

Day 8

GOD'S PURPOSE PREVAILS

"Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails." Proverbs 19:21

It is natural for us to plan ahead- things we want to start doing and to accomplish, places we want to go to, people we want to meet, etc. However, some of the plans we have might not happen. Even the very detailed plan might not push through. But when we follow the Lord, He can reveal to us His plan and pursue His purposes which would always prevail.

God has 3 attributes that can affirm us that God's purpose will be accomplished:

1. *God is omniscient.* We can be at rest when we place our lives and plans to an all-knowing God who knows exactly the best for us. He sees the big picture and He knows what's ahead.
2. *God is omnipresent.* God cannot be bound by our plans. Unlike us, He is limitless. He cannot be bound by time or by certain location. He moves and leads us anytime anywhere to accomplish His purpose.
3. *God is omnipotent.* He is powerful. We might see things as difficult and impossible to happen, but in the eyes of an omnipotent God, it is possible. Nothing is too hard for God. He will do it to accomplish His purpose.

Because God is God, His purpose prevails.

Instead of making plans for our lives – in our career, studies, ministry, family, let us seek more on what God is trying to accomplish in us and through us. We are no match compared to God so let us just humble ourselves before God and yield to His purpose in every area of our lives. We cannot hide from Him, we cannot control him, and we cannot overpower him. Therefore, let us yield to Him.

Pray that God will break your stubborn heart in resisting God's purpose. Pray that he will grace you with obedient heart to comply with His purposes in your life.

Write your reflections on your journal.

Day 9

STEP FORWARD WITH GOD

JOSHUA 8:24-26

When Joshua attacked Ai, the Lord gave him specific instruction to invade the land of Ai, God assured him that if he will conquer the land of Ai and he will surely win the victory.

Each one of us may have experienced difficult battles that are too hard to overcome. Yet as we struggle with these, God always has a word for us to keep on moving forward.

When we learn to rely on God's command to move forward, we will also exert effort and prepare to claim our victory. God gives us wisdom to trust Him, the strength to move forward and the strategy to succeed just as He promised. Every step of the way, God wants us to include Him and rely only in His strength that we may see whatever it is He has prepared for us.

In winning difficult battles, God will always do His part and assured us of victory. But we must always assert our faith in Him and trust Him at all times. Yes, He will do great and mighty things but we need to believe in Him and claim the things that God wants us to conquer or invade.

Are you facing battles and challenges? Believe God for the victory. Step forward on His command. But relentlessly trust Him until victory becomes complete. The battle belongs to Him but seize your victory. While seeing God's hand, dwell on His word and in His promises so that you can constantly trust Him.

Write your reflections on your journal.

Day 10

GOD IS OUR PURPOSE

"After all this, there is only one thing to say: Have reverence for God, and obey his commands, because this is all that we were created for" (Ecclesiastes 12:13 GNT)

Everything is meaningless without a purpose. The purpose is the reason why things were created, the cause for one's existence.

Have you ever considered your purpose? What is the end of all life's ambition? What is that cause why we exist?

The Teacher in Ecclesiastes laid out for us man's purpose: God alone is. "There is only one thing to say: Reverence for God and obey His commands because this is all that we were created for":

- **To revere God:** to esteem Him as more valuable than anyone else; to accord to Him the honor befitting our Creator who also made the whole universe
- **To obey Him:** to carefully follow as He instructed firmly believing that His ways are perfect and just.

We were created for a purpose. It is to fear God our creator and obey His commandments. This is now our reason for living. Our lives ought to be lived around God, making sure that we honor Him and obey Him at all times. Whatever we do that is not consistent with this is not according to God's purpose.

So, it's over now. Let's stop living without meaning. Let's start to live out the reason of our very existence. Behold our Creator and grasp His purpose for our lives. He is our purpose, therefore, let us live for Him. Fear God and be obedient to Him. Know Him because you are from Him. Remember, our life only becomes meaningful when it is lived in reverence of and obedience to Him.

Let us pray for the right direction from our God and a meaningful and purposeful life. Let us pray that we could live a life that has reverence to our God. May God strengthen us to follow Him.

Day 11

GOD IS OUR DEFENDER

Esther 3-7, 7:9-10

Mordecai was a Jew, a good citizen, a cousin of Esther the Queen- faithful servant of King Xerxes. Mordecai was doing his best to serve the King and was striving to keep the Jewish community in favorable situation. He was even given an honor by the King.

But a man named Haman got very jealous of Mordecai. He plotted to kill Mordecai and the whole Jewish community who lived in the kingdom of King Xerxes. He built a pole where he can hang Mordecai and created stories against the Jews. He even tricked King Xerxes to annihilate those who would go against the King. But he planned it as an attack against the Jews.

