

GOD'S PURPOSE IN OUR NEW LIFE

Ephesians 2.10: Message 14, Make an eternal difference with your temporal life

Ephesians is a book about our life “in Christ.”

- (1-3) Doctrine: Remember what we have “in Christ.”
- (4-6) Application: Instruction on how we ought to live “in Christ.”

(Eph 1-3) Doctrine: Remember what we have “in Christ”:

- (Eph 1) Remember your new beginning: (v3) All spiritual blessings “in Christ.”
- (Eph 2) Remember your big change...
 - ✓ (v1-10) ...from death to life.
 - ✓ (v11-22) ...from being far off to being made nigh.

(Eph 2.1-10) Remember your big change from death to life:

- (v1-3) Our Need: We were spiritually dead in our trespasses and sins.
- (v4-7) Our Change: But God quickened us (He intervened and gave us life when we were dead).
- (v8-9) How God Changed Us: By grace through faith, not of works.
- (v10) Results of Our Change: For what purpose did God change us? *For works that glorify Him!*

(Eph 1.10) When God gave us life, He also gave us an eternal purpose for which to live.

- God has changed us (made us new in Christ) in order to give us the privilege of making an eternal difference with our temporal lives.

I. (v10a) God's Purpose in Us: Created for Works

A. All those who are saved have been made new creatures in Christ.

1. (v2-3) Before Christ we were children of disobedience, children of the devil, and therefore children of wrath (worthy of God's wrath because of what we were and what we had done).
2. (v4-9) But God intervened and saved us.
3. (v10a) God created us anew (we are new creatures) in Christ Jesus.
 - a) (1Cor 12.27) We are new creatures “in Christ” because we are now members “in” His Body.
 - b) (1Cor 12.13) We have been baptized (immersed, placed into) the Body of Christ.

B. Ephesians 2.10 says clearly that each member of the Body has been created for good works.

1. And just like the physical body functions when each and every member is doing what it was designed to do...
2. ...so the Body of Christ (the Church) functions like God designed it, when each member is doing the work for which he was made (in Christ).
3. (Eph 4.16) Each member has a part to play (an “effectual working”) and unless each member does his part, the Body (the Church) will not and can not function properly.
 - a) This same truth applies to the Church as a whole (the “universal Church” of all believers), just as it applies to the local church (the local manifestation of the Body of Christ).
 - b) If each of us, as members of this body, are not doing the works God designed us to do, the body itself will not function as God designed (it will not grow, it will not be “healthy”).

C. (1Cor 12.18) Each member of the Body is unique (according to God's own design) because the mission requires “diversity in unity.”

1. The mission of the Body comes from the Head (we do what the Head wants): Jesus Christ has told us to *be and make disciples*.
2. However, just like a physical body, the Body of Christ has many different members that are designed to do many different things in order to work together accomplishing the mission.
3. You have been uniquely created by God in Jesus Christ for works that need to be done in the Body.

II. (v10b) God's Purpose for Us: Works Ordained for Us

A. The different works of the members are a perfect fit for each member.

1. Not only has God made each of us uniquely designed for works that He wants us to do, He has also designed the works specifically for us (it's a perfect fit!).
2. The worker has been made for the works, and the works have been designed for the worker.

B. (Rom 12.3-5) Every member of the Body has a work to accomplish.

1. (v3) No one is better than any other; we are all members of the same Body and equals.
2. (v4) However, “equal” does not mean “same.” We are not all made the same, nor for the same works.
3. (v5) We need the diversity of God's design so that we can work in unity to accomplish the mission.
 - a) So, before we open our mouths to speak ill of another member of the Body (because he is not like us), we ought to remind ourselves of this principle.
 - b) Different (in personality, gifts, skills, etc.) is *not* necessarily wrong.
 - c) (1Cor 15.10) God, by His grace, has made each of us exactly how He wants us.
 - d) Each member is different because each task (work) given to the members will be a little different, and it therefore requires a unique person to do them.
 - e) There is a biblical way to evangelize, but we will all do it a little different because of how we are made. The same is true with edification. We are not all designed to be the same.

C. Where is the weak link in this divine design of workers and works to accomplish the mission? Us!

1. God has done His part:
 - a) (Eph 2.10a) God created us in Christ for good works (we are designed by to do certain works in the Body in order to accomplish the mission Christ gave us).
 - b) (Eph 2.10b) God even designed the works for us (it's a perfect fit!).
 - (1) There are certain works in evangelism that God has designed you for, and because He has made you the way you are, you will do those works well.
 - (2) The same can be said for edification: Maybe God designed you to be a good one-on-one teacher, or a teacher in a classroom; maybe he designed you to pray with people, etc.
 - c) (Eph 2.19-22) The Problem: The church functions as God designed when we are “built together”—when each member does his part in evangelism and edification.
 - And this brings us to our last point of study...

