

## LIFE'S GLORIOUS PURPOSE

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." John 4:34.

In the course of His journey through Samaria Christ came to Jacob's well near Sychar. By this famous well there took place one of the most beautiful, interesting and memorable events recorded in the Bible. It was about noon when Christ and His disciples arrived at the well. They were hot, tired, hungry and thirsty. Weary from the journey, Christ sat down on the parapet of the well, while His disciples went into the village to buy food. It was their intention for all to eat and drink together when they returned with the food. Certainly they would not be gone any longer than necessary because the Jews did not associate with the Samaritans.

Even though He was thoroughly wearied, the Saviour completely relaxed as He sat there on the old well-curb. Ere long His reverie was disturbed by the coming of a Samaritan woman to the well for the purpose of drawing water. It was very unusual for a woman to go to the well at noontide. Realizing that the other women did not want her company because of her sinful ways, she came at the hour when she thought she would be alone at the well.

Weary and depressed in spirit, this poor woman advanced toward the well with a look of disillusionment and sadness on her face. She was no longer hoping for better days. As she approached the well she espied the weary stranger resting there. With an unsympathetic gaze she stared at Christ, somewhat embarrassed and disgusted that He was sitting there. In her usual way she proceeded to let down her bucket and to draw it up full from the cool depths.

With remarkable wisdom and unusual tact, Christ made a request of her which appealed to her sympathy. He asked her to help Him by giving Him a drink. His request awakened her surprise and broke down her prejudice. That this Man, Whom she recognized as a Jew, should address her was enough to awaken her surprise. She entered freely into conversation with Him. He quickly glided from the subject of the water with which He was refreshing His own parched lips to the water which would be the life of her soul. Christ told her that the water which He gave possessed the quality of satisfying completely all who drank it. Suggesting that the thirst of her soul might be satisfied thus, He aroused her desire for the living water about which He spoke. She accepted Christ as her personal Saviour, whereupon her soul was saved and her life was transformed. In her joyous excitement she hastened home to tell others what Christ had done for her. As a result of her loving and enthusiastic testimony, many of the Samaritans believed on Christ and were gloriously saved.

Having returned to the well with the food which they had bought, His disciples urged Him to eat. He replied, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." He did not need any food. He had seen that woman saved and that was refreshment enough for Him. He had come to do the will of His Father and in the fulfilment of that task He had received what He needed. He said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."

In those unmistakable words Christ expressed His glorious purpose in life. He told His disciples His object in living. His life was the triumphant accomplishment of that glorious purpose. No other ever came into the world for such a heavenly, heroic and sublime a purpose. Hear Him say in tones that still echo: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." Christ was not drifting aimlessly down the aisles of time. He was not strolling purposelessly across the field of human history. On the far-away skyline of His eternal horizon was a goal. Nothing, not even a cruel cross, could halt, retard, divert, intimidate, discourage or keep Him back from His destined aim. A glorious purpose will impel us onward. It will energize us, put new iron in our blood, new spring in our steps and new meaning to our lives.

There is no tonic so stimulating as the clear, holy, inspiring, lifting and moving sense that you are pursuing a noble purpose on the side of God and the right. It is better to be right than to be rich. It is better to be right than to be popular. It is better to be right than to be famous.

If our lives are to be worthwhile, useful and successful, each of us must possess a commanding and worthy purpose. If a life is not ruled by a purpose, it is only existence. It lacks the traits of real life, which are earnestness and energy; it lacks the elements of real life, which are aim and action; and it will lack the desirable end of life, which is success and usefulness. A life without a purpose is doomed to failure. Purpose is life's motive power. We are not here to ornament society, but to build real lives. This requires a high aim, earnestness, diligence, persistence and hard work. Nothing worthwhile is ever attained without work.

Our wonderful Saviour and gracious Lord had one glorious purpose or aim in His life. He concentrated everything on one great end, doing the will of God. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." He cast His whole being into the work of man's redemption.

Every life should be rightly related to Christ. Your relationship to Him is the most vital one in your life. Christ is the saving, emancipating and lifting influence of the world. He brings a new life, a new light and a new glory. He stands on the shore of each life and points to heights that each one should occupy. Nobody can fight life's battles and win life's victories without Him.

Life is not a picnic; it is a conquest. It is not a game to play; it is a battle to be fought. Life is an obligation, weighty and grave. Duty may be declined, but it cannot be ignored. Duty is the last word we hear at night, and the first to greet us in the morning.

"I slept and dreamed that life was beauty,  
I woke and found that life was duty."

The duties of life are many and urgent. They spring from within and without. These duties are to be done. We cannot safely evade them. It is not a question of doing or not doing. It is a question of doing well or ill, cheerfully or grudgingly. We have been placed here on the earth to fulfil God's will in the performance of some special task. That we are here is evidence that God has a purpose for each of us. That we have special faculties, abilities and opportunities is evidence of the nature of that purpose, and it explains its character. All of us are called to do some special work, the nature of which God has defined by the talents which He has committed to us. Our callings, for which our various talents of mind and body have fitted us, have come to us through the will of God.