The story of Mordecai reminds us that even despite the good that we do, there will always be people who will be against us. Although we strive to be holy and live according to God's laws, there will always be adversaries who will seek to do us evil. Adversaries will do everything to destroy a person. Sadly, we cannot avoid them. We cannot even stop them by our own strength. They will come into our lives and we could not really avoid them.

God, however, can defend us from our adversaries. He watches over us and sees how other people are plotting to harm us. Yet, we can be confident that His hands are not too short to save us from those who would try to destroy us. We can even dwell on the promise in Psalm 23 that His staff and rod will protect us. He would even prepare a table for us in the presence of our enemies.

Let us continue to trust God our defender, walk in his path, and listen to his words. Let us continue to trust God that he will do remarkable things in order to save us from our adversaries. As we wait upon His deliverance, let us wait patiently and follow his commandment.

Write your reflections on your journal.

Day 12

GOD IS OUR DEFENDER

2 Timothy 4:6-8

Every one of us can start something but not everyone finishes what was started. Some are tempted to quit and not to finish.

Paul, however, had the confidence to say that he was able to finish the race and fought a good fight. What he is saying is that he persevered. He did not waver, he kept on and finished the race of faith that he started.

To persevere means to continue, to not quit, to remain steadfast until you reach the finish line despite the hardship encounter.

Let us learn from Paul principles that can help us persevere:

- Keep on fighting: never give up. Paul despite the struggles of proclaiming the Gospel kept on fighting and running. He did not allow even the chains of prison to deter him from moving forward.
- Finish the race: life is not really a sprint or a 100-meter dash. Life is a marathon, you have to stay strong until the end. Paul admonished Timothy to finish the race of faith
- Keep the faith: do not swerve to the left or the right, focus on God alone
- Look to God who rewards those who never give up

Despite the hardship we encounter let us continue. Do not quit and persevere until we reach the finish line. Remember, whatever we labor for in Christ's name is not in vain. Christ, our greatest reward, will Himself honor us if we persevere.

Write your reflections on your journal.

Day 13

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.

The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me

Apostle Paul's attitude as a believer sets a good example as a follower of Christ. His life shows us that we are not living on our own. This means that we cannot just follow our own will and plans and we are not in control of everything.

Paul recognized this principle and even used a very strong phrase to denote this, "I have been crucified..." Being crucified is a sentence of death. It was actually a criminal's death. But using the very ordeal of Christ, Paul identifies with the death of his Savior and Lord. The idea is familiar but the essence is far more stirring. The Apostle, claiming to have been crucified with Christ, declared that has died to his own ways and own will. He asserted that he no longer follows what he thinks is best.

If we share Paul's conviction, we must also consider ourselves as dead to sin so that we can really live for Him. This is following His ways, doing His will in our life, and honoring Him in every relationship and decision we have.

We are crucified to our own selfish desires and have considered ourselves dead to our own plans and ambitions. Our self-centered lives ended already with Christ. If we share in His crucifixion we must end our old ways and die to our own sinful life.

Without this reality of crucifying ourselves we can never claim the victory He gives us. Let us pray that, as believers, we would no longer live in our own ways. As people who "crucified" the flesh, we will live according to His ways and will alone.

Write your reflections on your journal.

Day 14

MAKING THE CROSS OUR PURPOSE

Mark 8:34-37

If the cross is the centerpiece of God's plan, it should also be ours.

The purpose of God is made clear in the cross. When we look at it we can be reminded of how his love and justice intersect so that our salvation can be provided. More than that, God even intersected our lives so that we can be reconciled with Him. The cross testifies to us of a crucified and risen Christ, whose atoning work merited for us a relationship with the Father. As we imagine the cross as that wood on which Jesus' body was nailed, the cross also teaches us that our sins were crucified with Him as well. While the crucifix reminds us that Jesus died for our sins, the empty cross is also a fitting symbol of the freedom He guaranteed for all of us believers.

If the cross is the centerpiece of God's plan, it should also be ours. We believers adhere to what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:18 tells us, "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." For us believers, In the cross, we find our meaning and purpose.

What exactly do we mean by making the cross our life's purpose?

- MAKING THE CROSS OUR LIFE'S PURPOSE IS EMBRACING OUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST AND IDENTIFYING WITH CHRIST
- MAKING THE CROSS OUR LIFE'S PURPOSE IS ENGAGING IN THE FATHER'S BUSINESS INSTEAD OF "DOING BUSINESS AS USUAL"
- MAKING THE CROSS OUR LIFE'S PURPOSE IS SERVING A "DEATH SENTENCE"

The cross of Christ is also our purpose. We shall live in view of this cross and in honor of Christ who was crucified in it.

Write your reflections on your journal.



In Christ our Strength



GAME OVER

“ LORD, HAVE YOUR WAY”

WEEK 2 (JANUARY 11-17, 2016)