

# Called According to His Purpose

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Please take your Bibles again to the book of Romans, chapter 8. Our pastor has been preaching through this chapter. We have a short reading today, verses 28 to 30.
- Romans 8, Romans chapter 8, verse 28. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him.
- Who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son. That he might be the firstborn among many brothers.
- And those he predestined, he also called. Those he called, he also justified. Those he justified, he also glorified. Amen. Amen. Well, if God's so great salvation is like a great mountain range, then Romans 8, 29 and 30 is like the very top of the tallest mountain where the view is breathtaking.
- Because from here, this vantage point, we're given to see all the way back into eternity past.
- [ 1 : 2 5 ] To the very beginning of our salvation in the heart and mind of God. His loving choice and predestination of us before the world began.
- But also from these heights, we can turn and look into the unending future of our salvation that awaits us. That we've just sung about. At our glorification.
- That stretches on through the endless ages. And between the beginning of our salvation and the eternal past. The beginning in the eternal past and the future of our salvation in unending eternity.
- We're also given to see two aspects of our salvation that occur in this present age during our lifetimes. Namely, calling and justification. And so together we have these five links in this unbroken chain of salvation.
- And all five are said to be the work of God himself. Something he does. And that's what makes it so certain. This is what God does.
- [ 2 : 3 4 ] And all those that he foreknew us. He predestined us. He called us. He justified us. And he glorified us. It's put in the past tense because in the mind of God, it is as good as done.
- And all those he foreknew, he also predestined. And all those he predestined, he also called. And all he called, he also justified. And all he justified, he also glorified.
- Which means that there's no losses along the way. Zero. None fall off. None he foreknew and predestined.
- None he foreknew and predestined. Who will not also be called justified and glorified. So I say, what an amazing passage this is. It has to be divine.
- Because who but God knows the beginning and end and all in between. And speaks to us about it as certainties.
- [ 3 : 4 0 ] Sadly, and I mean sadly, this glorious passage that we're looking at this morning. Has been used more for theological arguments than for its original purpose.

And I must confess that myself. The original purpose of why this passage is in our Bibles is to give encouragement and absolute assurance to every Christian.

Every believer in Jesus. Everyone who has been united to Christ by saving faith. So let's not jerk this passage out of the garden in which God has planted it.

It's found in what is perhaps the greatest chapter of the Bible. A chapter that from beginning to end is full of the sweetest encouragements. That if we are in Christ, then we can know there is no condemnation for us.

And if we are in Christ, we can know that the love of God, nothing can separate us from that love of God. Which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. And therefore we have the strongest statement after statement of assurance of our salvation.

[ 4 : 57 ] Each one of these have come as hell deserving sinners to Jesus Christ. They came with nothing good to say for themselves.

To commend themselves to his grace and forgiveness. And they threw themselves upon the mercy of God in Christ. Alone. Put all their trust for salvation in him.

Who he is. The eternal son of God. Become man. What he'd done. His perfect life. His atoning death. His glorious resurrection.

That was all their trust. And so by faith they have been joined to Jesus Christ. In this indissoluble union that we just sang of. They are in Christ. And will ever be in Christ.

Now where are we in this glorious chapter 8 of Romans? Remember last week in verse 28. We saw the amazing truth. That we know. That all things work together for good.

[ 5 : 59 ] To those who are the called. To those who love God. To those who are the called according to his purpose.

Now that means that then that as we saw last week. That even bad things. Even evil things. Even sinful things that others do to us.

And that we do ourselves. Indeed all things. Things that hurt. Things that make us groan. And weep. And think that everything is against us.

Are nevertheless in reality. All being worked together. For our good. Now that is such a life transforming truth.

That you cannot know it experientially. And not live radically different. Because of it. Wouldn't you say that? That if you woke up every day.

[ 6 : 55 ] And knew that anything that can happen to me today. Will only happen. If God is going to use it for my good. Isn't that a wonderful way to wake up?

To live every day of your life. What confidence. What assurance. What warm sunlight it throws. On our darkest trials. What joy into our deepest sorrows and losses.

What peace into all the perplexities. And confusion that we face in life. In a fallen world. And what comfort. As we live with our own remaining sin.

Yet within us. And our own brokenness. To know that in all these things. Every last circumstance in my life. God is working it together for my good.

We can say with Spurgeon. Our troubles. Have always brought us blessings. And they always will.