Life's glorious purpose carries with it a threefold obligation:

#### I. To Ourselves.

We are to take the talents with which God has endowed us and gain other talents. We are not to abuse, misuse or bury them. They are God-given and should be God-directed. We are to put the very best materials into the structure of our lives. Good material and bad material will show up later in life.

"Build it well, whate'er you do;  
Build it straight and strong and true;  
Build it clean and high and broad;  
Build it for the eye of God."

A great purpose in life will give inspiration. Men and women have been inspired by a noble and worthy purpose. To those who have a glorious purpose, life is not a drudgery

but a delight. A man returned from World War I with an arm gone. His empty sleeve was painfully noticeable to all who had known and loved him. An old friend said, "I am sorry you lost your arm." His challenging reply was, "I didn't lose it; I gave it."

It was purpose that gave Nathan Hale, standing with a halter around his neck ready to be executed, the inspiration to say, "I regret that I have only one life to give to my country." It was purpose that inspired Sam Davis, a twenty-year old, to say, when he was condemned to be hanged because of certain papers found on his person, but who was offered life if he would tell who gave the papers to him, "I would die a thousand deaths before I would betray a friend." It was the tonic of purpose that inspired Warren of Revolutionary days to take such a stand and voice such noble sentiments, when the King of England sent messengers to him offering him 30,000 pounds in gold and a commission as General if he would go over to their side. He answered, "Such as I am is not worth buying, but you go back and tell your King that there is not enough money in the Bank of England to buy me." It was a noble and inspiring purpose that possessed Latimer and Ridley when they were burned at the stake. As the flames surged around their bodies, Latimer said, "Be of good cheer, Master Ridley! For if I mistake not, these flames will light a fire that will be seen throughout England."

## II. To Others.

Yonder Christ hangs bleeding and dying on Calvary. What caused Him to leave heaven with all of its enrapturing charms and come down into a cold, cruel, mocking, scoffing, misunderstanding world? It was the inspiration of a matchless purpose to save lost souls.

Had it not been for a sense of this inescapable obligation to others in society, we would not have our great churches, schools, mission boards, orphanages, hospitals, and institutions of mercy and uplift. Men are obligated to men, women to women, pupils to teachers, teachers to pupils, parents to children and children to parents. Parents have felt this weighty obligation and have sought diligently to fulfil it. Many parents have spent sleepless nights planning for the education and proper training of their children, in order that they may be fitted for honorable and useful service.

Dr. Len G. Broughton related an experience which he had some years ago in West Virginia. At the close of an evangelistic service one evening a man went forward and shook hands with him. His large and sunburned hands indicated that he was a hard worker. He told Dr. Broughton that he had come seventy-five miles to hear him preach and to show him a letter. When seated in Dr. Broughton's room, to which he had asked to go with him, the man said, "I want you to read this letter, but before you do so, I want to tell you a story leading up to it. Wife and I live on a little mountain farm seventy-five miles back in the mountains. We grow some corn, small grain and Irish potatoes. We have but one child, a boy. We wanted to educate him. We sent him to high school, thinking that if we could get him through high school, he could make it all right. Nearly four years ago he finished high school. We went to see him graduate. The professor urged us to send him on to college, as he was a promising student and had a bright prospect for life. At home that night we stayed awake, praying and planning how we might send our boy to college. Wife said, 'I will be willing to work longer hours and sacrifice more in order that we may send him.' We sent him. He has been there four years. The other day we received a telegram from him saying that he had won first honors in his class. We did not have twenty-five cents with which to answer the telegram, but we got some paper and wrote him of our joy and how happy we were that we had sacrificed in order to send him to college. This is the letter we got in reply."

"My dear parents:

When your letter came I was busy writing my oration and getting ready

for commencement. It recalled all your privations, tears, love and sacrifices for me. I can never repay you, but I shall try to live worthily of such lives and sacrifices."

That father and mother simply felt that they had discharged their obligations to their son.

During World War I two soldiers enlisted, entered camp, went overseas, then into the trenches and over the top together with the mutual promises that if one fell and the other escaped he would rescue the fallen one. After the battle one was missing, and the other persisted in going back, and finally the Captain consented. Later the soldier who went back was carried into the Captain's presence, wounded, bleeding and dying. The Captain said, "I told you that you should not go. Was it worthwhile?" The dying soldier said, "Yes, Captain, it was worthwhile. I found my chum, picked him up and was carrying him back when a shell burst, finishing him and wounding me, but before it fell he looked up into my eyes and said, "I knew you would come if you had not fallen."

### III. To God.

Our first and most important obligation is to God. Obstacles, difficulties, stress and storms may increase, but if we are rightly related to God, they will all be mastered. Can He trust you to be faithful, dutiful and true?