

THE PURPOSE SERIES



PRESERVING IN PURPOSE AMIDST ADVERSITY



By: Clarence E. McClendon

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God is not only interested in you getting to your purpose, but He is also interested in you staying there. In most cases, that process requires some spiritual education. In His sovereignty, God can raise you up and place you anywhere He desires for His purposes, but you must learn how to function there so that He can allow you to remain. Between the time God shows you a vision and when He establishes you in that purpose, God allows you to go through a sequence of challenges which will enable you to not be moved when facing adversity. Remember, once you begin moving in the purpose of God, you must be prepared for spiritual attack.

Purpose is not just about finding out what you are supposed to do, but fulfilling it as well. Many people find out what they are suppose to do in God, but never finish. Graveyards are filled with people who died with unfulfilled, God-given dreams and visions because they did not learn how to handle adversity. Once you step into what God has purposed for you, the enemy works overtime to keep you from fulfilling that purpose. If he can keep you from your purpose, then he does not have to fight you much. A great number of Christians are seldom confronted by the adversary, they are more often hindered by their own untransformed wills and unharnessed flesh because they have yet to be transformed by the renewing of their mind to the word of God.



I would dare to say that some believers hardly ever come in contact with the enemy because they are no danger—satan does not make you a major target if you are not aligned with your purpose. Once you begin to come into purpose, the adversary perceives you relative to what you see in terms of God-given vision, and not relative to what your mother and father named you. So if you are going to fulfill the purpose of God, you must settle the fact that the attack is against your purpose. God’s Word to you and in you! It is not personal, even though the enemy will put a face on his attack by using people against you. Remember, *“we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”* (Ephesians 6:12)

Let’s look at Joseph for a moment in Genesis Chapter 37. At first, Joseph’s brothers decide to kill him, but the oldest brother, Reuben, steps in to prevent this. Understand this principle: once you have found purpose, no one can take your life. Someone is always going to step in to save you from utter destruction. If you walk in wisdom when you are in purpose, you cannot be taken out of this life until that purpose is fulfilled.

Every time people came to get Jesus, the Bible says “He slipped through their midst.” Why? He was in purpose: He knew what He was doing and where He was going. They tried to kill the apostle Paul time and time again: they stoned him, but he got up to preach in the next city. Why? He was in his purpose. It is my belief that many people die prematurely because they never come into purpose.

Recall in this same chapter, Joseph does not begin to dream until after his father, Jacob, gives him a coat of many colors. What Jacob had literally done was clothe his son with the Spirit—in type-and-shadow—of illumination and revelation. After putting on that coat, Joseph began to see who he was and where he was going.



When his brothers could not kill him, they tried to strip him of his tunic. In other words, they tried to sever his relationship with his purpose and vision.

The Old Testament offers type-and-shadows of the true substance in Christ. Joseph is literally clothed with illumination, revelation by the author of dreams and visions who is the Holy Ghost. So what does the enemy do if he cannot kill you? He does whatever is possible to keep you from wearing your coat, or rather, communing with your God-given purpose and vision. They did that to Joseph by stripping him of his coat and casting him into an empty pit with no water.

By stripping Joseph of his tunic, they attempted to remove his relationship with God and his purpose. But to remain in purpose, you must stay in relationship with God through the word of God and through prayer. Yes, there are all types of prayer, but I am not speaking of prayer's form, but rather its objective, which is communing with God. That is the very principle God gave to Joshua so that he could have success in his life.

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. (Joshua 1:8 kjv)

Keeping the word of God before you—in your mouth and in your heart—is going to cause you to walk in, fulfill and be successful in purpose. You cannot do it without the word of God.



Then there is also the communion with the Holy Spirit, which happens through prayer. The enemy wants to sever your relationship with God because he knows you cannot fulfill your purpose if you do not stay in connection with the author of that purpose. So Satan will do whatever he can to keep you out of the word of God and out of communion with the Holy Ghost.

He will try to keep you out of a Holy Ghost-filled church. Instead, he will attempt to trap you in a dead, dry, religious mausoleum which kills everything it touches. He does not want you to get into real communion with the Holy Ghost. So he tries to convince you that you do not need the baptism of the Holy Ghost through the evidence of speaking in other tongues.

When Joseph's brothers stripped him of his tunic, they put him in a pit, which had no moisture, no anointing and no freshness. They put him in a dry place. The enemy knows that as long as you stay in a dry place, you will never fulfill your purpose. As a believer, you need to get into a church with an anointing where you can receive the word of God and be in communion with His Spirit. Otherwise, you will never come into purpose. So they tried to strip him of the source of his dream, his relationship with and/or knowledge of the Spirit of God.

To fulfill purpose in the face of adversity, you are going to have to stay focused. A great key that I have discovered is that a person with vision is empowered to remain focused. Many people mistake that focus as an attitude of arrogance and being "holier-than-thou". However, the word "holy" means "separate," so that particular person may be more separated to their purpose than you! So do not be insulted when someone calls you "holier than thou"—all that says is that you have made a choice to live more separated than others have.



That shift is now happening in the Church as a whole. People who are getting revelation about what they are supposed to do and who they are in God are separating themselves from mere churchgoers. So get prepared: once you know what you are supposed to be doing for God, some people are not going to want to walk with you. They may ridicule you. You might say, "Well, that is not very Christian." At a certain point in His ministry, Jesus said, *"He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad."* (Matthew 12:30) In other words, "if you cannot get with Me, then get out of my way and let Me go about My Father's business."

There does come a point when you have to make certain decisions. Jesus said, *"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be those of his own household."* (Matthew 10:34-36) What is He saying? There is going to come a point in walking with Me in purpose that you are going to have to make up your mind to go ahead and do it and let everyone else stay behind if they so choose. You will never fulfill purpose in God trying to make everyone happy. One of the greatest "deliverances" you can receive is the "deliverance from public opinion", because then you are free indeed.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." (Proverbs 29:18 KJV) One translation says, *"Where there is no prophetic revelation, the people cast off restraint."* Prophetic revelation means that something has been prophetically disclosed. The word "revelation" comes from the Greek word apokalupsis from which we get the word "apocalypse," which means "disclosure or pulling back". So for someone to whom nothing has been uncovered, anything is okay. If nothing has been revealed by God to a person as to who he or she is and what he or she is supposed to do, then that person can be satisfied with just about anything. Vision restrains your actions.



The problem with many believers is not that they are not saved, but rather that they lack vision. That is why they appear to have unrestrained lives. But once God shows you the beauty and glory of what He wants to do in your life, you will say, "Sorry, I cannot do that and I cannot go there." Once the world starts looking too good to you, it is a sure sign that you need to get alone with God and say, "God, show me my purpose again."

Again the Scripture reads, *"Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint. But happy is he who keeps the law," (Proverbs 29:18)* or that which has been revealed to him. That man will be happy and will not have to do everything and go everywhere to be satisfied. Once you get the fullness of the Holy Ghost's revelation, then there is no longer enough room for old wine and new wine within the same wineskin.

"Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom." (Proverbs 18:1, KJV) A man does not desire what he does not know or see. Desire is always a product of having seen, known or tasted. For instance, you do not desire alcohol until after tasting it. Beforehand, that desire is mere curiosity. You will not say "no" to a thing unless there is something you desire more. That is why "just say no" does not work: if you have not been shown something to say "yes" to, then you will not have the power to say "no"!

May the God of Heaven and Earth fill your spirit and mind today with His Purpose, plan and will for your life so that you are empowered to say "yes" to Him... and "no" to every hindrance that would hinder your purpose!





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