[ 7 : 53 ] They're the black chariots. Of bright grace. God promises. To work them. For our good. Now the measure. Of your enjoyment.

Of that truth. The measure of. The power of that truth. In your life. Is according to Jesus. According to your faith. Be it unto you.

So. If you have a great faith. In this truth. Of Romans 8. 28. It will give you great joy. Great peace. Great comfort. If you have a little faith.

You'll have a little joy. And little peace. And little comfort. You see. It's according to your faith. Be it unto you. Be it unto you. And so we cry.

I believe Lord. Help my unbelief. I want to believe this promise more. To my own good. To my own joy. Peace.

[ 8 : 52 ] And comfort. And to your glory. There's a man that takes you at your word. Now how does our faith grow then? If the enjoyment of this truth is. Based upon our faith in it.

How does our faith grow? Well Romans 10.17 says. Faith comes by hearing. Hearing the word. The word of Christ. So faith comes.

And faith grows. Not apart from the word. But in and by and through the word. And it's precisely to strengthen our faith. In this stupendous promise of verse 28.

That the Holy Spirit has Paul write more words. In verses 29 and 30. This is God stooping to our weakness. He knows this is an amazing promise.

If we ever get a hold of it. It will change the way we live. Every day of our lives. And he knows how weak our faith is. So he stoops. And he says here. Here's some more reasons.

[ 9 : 55 ] How you can say. We know this is true. We know it. Because of this. What he's telling us. In verses 29 and 30. So let's receive it as such.

As food for faith. There's truckloads of food. In these two verses. For our faith. For our greater joy. Peace. Comfort. And confidence. And assurance.

In God. In fact. The further encouragement to our faith. Actually begins at the end of verse 28. We didn't really have time to look at it last week.

So we're going to see. The end of verse 28. This morning. And then move on. As these encouragements flow through verse 30. And this encouragement.

Comes in the limitation. That is placed upon the promise. For whom do all things work together. For good. Well clearly not everyone. And the text limits it.

[ 10 : 51 ] It's to those who love God. And we looked briefly at that last week. But it's not just for those who love God. It goes on to say. To those who have been called.

According to his purpose. The called. According to his purpose. Now these aren't two different groups. That you have those who love.

God. And then you have those who. Have been called. According to his purpose. No those are just two things. That describe the one group of people. For whom God works all things together. For good.

They love God. And they have been called. According to his purpose. Now. It's that last phrase. Of having been called. According to his purpose.

That adds tremendous assurance. To verse 28. And the promise. So let's see how this works. In the first place. Let's consider God's purpose.

[ 11 : 50 ] That's what it's saying. We have been called. According to God's purpose. God never works. Without purpose.

Or plan. Everything he does. Every single thing he does. He does to fulfill some purpose. In his heart and mind. Now we do have purposes and plans.

That we're pursuing. Don't we? Reasons for what we do. For everything we do. Now we may not be aware of it.

But you can believe that. Behind everything we do. There's some purpose. To why. We've done it. So God has purposes.

We have purposes. But one of the big differences. The huge difference. Between God's purposes and ours. Is this. God accomplishes all that he purposes to do. Whereas many of our purposes.

[ 12 : 47 ] Fail to come to pass. Last year. I purposed to have fresh green beans. All summer long. With a staggered crop. But Peter Rabbit.

Had other plans. And purposes. For those beans. And so my purpose was frustrated. It was foiled. It didn't happen. How many of the things that you planned to do last month.

Were somehow. Left still on the things to do list. You planned to do them. But something happened. Something failed. Because. Sometimes those purposes fail.

Because we just give up on it. We give up on it. And we change our mind. Well I'm not going to do that anymore. Other times. They fail because of things that happen. Beyond our control.

Like. Peter Rabbit. We're learning to control him. But. It's. It's. You get what I mean. It's beyond your control. And that's our limitation. God has no such limitations.

[ 13 : 47 ] Amen. And it's against this backdrop. Of our own. Failed purposes. That we see the greatness. And majesty of our God. That he does whatever pleases him.

In heaven. In earth. In the sea. In all their depths. There's no place in the whole universe. Where God's purposes. Will fail. Why? Because he's reigning over.

Everything in heaven. And earth. We had it in our memory verse. For today. Daniel 4.35. He does as he pleases.

With the powers of heaven. And the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand. Does he purpose? Who can stop him? No one. Now.

