

Monday, November 16, 2009

Of all the human endeavors in our world today, which is the most significant...from an eternity perspective? Medical science, manufacturing, agriculture, education, natural resource management, law enforcement, entertainment, athletics... what will be most important in the big scheme of things, 1000 years from now?

I'm sure you've noticed that when God came here, in the person of Jesus Christ, and lived on earth, He did not start a hospital, or a school, or a business, nor did He enter politics or train to be a world class athlete... His mission was clear: live a God honoring life, invite the world to know God, and pay the full atonement price so the human race can be rescued from their sin bondage and each of us live in relationship with God, both during our earthly life and our eternal life!! Do you agree? Now, none of us is Jesus and I'm not suggesting you or I should do the same, for none of us can pay the sin price for another...none of us has Jesus' mission for our lives. But, what of Jesus' earthly life and His life mission is a model for you and me as we live our one chance at life? Have you pondered that?

"God's work, done God's way, in God's time will have God's resources" is a phrase we've used at Calvary Church for almost three years. This weekend I attempted to help you understand it. I have a question...from what you know of the Bible and your observation in real life all around the world today, is it true? Would you agree that a fundamental theme of the entire Old Testament is God providing all that His people needed, in every generation, for them to accomplish His purposes? Do you see it also in the book of Acts and the story of those heroic Christ followers in the first century Roman Empire? Do you see it the great biographies of God honoring men and women who have shaped our world in the past 4 millennia? Have you seen it in your lifetime?

Fundamental question: what is God's work as you view the world today...for you, me and all Christ followers? What is God's purpose, what does He desire to see accomplished in our world in our generation? What will be most important 1000 years from now? Consider John 17:4; Acts 13:36; Micah 6:8 and Matthew 28:18-20. What do you conclude God is saying to us about the "work" He wants us to be accomplishing?

Tuesday, November 17, 2009

Yesterday I concluded by asking you to consider Jesus' statement of "mission accomplishment" (John 17:4) and also *"when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep..."* (Acts 13:36). Have you ever given much thought to what your God given purpose is, in your generation? What legacy will you leave after you've written your life story? Many people assume life is a gift to them and they are free to do with it as they please, for their own enjoyment, with little regard to the larger picture. Is that how you see God's design for life?

God repeatedly stated to His people Israel that their existence was to show God to the world! *"Then the nations will know that I am God, when I show Myself holy through you before their eyes."* (Ezekiel 36:23) Remember God's promise to Abraham as He launched the Jewish nation...*"all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."* (Gen. 12) God's overall purpose then and now is that every human being has an opportunity to know Him, choose to accept His love for them, and live in a love relationship with God for this earthly life and all eternity. It's quite simple really! And the obvious conclusion then is that each person has the privilege of discerning how God wants to work through his or her life to help as many people in the world as possible come to know God and live in loving, fulfilling relationship with Him, and transition into life after death with certainty that they are spending eternity with God. Does that seem to be God's passion as you know God?

So...how does your life fit into that? Regardless of your career choice or your age or your gender or your marital status...how do you see your life being in "lock step" with God's overall passion for the human race in your generation? In who you are, in what you do for a living, in the social circles you run, how do you see God reaching to our world THROUGH YOU to draw as many people as possible to a wonderful life with Him?

Consider Matthew 28:18-20. Jesus commissioned His friends to a very specific mission! Or Ephesians 4:11-16. God calls me and Calvary leaders to specifically equip you to serve our world! Ephesians 2:10 is God's clear statement that He has been preparing you for specific needs in our world. So how do you and I "make the most of every opportunity" (Eph. 5:15,16)??

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

This week we're wrestling with *God's work done God's way in God's time will have God's resources*. Do you believe it's true and do you see how God has designed you to fit into this statement?

