

## **PURPOSE (4)**

How wonderful and encouraging it is to know that our Heavenly Father has made it crystal clear in His Word exactly what His purpose is for each one of us. Now is the time, right in these next few moments, to make sure, on the authority of His eternal Word, as to His purpose for your personal life.

"And God said, Let us make man in our image" (Genesis 1:26). The first Adam, the head of the human race, was made in God's image in the realm of personality, intellect, emotions, will, etc., so that there could be communion, fellowship, and cooperation between them; with God Sovereign, and man subject -- subject to His will, which is perfect freedom. But we know that Adam was beguiled into choosing his own way in preference to God's way, relying upon himself only, loving just himself. As a result, he immediately became self-centered instead of God-centered; dead to God who is the Source of all Life, dead in trespasses and sins. In this condition Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his [fallen] image" (Genesis 5:2). Thus he brought forth a sinful, ungodly, self-centered race, born "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1).

"God ... hath in these last days spoken unto us by His son ... Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person" (Hebrews 1:3). Here is the image of God back on earth, this time in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, God's instrument in the Father's hand for conforming us to the image of His Son!

Failure where self is concerned in our Christian life and service, is allowed and often engineered by God in order to turn us completely from ourselves unto His Source for our life -- Christ Jesus, who never fails. Rejoice, dear friend, in your need and hunger of heart, for God says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). As we, in our abject need, consistently and lovingly look upon our Lord Jesus revealed to us in the Word, the Holy Spirit will quietly and effortlessly change the center and source of our lives from self to Christ -- hence for each of us it will be, "Not I, but Christ."

God has a natural law in force to the effect that we are conformed to that upon which we center our interest and love. Hawthorne brought out this fact in "The Great Stone Face." Then too, think of Germany some years ago, full of little Hitlers all because of fanatical devotion to a second-rate paper hanger! Here in our country comic books, radio, T.V. and movies have all contributed in giving us a rising

generation of young Davey Crocketts, cowboys, gangsters, etc. And what of the believer? If we are attracted to this present evil world, we become increasingly worldly; if we pamper and live for self, we become more and more self-centered; but when we look unto Jesus Christ, we become more and more like Him.

Norman Douy writes, "If I am to be like Him, then God in His grace must do it, and the sooner I come to recognize it the sooner I will be delivered from another form of bondage. Throw down every endeavor and say, I cannot do it, the more I try the farther I get from His likeness. What shall I do? Ah, the Holy Spirit says, You cannot do it; just withdraw; come out of it. You have been in the arena, you have been endeavoring, you are a failure, come out and sit down, and as you sit there behold Him, look at Him. Don't try to be like Him, just look at Him. Just be occupied with Him. Forget about trying to be like Him. Instead of letting that fill your mind and heart, let Him fill it. Just behold Him, look upon Him through the Word. Come to the Word for one purpose and that is to meet the Lord. Not to get your mind crammed full of things about the sacred Word, but come to it to meet the Lord. Make it to be a medium, not of Biblical scholarship, but of fellowship with Christ. Behold the Lord."

"Thou sayest, Fit me, fashion me for Thee. Stretch forth thine empty hands, and be thou still: Oh restless soul, thou dost but hinder Me By valiant purpose and by steadfast will. Behold the summer flowers beneath the sun, In stillness his great glory they behold; And sweetly thus his mighty work is done, And resting in his gladness they unfold. So are the sweetness and the joy Divine Thine, O beloved, and the work is Mine." --Ter Steegen

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). And what is His "good pleasure" He is "performing" in us? He is working everything together for this one purpose: "That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" (2 Corinthians 4:11). This is life: "For me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21). This is service: "And there were certain Greeks ... saying ... Sir, we would see Jesus" (John 12:20-21).