The beauty is. Is that. God even uses the attempts. To stop his plans. As the very means. To fulfill. His plans.

[ 14 : 48 ] We don't have time. To look in that. But. But. You can see how. The devil was. Was working. To destroy. Christ. And. And the plan. Of salvation. And yet. God just uses his plan.

To bring him to the cross. And there. To defeat Satan. He uses the very. Attempts. To foil his plans. To fulfill them. What Satan means.

For evil. He works for good. That's our God. And the Bible never wearies. Of telling this. To us. There have been. And there still are. Many people.

Many nations. Many devils. Trying their best. To frustrate. God's purposes. And plans. But just the opposite occurs.

Psalms 33. 10 and 11. The Lord. Foils the plans. Of the nations. He thwarts. The purposes. Of the people. But the plans.

[ 15 : 42 ] Of the Lord. Stand firm. Forever. The purposes. Of his heart. Through all generations. Isaiah 40. 40. Excuse me.

46. 10 to 11. This is something. That God says. Sets me apart. From anything else. There's none like me. Because of this. What is it? Lord. Well.

I make known. The end. From the beginning. From ancient times. What is still. To come. I say.

My purpose. Will stand. And I will do. All that I please. From the east. I summon. A bird of prey. From a far off land. A man.

To fulfill. My purpose. He raised up. Cyrus the Persian. A man. To fulfill. My purpose. What I have said. That will I bring about.

- [ 16 : 37 ] What I have planned. That will I do. Now that's a characteristic. Of God alone. And the New Testament. Is just as bold.
- To tell us. As the old is. Ephesians 1 11. We heard it. In the scripture reading. That in him. That is in Christ. We were also chosen. Having been predestined.
- According to the plan. Of him. Who works out. Most things. In conformity. With the purpose. Of his will. No. He works out. All things. In the purpose.
- According to the purpose. Of his will. In other words. The outworking. Of his plan. Is exactly. The same. As the plan. Itself.
- There's not a shade. Of difference. Between what he planned. And what he. Accomplished. What he purposed. And what he did. This is a God.
- [ 17 : 32 ] Whose purposes. Cannot fail. Or. He simply. Is not God. He is not God. Most high. Now. When.
- Did God. Purpose. And plan. To save you. Well again. From this passage. We can look back. Into eternity past. We read it. In Ephesians 1 4.
- He chose us in him. Before the creation. Of the world. To be holy. And blameless. In his sight. And predestined us. To be adopted. As sons. Because of his love.
- It was from the beginning. That he chose. You to be saved. Second Thessalonians. 2 14. So God planned. To save you. Before the creation. Of the world. But he effectually.
- Called you. To salvation. When you heard the gospel. And believed it. Believed on the Lord. Jesus Christ. Repented of your sins. So that's where.
- [ 18 : 29 ] God planned. Our salvation. From eternity past. Second Timothy 1 9. God who has saved us. And called us. To a holy life. Not because of anything.
- We have done. But because of his own. Purpose. His own purpose. And grace. It was because of his own. Purpose. That he powerfully.
- Called you. To this holy life. In Christ. So as Romans 8 28. Says. You were called. According to purpose. To his purpose. Well this then.
- You can see. Is another reason. Why we know. Beyond a shadow. The doubt. That God works. All things together. For our good. Because those. He called.
- He also justifies. Those he justifies. He also glorifies. That's the ultimate good. Out of which. He's working.
- [ 19 : 26 ] All things together for. He never fails. To accomplish. His purpose. It's the Heidelberg Catechism. Question and answer number one. Rejoices that.
- Jesus Christ. Protects me so well. That. Apart from the will. Of my father in heaven. Not a hair. Can fall from my head. Indeed that everything. Must fit his purpose.
- For my salvation. What a way to live. To know there. That my salvation. Was purposed. And I've been called. To Christ. According to his.
- Good and gracious. Purpose. David knew this truth. He had a much smaller. Bible than ours. And yet he. He could say.
- In Psalm 57. To I cry out. To God most high. To God. Who fulfills. His purpose. For me. He says the same. In Psalm 138.
- [ 20 : 21 ] Verse 8. The Lord will fulfill. His purpose. For me. There were many times. That David did not look. Like he was going to be crowned. The next king of Israel. That was God's purpose.
- For him. He knew that. He had been anointed. But for some. Dozen years. He's being chased. Like a rabbit. By Saul. And his army. Seeking to kill him. And yet David says.

