

Choosing Our Life's Goal

INTRODUCTION:

1. I am tempted to say that today I want to talk about goals, but that would not be exactly true.
2. For, I really want to talk about only one goal, and it is the one goal you should choose for your life.
 - A. And in talking about this goal, I am not really going to address the career you might choose, or if you want to get married, or other goals like these that are important but subordinate goals.
 - B. For, the one goal I want to address *transcends* all of these, and ultimately guides, or even rules, us when deciding about these other matters.
3. I want to talk about this goal because:
 - A. God requires each of us to choose the right goal to live for.
 - B. The goal we choose for our lives, whether we do so purposely or not, will direct our life and determine its ultimate value to us in the end.
4. With this in mind let's talk about "choosing our life's goal."

BODY:

I. Everyone *chooses* their life's goal:

- A. This is true whether I do so with purpose or not.
 1. For, I may live my life without any thought of its goal, or end, but God still holds me accountable for this.
 - a. God will allow me to live my life in the futility, or vanity, of ignorance, but not without consequences (Eph. 4:17-18 – "So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the **futility of their mind**,¹⁸ being darkened in their understanding, **excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them**, because of the hardness of their heart").
 - i. So, I may never really know about God, think about God, or see myself as purposely rejecting God, but that does not mean I am safe.
 - ii. Ignorance of God, as the passage says, excludes one from the life God offers.
 - b. For, ignorance of God is a choice (Rom. 1:18-20 – "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,¹⁹ because **that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.**²⁰ For since the creation of the world His **invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen**, being understood through what has been made, **so that they are without excuse.**").
 2. So, God allows me to choose my goal. But what that goal is matters (Gal. 6:7 – "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man **sows**, this he will also **reap.**").
- B. Because my life's goal is mine to choose, I cannot put this on others or blame others for what my life achieves.
 1. I understand that things of this world can affect what I physically accomplish.
 - a. Unjust treatment from others, bodily harm, disease, the cards I am dealt at birth, etc., can and will affect my life.
 - b. But these things cannot force me to choose a particular goal for my life.
 2. My life's goal, the end which I seek by my life's efforts, a choice God has given to me.
 - a. We see this from the beginning when God approached Cain concerning His choice to offer a sinful sacrifice (Gen. 4:6-7 – "Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? **7 If you do well**, will not your countenance be lifted up? And **if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door**; and its desire is for **you, but you must master it.**").
 - i. There are a lot of "yous" in these verses indicating that God expected Cain to make his own choice and face the consequences, whether good or bad.
 - ii. He could choose to obey God and master sin. But if not, sin was crouching at the door like a lion ready to devour him!

- b. Israel had to choose the goal for which they would live (Deut. 30:19-20 – “I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you **life and death**, the **blessing** and the **curse**. **So choose life** in order **that you may live**, you and your descendants,²⁰ by **loving** the LORD your God, by **obeying** His voice, and by **holding fast** to Him; for **this is your life** and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.”).
 - i. Note how **life** had to be **chosen**.
 - ii. And if they did not choose life found in loving, obeying, and holding to God, they were choosing death.
 - c. This choice is ours to make today, but again, not without consequences (Rom. 6:15-16 – “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!¹⁶ Do you not know that when **you present yourselves** to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one **whom you obey**, either of **sin resulting in death**, or of **obedience resulting in righteousness?**”).
3. So, only you can determine your life’s goal, who you will obey, what kind of life you will live, but not without consequences.

II. Jesus’ life’s goal:

- A. I want to talk about Jesus because God by His grace He has provided in Jesus the perfect example to follow in choosing our life’s goal.
- B. Jesus’ example is special because:
 - 1. Jesus is the only one who ever lived before His conception and birth (Jn. 1:1-3 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with God.³ All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.”).
 - a. Jesus existed as God and with God before the world was created.
 - b. In fact, it was by Jesus that all things were created.
 - 2. He is the only one who chose his life’s goal before being born.
 - a. God knew of Jesus’ coming before the foundation of the world (1 Pet. 1:18-20 – “knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.²⁰ For **He was foreknown before the foundation of the world**, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you”).
 - b. And, it was **Christ’s Spirit** that enabled the prophets that foretold of His earthly sufferings and glory to follow (1 Pet. 1:10-11 – “As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries,¹¹ seeking to know what person or time the **Spirit of Christ within them** was indicating as **He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.**”).
- C. Jesus’ foreknowledge of His birth and the goal for His life in this world meant that Jesus **chose**:
 - 1. To become a man of flesh and blood (John 1:14 – “And the Word [Jesus] became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”)
 - a. A body of flesh was chosen to be the instrument by which Jesus would accomplish His goal in this world.
 - b. That is important because a body of flesh is the instrument given us to accomplish our goal in this world as well.
 - 2. To come and live an earthly life despite being God and **possessing** all the **wisdom, power, and glory** of God and **experiencing the wonders of heaven itself**.
 - a. So, no matter what Jesus could have been and done on this earth, even if it was to rule as the most powerful, richest, and honored earthly king, this would be a step down of incredible proportion compared to what He left behind.

