



# LESSON ESSENTIALS

## INTRODUCTION TO EVANGELISM

### LESSON 1: Call to Reach Your World

Man's purpose in life and ministry is to discover God's purpose and then to participate with Him in accomplishing it. This lesson will help you align your perspective with God's as you partner with Him in accomplishing His purpose for your life.

Once God has revealed to you His purpose for your life, He expects you to fulfill it. Read on to find out how you can begin moving forward in all the ways God desires for you!

God's purpose is to save souls, which is why He sent His Son in to the world. Jesus perfectly understood God's purpose and responded in a manner that pleased His Father. Just like Jesus, God wants us to reach out to the lost and shepherd them. That's His purpose for our lives.

What's my purpose in life? Why am I here? That might sound like an existential question best left to philosophers, but it's proven to be a question that plagues everyone at one time or another. Some have tried everything to find an answer – different faiths or gurus, different programs of self-improvement, or trying to attain the one more thing that will give their lives meaning and purpose. There have been many young people who have ended their own lives or died prematurely and unnaturally trying to find their purpose in life. Many have even been people who are rich, famous and talented, but for some reason, happiness still eluded them. That sounds strange, doesn't it? Many of us believe that our purpose on earth is to make lots of money so that we can lead a comfortable life. We measure our worth by our bank accounts, our measure of power and our possessions.

An ambition to succeed might be something attributed to this generation, but things weren't too different even in Jesus' time. In Luke 12:16-20, Jesus tells us a story that many of us might be able to relate to. 'And he told them a parable, saying: "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry." But God said to him 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'" This story aptly defines man's purpose in life verses God's. While the world might respect and even envy this rich farmer for his wealth and status, God is only concerned about his perishing soul. God's purpose is to save souls, which is why He sent His Son into the world. Jesus perfectly understood God's purpose and responded in a manner that pleased His Father.

Just like Jesus, God wants us to reach out to the lost and shepherd them. That's His purpose for our lives. In Matt 9:35-38 we read, 'Then Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest".

It was compassion for the lost that spurred Jesus to reach out to them and shepherd them. Like many today, they were directionless, hurting, lost and lonely. Jesus abandoned His divine status and the privileges associated with it to care for His hapless sheep. Today He calls you to do just that – to step out of your comfort zone to become a labourer in His harvest field. After all, there still is a severe shortage of labourers. You could add to that number by participating in God’s work. But even while you partner with your Shepherd, don’t forget to pray for more labourers. And also remember to live what you preach. In 1 Corinthians 10:31, Paul rightly says, ‘So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.’ As a believer, you can’t compartmentalize your life thinking that your secular world is independent of your Christian call. Your purpose in life has to do with glorifying God; making Him seen in your life through your words and actions.

The task commissioned to us by Jesus is a twofold one and doesn’t simply end with preaching the Gospel. In Matt 28:16-20 Jesus clearly says, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, even to the very end of the age.” Discipleship is an integral part of the Great Commission. In other words, you must first be a disciple of the Lord Jesus, learning and following Christ, so that you can know the way and show others the way too. The process of discipleship involves maturing in God and becoming more Christ-like. Hebrews 5:12-14 presents a great analogy between physical growth and spiritual growth. ‘For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.’ While discipleship begins with basic teachings of our faith, an in-depth study of scripture helps in building up a Christian. And as a discipler, you ought to encourage your subjects to read the Bible, just as Jesus commanded you to do when He said, ‘teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.’

Even though evangelism may seem like a daunting task sometimes, just the knowledge of the fact that you’re fulfilling

Jesus took the form of a servant to come to this earth leaving heavenly privileges to care for His helpless sheep. Today He calls you to do just that – to step out of your comfortable life and becoming a laborer in His harvest field.

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God's purpose for your life makes it an enjoyable experience. After all, if God hadn't revealed His purpose for our lives, we would have been aimless and lost, like sheep without a shepherd. Today, let's reaffirm our commitment to God as we partner with Him to bring more sheep into the fold.

## IN REVIEW

- Many of us believe that our purpose in life is to have a healthy bank balance so that we can lead a comfortable life. But the story of the rich farmer in Luke 12:16-20 shows us that God's more concerned about the health of our souls.
- God's purpose for the world is to save souls, which is why He sent His Son to die for our sins. Just like Jesus who perfectly understood God's purpose, we also ought to align our perspective with God's so that we can reach out to the lost and shepherd them. That's His purpose for our lives.
- A believer can't compartmentalize the secular world that he's a part of, from His Christian call. He ought to glorify God in everything he does (1Cor 10:31).
- Jesus gives two directives in the Great Commission (Matt 28:16-20). As God's ambassadors, we are called to preach the Good News and disciple others.
- Discipleship is a process of maturing from a new believer into someone who is well rooted in the Word, maturing into Christ-likeness. As evangelists, it is your job to encourage new Christians to feed on God's Word (Hebrews 5:12-14).

## HAVE YOUR SAY

- How does God's purpose for your life match with yours?  
What can you do to align the two?
  
- What is your opinion towards evangelism – reaching the lost?
  
- How can you deal with some of the challenges that you face in witnessing to others?
  
- What strategy do you have to effectively disciple newer Christians?
  
- What are you doing to grow in your walk with God?

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