God's purpose. For me. Will be fulfilled. And if you've been called. To Jesus Christ. You can say it. With the equal. Assurance. That he who has called me.

According to his purpose. Will fulfill that purpose. In my glorification. One day. So verses 29 to 30. Go on then.

To spell out. In greater detail. Just what that good purpose. Is for you. Christian. And in the future. We will be looking more fully.

[ 21 : 17 ] At these words. Each one of them. That he foreknew us. He predestined us. He called us. Justified. And glorified. But. But for this morning.

I just want you to focus. In on God's purpose. For which he called you. To Jesus Christ. If you know you're here. That he called you.

And again. We'll look at calling. But that means that. Not only has the invitation. Gone out to you. Come to me. You've actually come. It's an effectual call. Because not everybody. Who hears.

The call. Is going to be glorified. Or justified. No. This is an effectual call. Where you actually. Came to Christ. And trusted him. And took him. And became. Joined to him.

And if you know that. Then you can know that. It was God's purpose. For which he called you. Now I want you to know.

[ 22 : 13 ] That in the first place. God's purpose in saving you. Is much more. Than to save you. From hell. That seems to be all. That many people. Want out of salvation.

Just a free. Get out of hell card. They would be content. To live their whole lives. As slaves to sin. Just as long. As there's no hell.

To pay at the end. That way they get their cake. And eat it too. And that only. That attitude only proves. That they have never been called. To Jesus Christ. No.

No salvation. Is from sin. That's why his name. Is called Jesus. Because he will save his people. From their sins.

And a life. In slavery to sin. Is viewed by a Christian. A real Christian. As a living hell. That's a change of heart. He's been called.

[ 23 : 11 ] To Jesus Christ. Now it's true. That rescuing us. From the coming wrath. Is no small part. Of our salvation. In eternity. Separated from God.

In torment. That is a big deal. I'm not wanting to dismiss it. But it is by no means. All of our salvation. Nor do I believe. It's the greatest purpose. Of our salvation.

There are multiple purposes. For God saving us. But I want you to notice. What Paul says. Right here in verse 29. Look at it in your Bible. When he's discussing. God's purpose.

For calling us. He says in verse 29. For those God foreknew. He also predestined. For what purpose? To be conformed.

To the likeness. Of his son. That he might be the firstborn. Among many brothers. Did you know. That God saved you. And predestined you. For this very purpose.

[ 24 : 05 ] That you might be conformed. To the image. The likeness. Of Jesus Christ. Let's go back. To the beginning. And ask. What was God's original purpose.

In creating man and woman. Mankind. How did he create him? In Genesis 127. As we've been hearing. In the Sunday school hour. God created. Man.

In his own image. In the image of God. He created him. Male and female. He created them. Both in the image of God. To be created. In the image of God.

Is to be created. In his likeness. Remember when Jesus. Asked for a coin. And asked. The crowd a question. Whose image. Or likeness.

Is on the coin. Well it was Caesar's likeness. There was a resemblance. Between what was on the coin. And the real Caesar. God.

[ 25 : 00 ] Even so. Mankind. Was made. In the image of God. To reflect his likeness. In some ways. To resemble God.

Now there are. Significant differences. Between God and man. God is infinite. Eternal. And unchangeable. And we are not.

God. We don't share that. Similarity. With God. But there are other. Ways that. We have a likeness. To God. We are creatures.

With a mind. And a rationale. We can reason. As God is a reasonable being. We have affections. We have. A will. We're volitional creatures.

And in these ways. We reflect. A God. Who is. Has mind. And rationale. Capacity. And affection.

[ 25 : 57 ] And volition. We're like God. In that. We're made for relationship. God. For all eternity. Had relationship. Father. Son. And Holy Spirit.

Within the Trinity. And when he made us. He made us for relationship. With a capacity. For a relationship. With him. And then a relationship. With each other. In marriage.

And family. And church. And society. And then he also. Made us like him. In that he gave us dominion. To rule over. The creation. He put everything.

Under our feet. All flocks. And herds. Birds of the air. Fish of the sea. He put it under us. That we might rule over it. A reflection of God's. Sovereign rule.

Over. Heaven and earth. So. In these ways. We were made. In his likeness. But most importantly. We were created. In his moral likeness.

[ 26 : 50 ] Which means. That we were created. Upright. Righteous. Without sin. Capable of sin. Which is something. That's not true. Of our God. But we were made. Righteous. As we came from.

