



A TOUCH OF TRUTH From Bob Pratt

THE PURPOSE OF IT ALL

Back in the days when about all I knew of the Bible was that it could be found in every hotel room I slept in, and that it was “that religious book” from church, I could never have imagined that it would become the most important book in my life. As far as I was concerned, it was too difficult to understand, had no relevance in my affairs, and certainly didn’t warrant wasting my valuable time on. The way I saw it, that book was dead and I was alive. Little did I know! I had it exactly backwards; in fact that Book was alive and *I* was dead. It’s no coincidence by the way, that most biblical truths work exactly that way, opposite to the way we “*naturally*” think and then act. Let me go a step further. Without biblical truths at work within us, we are not in a position to think or act wisely, and so set ourselves up for failure & futility. Solomon told us in Ecclesiastes all about the futility of going at life through fleshly pursuits.

The Born-again, Spirit-filled believer is on a lifelong quest of seeking out those biblical truths, understanding them, and finally applying them to his or her life. Then he or she is expected by God to show others how to do exactly the same thing. Now somewhere, sometime, an important question is going to arise in the mind of every follower of Christ. It’s not much different from the question you had before being saved, and it’s this: “*Why am I here, and what am I supposed to be doing?*” Prior to the new birth, that was a flesh-oriented question, and after salvation it becomes a spiritual one.

Now we can sit down as brothers and sisters in The Lord at any time on any day and discuss the merits of all the church priorities, programs, and visions you want to, and we’d probably agree that most are motivated by renewed minds operating out of pure hearts. And so it should be. But that nagging question will inevitably resurface again saying; “*Now that I’m here (reborn), what is it I’m supposed to be doing?*” In retrospect, I thought that once I was saved, that question would never come up again. Bible reading, prayer, church attendance, personal evangelism, service ministries etc. all have a place, but what am I striving for, what’s the real goal you may wonder. If you haven’t yet, I can assure you that you will.

These things having been said, let's turn to God's answer to our question. In many places and in many ways throughout the scriptures, our Lord makes quite clear just what it is we should be seeking to accomplish with the life he has given us. In the letter to the Ephesians, we can see God really start to drive home a core mandate for his children. Allow me to quote some key verses in Chapters 1, 3, and 4. From Chapter 1 we read in verses 9-12;

⁹having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. ¹¹In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹²that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

These verses tell us not only that God has a plan, but that He has made it known to us, and that throughout all of human history His number one objective has been to bring us to His dear Son. Verse 11 is analogous to Romans 8:28 and is of great comfort as we are reminded that He is always working behind the scenes to bring about His will in the life of every child of God.

Moving to Chapter 3 at verses 8 through 12, we read;

⁸To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹and to make all see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; ¹⁰to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*, ¹¹according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

In Paul's humility, he explains his marching orders and in doing so makes reference to "*the eternal purpose*" which God laid down "*from the beginning of the ages.*" Again we are reminded there is a plan, and it will continue to unfold in and through the church.

Finally, take a look at Chapter 4 beginning at verse 11 and ending at verse 13;

¹¹And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

Verse 11 speaks of the five-fold ministry. Verse 12 tells us why those ministries exist in the first place. But verse 13 is the proverbial bottom line. If that one piece of scripture is not God's "mission statement" to the church body, I don't know what is. Here it is again that you may really let it hit home:

**¹³till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man,
to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;**

That, friend is "*what we are to be doing*"! As simply and as beautifully stated as the verse itself, God's plan is that we meet Him in faith, fall completely in love with Him as we come to know more of Him, and that we spend the God given time, talents and treasures of this life forever aspiring to be just like Jesus. Allowing Him to live in and through you both glorifies Him and brings you to the maturity He seeks for you; in His own words "**the fullness of Christ**". That lifelong process is truly "*The Purpose of it All*"