III. What God's Purpose Requires of Us: Preparation & Diligence

- In order to do the works God designed us for (the works designed for us), we need first to prepare ourselves for those works and then we need to exercise diligence in doing those works.

A. (Eph 4.11-12) God's Divine Design and Purpose Requires Preparation

1. (v11-12a) God has charged the leadership in the church, especially the pastor-teacher (the senior pastor) with the task of perfecting the saints for the works for which they have been created in Christ Jesus.
 - a) (Col 1.28-29) A pastor-teacher is called by God to the work (“labour”) of preaching and teaching the saints “all wisdom” in order that he might present them *perfect* in Christ.
 - b) (2Tim 3.16-17) That means the pastor-teacher needs to teach and preach the Scripture.
 - c) (1Tim 4.6-16) And that means that God expects the pastor-teacher to nourish himself in good doctrine (v6) in order to that he might give himself wholly to his work (v15) and continue it in for the benefit of the saints in his ministry (v16).
 - d) (2Tim 4.1-5) In addition to preaching and teaching the Word of God, the same pastor-teacher is required to also do the work of an evangelist.
 - (1) (Eph 4.11-12) The evangelist is also one of the leaders in the church structure who are given by God for the perfecting of the saints.
 - (2) The evangelist is the leader who teaches and trains the saints in the work of evangelism.
 - (3) It seems that the work of an evangelist is so important, and that evangelists are so scarce, that God charges the pastor with this task also (even though the pastor is more than likely not the most gifted individual for the job).
 - e) This is why God expects the pastor-teacher to “live of the gospel.”
 - (1) Please don't misunderstand what I am about to say: I am in no way trying to get money out of you. I have a job and I'm looking for a better job. What I do by bring out these aspects of the work of a pastor-teacher is make the point that we need *everyone's* participation in this ministry if this church plant is going to make it and thrive.
 - (2) (1Cor 9.14, context: v7-14) God commands the pastor-teacher to receive a salary.
 - (a) The work of a pastor-teacher (nourishing himself, teaching and preaching all Scripture to his congregation, doing the work of an evangelist) is such that he cannot do it according to God's design and dictates if he is not able to dedicate himself to it completely.
 - (b) This first command is to the pastor-teacher. The next is to his congregation.
 - (3) (1Tim 5.17-18) God commands the local church to pay her pastor-teacher so that he can do the work God expects him to do: *labor* in Word and doctrine (study, teaching, training).
 - (4) My point is this: (Eph 4.11-12) The pastor-teacher needs to be about the business of perfecting the saints through the teaching and application of Scripture.
 - (a) That in itself is a full-time job. Therefore, who is doing work of the ministry—the works of evangelism and edification? The saints!
 - (b) If the pastor-teacher fails in his job (either because he's lazy or because he himself is trying to do the works of the ministry that God has given to the saints), what is going to happen in the mission? Failure!
2. (v12b) God has ordained the saints to do the work of the ministry to make the church grow.
 - a) Each saint has been created in Christ Jesus for good works, and those works require *preparation* (teaching and training) in Scripture and its application in evangelism and edification.
 - b) And because it requires preparation (learning and application), it also requires... diligence.

B. God's Divine Design and Purpose Requires Diligence

1. God has already done His part: He made us for the works He wants us to do, and then He designed the works to be a perfect fit for each of us.
2. The weak link between God's purpose in our divine design in Christ and a successful local church ministry is... *us*. We are often not as *diligent* as we ought to be.
3. Diligence: [def] Constant and focused effort to accomplish something.
4. Diligence requires three things:
 - a) *Goal*: This is the something we are striving to accomplish (mission: be and make disciples).
 - b) *Decision*: We have to decide to dedicate ourselves to reaching the goal (it won't happen “naturally”).
 - c) *Discipline*: We have to have the daily, constant, focused *effort* (work, labor) to reach the goal.

Conclusion:

Ephesians 2.1-10: In Christ, we have been given a new life, and with that life comes purpose.

- We *can* make an eternal difference with our temporal lives.
- But in order to do so, we have to be diligent in the works that God has given us to do in the mission.
- We are all called to evangelism: Each member is different, therefore each member will do the work of evangelism a little different (biblically, but according to his own personality, gifts, etc.).
- We are all called to edification: Each member is different, therefore they will edify other believers a little differently (even though it all boils down to teaching Scripture to another and showing them how to do it).

God has done His part in saving us and making us new in Christ (for good works, and good works for us).

- Are we *prepared* (or *preparing*) for the works God expects us to do?
- Are we *diligent* in doing those works of the ministry so that the Body of Christ might grow?
- Or is there something we can change today in order to better glorify God by finishing the works He has given us to do on this earth?