The hand of God. I should say. Adam and Eve. Came from the hand of God. Morally upright. Without sin. Well then. You know. That Adam and Eve. Fell into sin.

Man. And when they did. This image of God. In man. Was marred. It was defaced. It was disfigured. And every image. Bearing faculty.

Of man. Was corrupted. And that's the. Fallen nature. That Adam and Eve. That Adam and Eve. Passed on. To their sons. And they passed on.

To their children. And to their children. Until you and I. Were born into this world. It was. Yes. There is something. Of the image of God. That remains in us. But it is marred.

[ 27 : 44 ] Defaced. And disfigured. So yes. We still. Have a mental capacity. A rationale. But our mind. And understanding.

Is darkened. We call light darkness. And darkness light. And evil good. And good evil. Our mind is polluted. Our affections. Are all disordered. We love what we should hate.

And hate what we should love. And things that should be. Way down here. In priority number 10. And God should be number one. We've reversed them. All disordered.

In our affections. In our will. We choose the wrong things. We choose. What I want. Instead of what God wants. Relational. Yes. We're still relational. But our relationship with God.

Is shattered. Sin has separated us from God. Our relationships with each other. Marriage. Where is marriage today? Where has marriage ever been? It is marred by sin.

[ 28 : 41 ] It is not perfect. We're broken. And it's seen in our relationships. With children. We heard it in Sunday school. What kind of relationship is that? That would sacrifice our children. What about our rule?

And dominion? How do we use authority? Well we either abdicate authority. And don't raise our children. In the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Or we become authoritarian. Despots.

And we rule without love. And without servant. Humble leadership. You see. Every faculty. Is spoiled. Is spoiled because of our moral lack of likeness to God.

And that moral aspect influences every other aspect of our image of God. It's defaced. It's marred. Think of it as a beautiful original portrait hanging on a wall over in the Louvre.

And it being severely vandalized. Somebody comes in with knives. They slash it. They paint over it. They tear parts out of it.

[ 29 : 46 ] You can still tell afterwards. It's a human face. Yes. I can see that. But it's so damaged into face. That you can't tell what that person really looked like.

That's something of the fallen image in man. We have, yes, these capacities for greatness.

But they're marred. They're twisted and corrupted. And this is the identity crisis that's happening in our own day.

In a big way. Man was created to bear the image of God. But God's invisible. We can't see him. And man who was made in his image.

Is not what he once was either. And now he's sinful and corrupt. With God's image defaced in him. Vandalized by sin and Satan.

[ 30 : 47 ] No wonder we don't know who we are. Who am I? Am I a man or a woman or a cat or a unicorn? What is my identity? We don't know.

Because where can we see the image of God? We can't see God. He's invisible. We can't see man's bearing that image. Because it's all distorted and destroyed.

With little to see. I ask you. Did God just scrap his purpose? And say well. Oh well. That was a good idea.

But I guess it just didn't work out. So. That's it. No. His purpose cannot fail. Job knew it. I know that you can do all things.

No plan of yours can be thwarted. And so God designed a way of salvation. With the very purpose. Of restoring in his image.

[ 31 : 45 ] In fallen man. And central to this plan. Was sending his own eternal son. In human flesh. Who Colossians 1 15 says.

Is himself the image. Of the invisible God. Hebrews 1 3. He is the radiance. Of God's glory.

The exact representation. Of his being. Look at the image in him. And look at God. And. It's the exact representation. Here's the original painting.

Unmarred. Imperfection. So in seeing Jesus Christ. The perfect God man. We're seeing what we were meant to be.

As image bearers of God. And it's only through salvation in Christ. That God's image. Then is being restored. In us. This is the end.

[ 32 : 46 ] To which he predestined us. To be conformed. To the likeness. The image. Of his son. You see it there in verse 29. That was the end in view.

That we would be. Conformed. To the image of Christ. Who is the image of God. It's the purpose for which he saved us. And called us.



That we might bear his likeness again. And it's the highest good. Toward which he is working all things together. To restore fallen man. Into the full image of God.

When we're glorified. The son of God came to be. And became like us. That we might. Become like. Him. Not in his deity.

But in his perfect humanity. To once again. Realize. Why we were created. What we were created to be. What our image is. What.

[ 33 : 39 ] What our purpose is. Ephesians 4.24. Having put off the old self. The self we were born with. And having put on the new self. Created to be like God.