- b. Yet, Jesus not only chose to live as a man, He chose his life's goal to be great suffering and a sacrificial death (Phil. 2:5-8 – “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, **did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,** ⁷ but **emptied Himself,** taking the form of a **bond-servant,** and being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by **becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**”).
 - i. That should leave us with nothing but admiration for Him.
 - ii. But it should also help us see the importance of Christ's example in helping us choose our life's goal and the encouragement it gives us to reach for it no matter what it takes to do so.
- D. Why did Jesus choose to leave heaven, become a man, and suffer so greatly in this life?
1. Without question it was about God's love for lost sinners (Jn. 3:16-17 – “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”).
 2. But Jesus' choice to take part in this went further than love for us, seeing His part required choosing the life goal of **doing God's will** (Jn. 6:38 – “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but **the will of Him who sent Me.**”).
 - a. Doing God's will required that He give his **life** as a ransom (Mt. 20:27-28 – “and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; ²⁸ just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to **give His life a ransom for many.**”).
 - b. Doing God's will required **choosing death** so **others** might **live** (1 Thess. 5:9-10 – “For God has not **destined us** for wrath, but **for obtaining salvation** through our **Lord Jesus Christ,** ¹⁰ **who died for us,** so that whether we are awake or asleep, **we will live** together with Him.”).
 - c. Doing God's will required **losing his life** to **save the lost** (Lk. 19:10 – “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”).
 3. Everything about Jesus' goal for His life in the flesh was about doing God's will so that salvation might come to sinners.

III. Choosing our life's goal:

- A. For my life to be of value, like Jesus I must accept that I was born into this world with the life goal, the life purpose, of living for God.
1. Paul preached this at Athens (Acts 17:24-31 – “The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; ²⁵ nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He **Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things;** ²⁶ and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, ²⁷ **that they would seek God,** if perhaps **they might grope for Him and find Him,** though He is not far from each one of us; ²⁸ **for in Him we live and move and exist,** as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His children.’ ²⁹ Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man. ³⁰ Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, **God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent,** ³¹ because He has fixed a **day** in which He will **judge the world in righteousness** through a **Man** whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by **raising Him from the dead.**”).
 - a. We are created for the goal of seeking and finding God and living as His children.
 - b. Therefore, all who have not lived as God's obedient child must repent or face the judgment unprepared.

2. Paul spoke of our life's purpose in relation to Jesus (Colossians 1:15-16 – “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—**all things have been created** through Him and **for Him**.”).
 - a. So, everything created, including **us**, finds its goal, its purpose, in **Jesus**.
 - b. Therefore, if Jesus is not my goal, my purpose for living, then my life is misdirected, futile, and in the end wasted.
- B. For my life's goal to be of value, like Jesus, I must follow this goal.
 1. Solomon, after living for all the pleasure, etc., the world had to offer, came to realize this and so must I (Eccl. 12:13-14 – “The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: **fear God and keep His commandments**, because this applies to every person. ¹⁴ For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.”).
 2. My salvation is dependent on following this goal.
 - a. For, Jesus saves those who obey Him (Heb. 5:8-9 – “Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. ⁹ And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him”).
 - b. But, as the Spirit said in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10, punishment awaits those who do not obey “when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels ⁸ in flaming fire, **inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God** and on **those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus**. ⁹ They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, ¹⁰ when he comes on that day to be **glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed**, because our testimony to you was believed.”
- C. And though I may not be sacrificed on a cross, like Jesus my life's goal must be to offer myself as sacrifice to God.
 1. It must be holy and acceptable (Rom. 12:1-2 – “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship**. ² And **do not be conformed to this world**, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”).
 2. It must be one offered on a cross (Matt. 16:24-27 – “Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds.”)

CONCLUSION:

1. I hope I have helped you see that:
 - A. You must decide what your life's goal will be and God will hold you accountable for it.
 - B. Your life's goal is found in Jesus, in following the path He has shown us.
 - C. Every day you are moving closer to your life's goal, whether it has been purposely chosen in serving Christ leading to hope and life, or whether you are oblivious, cruising through life, or just putting God off leading to disappointment, condemnation, and death.
2. So, will you choose the goal of **life** which is found in Jesus and only in Jesus.
3. If you are lost, if you are in sin, if you once choose the goal of life but have left it, God is pleading with you right now to make the right choice, to choose to live for Him and be saved.
 - A. So, if you are a Christian but have deviated from your life's goal, will you repent of your sins today, confess them, and seek God's forgiveness?
 - B. If you are outside of Christ, will you choose to seek out life through faith in Jesus, repenting of your sins, confessing your faith in Jesus, and by being baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins?

4. If you will choose life today, please come as we stand and sing!