

**What On Earth
Am I Here For?**

Colossians 1:15-23

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,

**and through him to reconcile to himself all things,
whether things on earth or things in heaven, by
making peace through his blood, shed on the
cross.**

**Once you were alienated from God and were
enemies in your minds because of your evil
behavior.**

**But now he has reconciled you by Christ's
physical body through death to present you holy
in his sight, without blemish and free from
accusation—**

**if you continue in your faith, established and firm,
not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.**

**This is the gospel that you heard and that has
been proclaimed to every creature under heaven,
and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.**

**"A life devoted to things is
a dead life, a stump;
a God-shaped life is a
flourishing tree."**

Proverbs 11:28

(The Message translation)

"Blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green, and they go right on producing delicious fruit."

Jeremiah 17:7-8

(New Living Translation)

**It All Starts
With God**

"For everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, rank after rank of angels-- everything got started in him and finds its purpose in him."

Colossians 1:16

(The Message)

**"It is God who directs the
lives of his creatures;
everyone's life is in his
power."**

Job 12:10

(Good News Translation)

"Obsession with self in these matters is a dead end; attention to God leads us out into the open into a spacious, free life."

Romans 8:6

(The Message)

Jesus said, "Self-help is no help at all. Self-sacrifice is the way, my way, to finding yourself, your true self."

**Matthew 16:25
(The Message)**

"God's wisdom is something mysterious that goes deep into the interior of his purposes. You don't find it lying around on the surface. It's not the latest message, but more like the oldest--what God determined as the way to bring out his best in us, long before we ever arrived on the scene."

**1 Corinthians 2:7
(The Message)**

"It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone."

**Ephesians 1:11
(The Message)**

**Question: How can I
remind myself today that
life is really about living
for God, not myself?**

Thought: It's not about me. (The purpose of your life is far greater than your own personal fulfillment, your peace of mind, or even your happiness. It's far greater than your family, your career, or even your wildest dreams and ambitions.)

**What is the Belmont
church of Christ
here for?**

We are in the process of establishing long range goals for the church. To do that we want to look at everything the church does through the lens of New Testament purpose and see how God intends for the church to balance all of those purposes.

Paul asks will it last: "The fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward"

(1 Cor 3:13-14).

To make it last Paul said it has to be on the right foundation:

"But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ"

(1 Cor 3:10-11).

Lasting growth is possible: "Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD'S purpose that prevails."

(Proverbs 19:21)

**Plans, programs, and
personalities don't
last. But God's
purposes *will* last.**

United in purpose:

**"Let there be real harmony
so that there won't be
splits in the church.... Be
of one mind, united in
thought and purpose."**

**1 Corinthians 1:10
(living Bible)**

**"Where there is no vision,
the people perish."**

Proverbs 29:18

(KJV)

A Clear Purpose Reduces Frustration:

Isaiah 26:3 (TEV)

**says that God "gives[s]
perfect peace to those
*who keep their purpose
firm* and put their trust in
[Him]."**

**A Clear Purpose or Goal
not only defines what we
do, it defines what we do
not do.**

**Note: Being efficient is not
the same as being
effective.**

**"Efficiency is *doing things
right*. Effectiveness is
doing the right things."**

Proverbs 11:27 (TEV)

**"If your goals are good,
you will be respected."**

**So, we can evaluate the
church by asking,
"What is our business?"
and then,
"How's business?"**

Homework for this week: Look for Biblical answers to 4 questions:

- 1. Why does the church exist?**
- 2. What are we to *be* as a church?
(Who and what are we?)**
- 3. What are we to *do* as a
church? (What does God
want done in the world?)**
- 4. How are we to do it?**

**Next week: Biblical
reasons for the church at
Belmont**

**"What Are We Here For?"
(part 2)**