Into righteousness and holiness. Salvation is a supernatural. Moral transformation. In which we're. Newly created. To be like God.

Into righteousness and holiness. The new self. Which is being renewed in knowledge. In the image of its creator. Colossians 3.10. So God's recreating. In Christ Jesus.

A new humanity. To fulfill his original purpose. For man. That begins with a new birth. With a new heart. And then the makeover continues. Throughout our lifetime. Second Corinthians chapter 3.

And verse 18. Tells us something about the process. Listen to this. We. Speaking of us who are in Christ. Called to Christ. We who with unveiled faces.

[ 34 : 37 ] All behold. The glory. Of the Lord. Are being transformed. Into his likeness. With ever increasing glory.

Which comes from the Lord. Who is the spirit. The transformation. Into his likeness. His image. Is happening. From one stage. One stage of glory.

To another. It's ongoing. In the Christian's life. It's a lost person. If you want to find yourself. Don't look within.

You'll never. Understand. The image of God. By looking at the broken image. That you are. No. Look outside. Look to Christ.

You want to find. Who. Who you were made to be. Open your Bible. And look at Jesus. See what. What it says about him. Because.

[ 35 : 34 ] He's the perfect image of God. That's what we were made to be. Like Jesus. Don't consult your feelings. Consult God. As he's revealed Christ. In the scriptures.

He's the original pattern. In which. We become. The image bearers. And. And Christians. Since this was God's. Predestinating purpose.

For all his called ones. You can be assured. It's going to happen. That one day. You will perfectly. Bear the image of God. Likeness to Jesus. With. Without sinful thoughts.

Motives. Words. Actions. Reactions. None of it. Reflecting the beauty of holiness. Found in our savior. Paul says it in. First Corinthians.

Fifteen. Forty nine. Just as we've borne the image. Of the earthly man. Adam. So shall we bear the likeness. Of the man from heaven. Jesus Christ. First John three.

[ 36 : 30 ] Two. We know. That when he appears. We shall be like him. For we shall see him. As he is. There again. It's seeing. Beholding his glory. That even now.

We're being transformed. And when we see him. Face to face. We will be like him. Bearing his image. Perfectly. Not just in our souls.

But even in our bodies. The apostle Paul says. In Philippians. Three. Twenty. One. That we're waiting. For the Lord Jesus Christ. To come from heaven. Who by the power.

That enables him. To subdue all things. Beneath his feet. Will transform. These lowly bodies. That they might become like. His glorious body. You see this.

This conformity. To Christ. It's going on now. In our souls. Our hearts. Our minds. And will. And emotions. And it feeds out. Into our relationship. With God. And each other.

[ 37 : 25 ] And the way we rule. And handle the things. God. The responsibilities. God's given us. But one day. It's going to permeate us. Throughout all that we are.

As body soul creatures. We're going to be made. Like the Lord Jesus. And we'll have a body even. That bears the likeness. Of his glorious body.

Three applications. As we conclude. It's for you. Who love God. You who have been called. According to his purpose. The first application. Is assurance. That's the whole reason.

For the chapter. And here is the strongest. Assurance. For your final. Salvation. Your final. Salvation. God says.

He called you. According to this. Very purpose. He predestined you. To be conformed. To the image of Christ. His son. And his predestined. Purpose. Will not fail.

[ 38 : 19 ] Because he is. God most high. The work. Which his goodness. Began. The arm of his strength. Will complete. It. And that glorification.

Is so certain. That he puts it in the past tense. It will happen. It's as if it. Has happened. In the mind of God. We're going to share.

In his glory. And in his perfect likeness. No longer. From one stage of glory. To another. Progressively. At last. Fully glorified.

Completed. And now. To be enjoyed. Through the endless ages. That's the first application. Take this assurance. To yourself. If you have been called.

To Jesus Christ. You've come to him. Take this assurance. To yourself. Second. Pursuit. Be clear. About God's purpose. For your salvation.

[ 39 : 18 ] And then. Pursue it. Yourself. God's made his purpose. For saving you. Very clear. It wasn't just to save you. To keep you out of hell. It wasn't just to keep you.

From all things painful. And difficult. In this life. It's to conform you. To the likeness of his son. It's to restore. That fallen image. Of God.

In you. Through Jesus Christ. So if. If that's God's purpose. That he is pursuing. In your life. I need to ask you. Is that your purpose?