God's Way...how do you and I do 'God's work' in 'God's way'? Part of the reason for the 10 Commandments and the Old Testament "law" was to show the world the dramatic difference between living a God honoring life and living a normal human life! Why do we have laws, law enforcement people, judges, juries, prisons, and even the death penalty in our world? Because "God's Way" is not the normal way nor even the preferred way for most people to live...and the result is pain and too often death to lots of people as "man's inhumanity to man" runs wild in our world...do you agree?

'God's way' begins in your heart! David was passionate about this: *"create in me a clean heart O God"* (Psalm 51:10); *"give me an undivided heart O God"* (Psalm 86:11); *"Delight yourself in the LORD and He will give you the desires of your heart"* (Psalm 37:4). David's son, Solomon, must have learned from his daddy...*"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life"* (Prov. 4:23)

God instructed Moses to tell the people *"Love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength"* (Deut. 6:5). Jesus quoted this (Luke 10:27) and then added *"and love your neighbor as yourself"* as a defining statement of "God's Way" to live!

Several times in the upper room with His friends on the night before His crucifixion, Jesus explained how to do God's work in God's way...*"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done": "As I have loved you, so you should love one another. By this all men will know you are My disciples" (John 13). "If anyone loves Me he will obey My teaching...He who does not love me will not obey My teaching." (John 14)*

"I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing." (John 15) *"The Spirit will guide you..." (John 16)*. God's work is done God's way when you and I live in close relationship with Jesus and He is guiding us, teaching us, empowering us, protecting us as we live fulfilling His mission for us! Are you?

Thursday, November 19, 2009

Time...what a remarkable thing. You can't speed it up, slow it down, or spend it more than once! Every day, moment, second is a "one use only" gift from God. Yes a gift, because you can't buy it, earn it, or negotiate for more of it! God creates Time and gives some of it to you...second by second, with no assurance of how much of it He will entrust to you! So, how do you assess the value of time, and in your lifetime what has been time well spent and what has been time wasted?

Psalms 139 is, of course, one of the great passages of the Bible which describes how you came into existence, and then "all the days ordained for me are written in Your book before one of them came to be" (Ps 139:16). Does God know exactly how much time He will give you? Yes! He can see, before you are born, the moment in which your earthly journey will come to an end, and He knows the plan He'd love to work to full accomplishment in your life. I realize Jeremiah 29:11 is God's specific word to Israel when in captivity, but it seems consistent with His individual work in the lives of countless Bible characters, and you and me!

How often do you become impatient with God? You've noticed, I'm sure, that almost always God's "timetable" is not the same as yours?! God 'keeps time' with an eternity time clock. Events and even lives are part of a much larger eternal story, His story! (have you read John Eldredge's EPIC?) You and I tend to view life in such bite size pieces... seasons (summer), weeks and days, even hours and now "real time"! Have you noticed God rarely rushes? If you like history, the Kings and Chronicles in the Bible are great accounts of God working in His people over the centuries!

And yet, God is very concerned about now, today, for 80,000+ people each day are passing into eternity, many of them into an eternity separated from the God Who made and loves them! God cries out "turn, turn, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked" (Ez. 33:11). Each day many make choices that ruin the rest of their lives. Ephes. 5:15,16 is key: "be very careful then, how you live, not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil." The more you get to know Jesus, you'll discern the best use of His time entrusted to you.

Friday, November 20, 2009

God's work, done God's way, in God's time will have God's resources". What are "God's resources" which He provides to His people to do His work, in His way and in His time?

Well, of course TIME is one of those great resources, and we discussed it yesterday. What is your eternal perspective?

