

WHAT'S YOUR GAME PLAN?

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Do you recognize this quote: *"Life holds many pleasures for me, but nothing, nothing, beats the thrill of playing on that field every Sunday. Football is my LIFE! Beyond the field nothing else matters. Nothing."*
1. The quote will only sound familiar if you have seen the Walt Disney movie entitled *"The Game Plan."*
 2. The quote is made by Joe Kingman (played by Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson), a professional quarterback who is trying to lead his team to the league championship. During the course of the movie, Kingman learns that there is something more important than football.
- B. Is Kingman's quote a valid Game Plan for life?
- C. So many are living with a similar Game Plan, putting the emphasis in the wrong place.
- D. Not only must we HAVE a purpose, we must have the RIGHT purpose.
- E. I want to discuss this matter with you today, and we will begin by examining two examples from the Bible:

I. JESUS RECOGNIZED HIS PURPOSE:

- A. What was His purpose in coming?
1. To "seek and save the lost," ***Luke 19:10.***
 2. To build the Church, ***Matthew 16:18.***
 3. To provide the means for the abundant life, ***John 10:10.***
- B. His ultimate *PURPOSE* corresponds with our greatest *NEED*.

If our greatest need had been HEALTH, God would have sent a DOCTOR.

If our greatest need had been WEALTH, God would have sent a BUSINESSMAN.

If our greatest need had been TECHNOLOGY, God would have sent a SCIENTIST.

If our greatest need had been AMUSEMENT, God would have sent an ENTERTAINER.

But our greatest need was FORGIVENESS, so God sent a SAVIOR.

- C. Jesus knew His Purpose:
1. In the Garden He prayed: "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, *not as I will, but as You will.*" ***Matthew 26:39.***
 2. Jesus told His apostles, *"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."* ***John 4:34.***
- D. Jesus fulfilled His purpose:
1. "I have glorified You on the earth. *I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.*" ***John 17:4.***
 2. Hanging on the cross, Jesus said *"It is finished."* ***John 19:30.***
- E. If ANYONE ever had a purpose and fulfilled it, HE did.

II. PAUL RECOGNIZED HIS PURPOSE:

- A. In an attempt to convince Ananias to go to Saul in Damascus, God stated the purpose set out for the apostle Paul: "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake." **Acts 9:15-16.**
1. His purpose was to teach the Gentiles and suffer for His name.
 2. Paul gladly accepted this as his purpose and set about to fulfill it.
- B. This is evidenced by statements like:
1. "For to me, *to live is Christ*, and to die is gain." **Philippians 1:21.**
 2. "Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; *but one thing I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. **Phil 3:13-14.**
 3. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." **Galatians 2:20.**
- C. Paul fulfilled His purpose, for as his life was coming to an end, he wrote: "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing." **2 Timothy 4:6-8.**

III. WHAT IS YOUR GAME PLAN?

- A. It is VITAL that we have a GAME PLAN or purpose in life: "A man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder, a football game without a plan, a guitar without strings and a car without gasoline. He won't accomplish much."
1. How terrible to go through life without a purpose.
 2. Very little can be accomplished without a purpose in life.
- B. What is the focus of YOUR "GAME PLAN"?
- C. Solomon wrote: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all." **Ecclesiastes 12:13.**
- D. HOW WOULD MOST FINISH THIS VERSE THAT PAUL WROTE:
1. "For me to live is _____ ? _____ ." *What would you write in the blank?*
Whatever you write in the blank reflects the top priority in your life.
 - a. Make as many FRIENDS as possible?
 - b. MARRY a certain person?
 - c. Make as much MONEY as possible?
 - d. Consider an answer that might be given in the world today:
"FOR TO ME TO LIVE IS TO ACCUMULATE WEALTH AND POSSESSIONS."

1. This is without a doubt one of the top priorities in the lives of many people.

2. As one person has expressed it, **"WE BUY THINGS WE DON'T NEED, WITH MONEY WE DON'T HAVE TO IMPRESS PEOPLE WE DON'T EVEN LIKE."**

2. Now the second part: "For to me to live is (your answer here), and to DIE is _____."
- Paul said to die is GAIN, but if you put something else besides Christ in the first blank, the second blank must be LOSS.
 - Someone answered this way: "For to me to live is to make money and to die is to lose everything." "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" **1 Timothy 6:7.**
 - If your priorities are on earthly things or people, the second blank would always be to lose everything.

E. If you have a purpose as a Christian, what is it? It should be things like:

- BEARING FRUIT, John 15:1-2.
- PRAISING GOD IN WORSHIP, John 4:24.
- HONORING GOD BY YOUR LIFE, Romans 12:1-2.
- GOING TO HEAVEN, Matthew 7:21-24.

F. **ILLUSTRATION:** AN EXECUTIVE HIRER, a "head-hunter" who goes out and hires corporation executives for other firms, once told me, "When I get an executive that I'm trying to hire for someone else, I like to disarm him..."

I offer him a soft drink, take my coat off, then my vest, undo my tie, throw up my feet and talk about baseball, football, family, whatever, until he's all relaxed. Then, when I think I've got him relaxed, I lean over, look him square in the eye and say, "What's your purpose in life?" It's amazing how top executives fall apart at that question.

"Well, I was interviewing this fellow the other day, had him all disarmed, with my feet up on his desk, talking about football. Then I leaned up and said, 'What's your purpose in life, Bob?' And he said, without blinking an eye, **'TO GO TO HEAVEN AND TAKE AS MANY PEOPLE WITH ME AS I CAN.'** For the first time in my career I was speechless" [from *The Ignored Task of the Church: Evangelism*]. What's YOUR purpose in life? Really...

G. AM I FULFILING MY PURPOSE?

CONCLUSION:

- A. Thus far, where does your “GAME PLAN” lead?
- B. *Is your purpose to go to heaven and take as many people with you as you can?*
- C. Song we sang before the lesson: “HE IS MY EVERYTHING”
- D. What we will sing: “I AM MINE NO MORE”
- E. Have you give yourself to the Lord and let Him formulate YOUR Game Plan?

Ricky Phillips

Martin Church of Christ

Martin, TN

rphillips@martinchurchofchrist.org