Is that what you are chasing after. With all of your strength. To be conformed. To the image. Of Christ. You see.

If God is pursuing. One purpose. In your life. And you are pursuing another. There's going to be nothing. But conflict. Frustration. Disappointment.

[ 40 : 11 ] And even anger. At God. Like we saw in Jonah. No small part. Of our discontentment. In life. Christian. Our lack of peace. And joy. Can be traced right back.

To this. That my purposes. And pursuits. Are at odds. With what. God's purposes. And pursuits are. That's where the tension.

Comes. His aim. Is to make you more like Jesus. And. He sometimes uses sickness. He sometimes uses pain.

Hardship. Disease. Trials. Suffering. Loss. To bring you. Into greater conformity. To Christ. But if you're not. Pursuing likeness. To Jesus.

You'll spend the better part. Of your energies. In prayer. Trying to get out. Of the school. Of affliction. That he is using. To make you more like Christ. Instead of.

[ 41 : 07 ] Learning greater likeness. To Jesus. Instead of. Enduring. Hardship. As discipline. That you might. Share in his holiness. You'll be discouraged.

And depressed. And chafing. That things aren't going your way. God's not treating you well. And you're a bit miffed. At God. Like Jonah was.

The fact is. Things are going. Exactly the way. That God wants them. To go. And. As painful. And difficult. As they may be.

And we all have those things. In our lives. They're the very instruments. That he's using. To work together. For your good. They're the ingredients. In that delicious pie.

The painful. Disagreeable. Ingredients. That he's working together. For a. Good. And glorious. And. To make you more like Jesus. So how do you pursue.

[ 42 : 06 ] Greater likeness. To Jesus. You see. This is God's purpose. For you. How do you get on board. And pursue it. Remember what. Second Corinthians. Three eighteen. Says.

It's as we behold. The Lord's glory. That we are being. Transformed. Conformed. To the likeness of Christ. As we. As we see him. As we contemplate him.

We become like him. So are you daily. Beholding the glory of God. In the face of Jesus Christ. As he is revealed. In scripture.

This is where you meet Jesus. This is where you. Follow him through. The roads of Galilee. And. And through the streets of Jerusalem. And you see him. And as you see him.

You become like him. Which comes from the Lord. Who is the spirit. The spirit helps you read. He. He shines his light upon the page. Over your shoulder.

[ 43 : 00 ] Says look at Jesus John. Look. Look at him under stress. He's not worried. And all fretting. Look at him over here. He's being falsely accused.

He's not hitting back. Look at him here. Look how kind he is. To this prostitute. Look how. How good he is. To this Pharisee. Who's. Who's trying to trip him. And as we see him.

The spirit. Works this. Same likeness. Of him. Into us. Jesus. So are you. Are you. Daily. Coming in. And having your look. At Jesus.

Are you walking. Through life with him. Are you doing all of life. With him. You know. Those who walk with the wise. Become wise. And if you walk with Jesus. You will become like Jesus.

We become what we worship. And if you're walking. Through life. Worshiping him. And living with him. You become like him. And so Jesus says.

[ 43 : 57 ] Come to me. And take my yoke upon you. Come on. Stick your neck. Under the other side. Of this yoke. And walk with me. And learn from me. Who is.

Gentle and lowly. In heart. And you'll find rest. For your souls. We learn from him. We become like him. As we walk with him. In other words. Because. Conformity to Christ.

Is to happen. In communion with Christ. It doesn't happen. Any other way. We've got to get to Jesus. We've got to see him. We've got to walk with him. We've got to watch him.

And it's through that process. That the spirit. Makes us. More gentle and lowly. More. Forgiving like he forgives. Loving like he loves. Serving like he serves.

Doing good to others. Like he did to others. We are being conformed. To him. As we see him. So assurance.

[ 44 : 55 ] Is the application. The pursuit. And then. Lastly. We have the chief. End of man.

The chief end of man. The chief purpose. Of our existence. You see there's a. A higher motivation. For your conformity. To God's son. It's higher than. Than finding your own.

Fulfillment. In discovering. What you were meant to be. That's a glorious thing. Isn't it? To know who I am. Oh I'm image of God.

And in looking at Jesus. I see. Oh that's what I was created. To be like. And the more I become like him. The more satisfactory. Life becomes. The more. Of that. fullness.

Of shalom. And blessedness. And fruition. That becomes ours. But. There's something. Even beyond that. There's a.

