthians 5:9)

“I’ve always felt insignificant. When comparing myself to others who are more gifted and accomplished than I am, how can I not feel insignificant?”

You already have God-given significance ... not because of anything you have done, but because of what Christ has done for you.

*“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies?
Yet not one of them is forgotten by God.
Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered.
Don’t be afraid; you are worth
more than many sparrows.”*
(Luke 12:6–7)

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