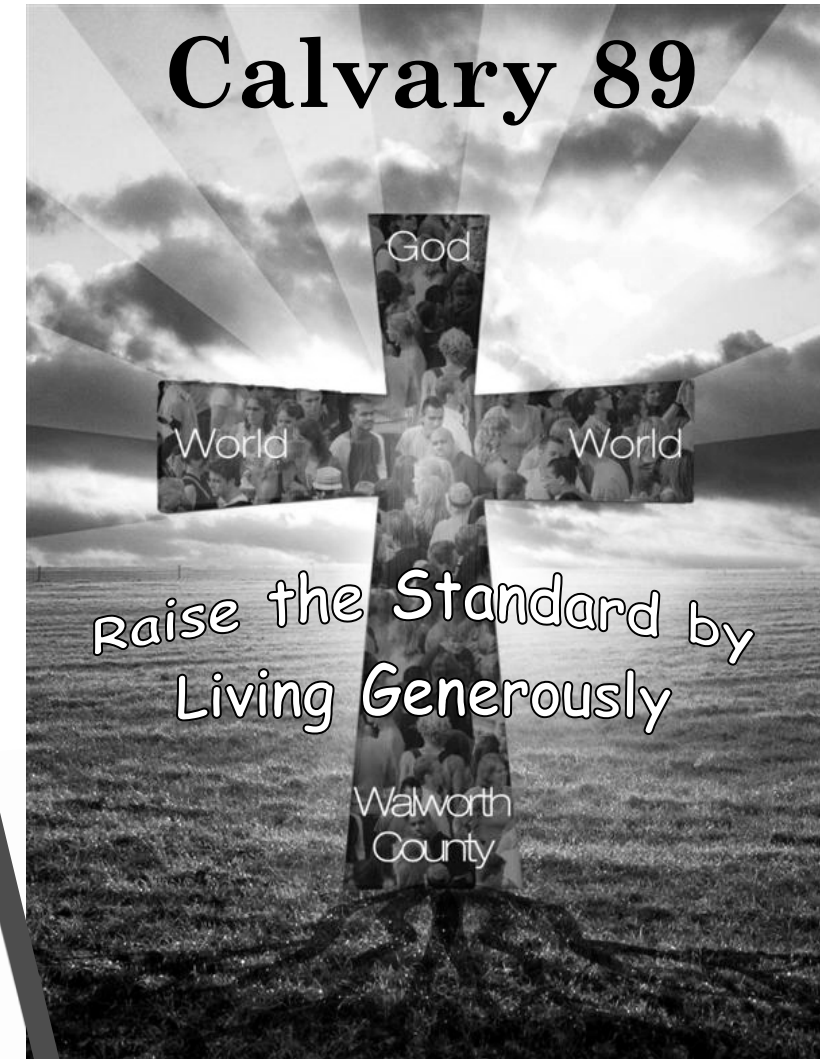
TALENT is another great gift from God. Each of us is born with ability to learn music or carpentry or technology or almost anything. But, deep inside you have passions and interests that combine with remarkable ability to do some things exceptionally well. What is that for you? How are you using it for "God's work, done God's way in God's time"? But there's more...GIFTS, spiritual gifts entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:11-16 teach us about these God given gifts that are intended to be identified, developed and used...both within the Church and outside in the world...for significant contribution to God's purpose! What are yours and how are you maximizing their potential? Service, leadership, mercy, teaching, encouragement, financially contributing to meet the needs of others or accomplishment of kingdom purposes, and more are some of those spiritual gifts. Which are yours? Do you know?

As followers of Jesus, we form His Church, God's family, each with a particular "fit", in which your unique personality, passion and giftedness is used of God to fill a special role in making the 'body' healthy and effective. So, what's your fit? Don't know...contact Pastor Chuck or myself!

Now finally, financial resources...it's all God's right? He will entrust some to you in your lifetime. Your privilege and mine is to discern how HE wants us to use it all...EVERY PENNY! Anything we spend without checking with God may be mis-management, maybe even stealing from God! God's provision of daily manna in the desert for 40 years is a powerful example of His daily provision for your need and mine. Note Exodus 36:1-7 and His overflow provision for the Tabernacle, or 1 Chronicles 29 and the Temple! Consider Acts 2:42-47 and 4:32-37 and 11:27-30 as examples of Christian giving meeting the needs of those within and outside their local church. Finally Luke 12:13-34 and 1 Timothy 6: 6-10. What is God saying to you my friends?

Pastor Doug Anderson

November 16 - 20, 2009



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