[ 45 : 52 ] There's a. Higher. Motivation. Even behind. Our being conformed. To Christ. Than our own happiness. And it's given. At the end. Of verse 29. He predestined you.

To be conformed. To the image. Of his son. So that he. Might be the firstborn. Among many brothers. So God's purpose. In your salvation.

Does not terminate. On you. But upon the glory. Of his son. When God's purpose. Is fulfilled. At the end. In making you like him.

How his son. Will be glorified. You remember. Here on earth. He died in humiliation. And shame. With only a few. Ragtag followers. And he has remained.

For some. Two thousand years now. Despised and rejected. By this world. Little more than a curse word. In many hearts. But that. In that day. In the day.

[ 46 : 45 ] When we're glorified. And we. We take on. And we will bear. The full likeness. Of Jesus Christ. How the tables. Will be turned. As he is seen.

To be the firstborn. Of many brothers. That in fact. By his. Life and death. And resurrection. He was bringing. Many sons. To glory.

It wasn't seen. There on the cross. It looked like. Failure. Shame. Humiliation. But in fact. He's bringing. Many sons. To glory. In this way. In fact.

A multitude. That no man. Can number. And he is. The firstborn. The elder brother. Of this family. Of God. In the Hebrew home.

The firstborn. Was the one. To receive. The highest honor. And glory. In the home. Privilege. And there he is. On his throne.

[ 47 : 40 ] The perfect God man. Jesus Christ. Having triumphed. And gathered around him. Is the sea. Of many brothers. That he has brought. To glory. And they're all singing. Worthy.

Is the lamb. That was slain. To receive glory. And honor. And praise. For conformity. And every last. One of them. Are perfectly.

Bearing the likeness. Of their elder brother. So that he. Will become. The firstborn. Of many brothers.

Brothers who are. Looking just like him. Bearing the family likeness. Just like Jesus. And it's all because of Jesus. And in that day.

All glory. And honor. And praise. For conforming us. To his image. Will go to him. And his glorious. Work of salvation. So when we're glorified.

[ 48 : 35 ] He will be glorified. When we're fully. Conformed to the image. Of Christ. He will be honored. And that's the chief. End of man. That's the chief. Purpose. Why we draw breath. Why we get out of bed.

In the morning. To glorify him. And enjoy him. Forever. That's the ultimate. Good. For which he's working. All things together. In your life. There's more than our good.

At stake in this. There's the glory. Of God's. Eternal son. Will that not motivate us. To pursue. Greater likeness.

To Jesus. That he might be glorified. And that I might be one of those. Who are bearing that likeness. More and more in this life.

But in that day. To the honor. And the glory. Of Jesus Christ. Will that not motivate you. To kill that sin. That stubborn sin. Will that not motivate you.

[ 49 : 29 ] To move. Out. With him. In love. Aggressively. Going. After others. Taking his gospel. Our conformity. To Christ. Is to be sought then.

For the glory. Of Christ. To this end. He came. To this end. He lived and died. And rose again. To bring many sons. To glory. To that end.

He's coming again. To take us. To be to himself. And to see his glory. The glory that the father gave him. Before the creation of the world. And there we will be. A new.

A new. Human family. Who once again. Reflect the glory. Of his own image. May the Lord.

Give us a heart for it. And give us the joy. Of pursuing. What we were made to do. To his glory. And praise. Let's take our hymnals. And turn to number 460.

[ 50 : 25 ] 460. We're going to sing the second tune. And in it. We're going to cry out to God. Finish then thy new creation. Pure and spotless. Let us be.

Let us see thy great salvation. Perfectly restored in thee. Here we are. We're in process. We're here in the middle. And called. But this is where we're going. And. And it's that hope.

That raises this prayer to God. Come and finish that good work. You've begun in us. Let's stand and sing it. 4. 6. 0. The second tune.

Now father. We are. Indeed amazed. That ever you would begin. That work of salvation. In us. When we had nothing to commend ourselves. To your love. Only that which was obnoxious.

To your holiness. And to your wrath. Thank you for your grace. That chose us. And predestined us. And has called us. And justified us.

[ 51 : 28 ] Would you now. Continue that good work in us. Until we see you face to face. Lord Jesus. And that image. Is fully restored. To your eternal praise.

To our everlasting good. Now may the God of hope. Fill you with all. Joy and peace. As you trust in him. So that you may overflow with hope.

By the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.