



## DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

### Lesson 1. The Eternal Purpose of God

#### I. God Only Has One Purpose

*I the Lord do not change* (Malachi 3:6).

- A. God does not change his mind.
- B. His purpose flows out of his nature and character.

*The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations* (Psalm 33:10-11).

- C. Only the plans of God cannot be thwarted.
- D. Our lives have purpose to the extent that they line up with God's purpose.

*My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please* (Isaiah 46:10).

- E. Whatever pleases God brings pleasure to all.
- F. God's purpose will be fulfilled.
- G. We can choose whether or not to participate in the purpose of God.

*David . . . served the purpose of God in his own generation* (Acts 13:36 NAS).

#### II. The Purpose of God For Creation

- A. God's purpose was to pour his life out and see it spread until it filled all of creation. See Genesis 1:11, 20. God is love!
- B. He created beings with the ability to share in that work of reproducing life. See Genesis 1:22, 24.
- C. God created humankind to bear his image, with a unique capacity for knowing God and sharing in his work.

*So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them*  
(Genesis 1:27).

- D. We are God's friends and his partners, sharing in his image and his work.
- E. There was a Plan of Creation before there was a Plan of Redemption.

### III. The Purpose of God For His People

- A. In redemption, God has always called out a people for himself who would represent him to the rest of the world.
- B. These become God's people by entering into a covenant relationship with him. See Leviticus 26:12.
- C. Covenant-making and covenant-keeping is essential to God's own nature and character. As human beings we are designed for relationship.
- D. God made a covenant with Abraham and his family. He blessed them and called them to be a blessing to all the people on earth.

*I will make you into a great nation  
and I will bless you;  
I will make your name great,  
and you will be a blessing.  
I will bless those who bless you,  
and whoever curses you I will curse;  
and all peoples on earth  
will be blessed through you*  
(Genesis 12:2, 3).



- E. God made a covenant with the whole people of Israel. Priestly ministry is to represent God to the people and the people to God. As a nation they were to represent God to all the other nations on earth.

*Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation* (Exodus 19:5, 6).

- F. Jesus called anyone who would believe in him out of the world to be his representatives to the rest of the world. The resultant covenant community is called the "church."

*His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Ephesians 3:10, 11).

### IV. The Purpose of God For the World

- A. Ultimately the Gospel will be preached to every nation.
- B. Every people group will have a Gospel witness in their culture.

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations . . .* (Matthew 28:19).

*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come (Matthew 24:14).*

**V. Entering Into the Purpose of God**

- A. Believe that the purpose of God will always prevail. See Proverbs 19:21; Isaiah 55:11.
- B. Each one must respond with a personal commitment to his purpose. See Luke 7:30; Acts 13:36.
- C. Realize that his grace is sufficient to accomplish his purpose in our lives.

*. . . being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6; see also 2:13).*