

God's Purposes

by Anton Bosch

God's ultimate purpose is Himself, to bring glory to God, and our goal should be to glorify Him in everything we do and say.

Scripture: Exodus 20:3, Psalm 19:1, Zechariah 14:16, Matthew 6:9, Luke 2:14, John 5:39, Romans 1:21, Romans 11:33, Colossians 1:16, 1 Timothy 1:17, Revelation 21:6

Topics: "Gods Sovereignty", "Divine Glory"

Description

Anton Bosch delves into the ultimate purpose of God in His dealings with mankind, emphasizing that God's highest purpose is Himself, not centered around man or the church. The focus is on bringing glory to God, with all things created through Him and for Him, so that He may have preeminence. The goal of all things is to exalt God as the Supreme Being, entitled to the center stage of the universe.

Transcript

What does the Bible reveal about God's ultimate purpose in his dealings with mankind? What is the theme that runs from Genesis through Revelation and that transcends both testaments?

Some may say it is Jesus Christ. That is true - the whole of Scripture reveals Him. He appears on every page and Jesus Himself said that the Scriptures speak of Him. (John 5:39). But what is God trying to achieve through Jesus? What is that ultimate purpose?

Many say that God's ultimate purpose is to save man and that the Bible is the account of God's great plan of salvation. Some even refer to it all as "redemptive history" - the account of God working out His plan of salvation for man. This view is very popular, but is it true?

Personally, I have a problem with that idea. Yes, we read about God's attempts to save man, in spite of himself, from the very first pages. But what has His dealings with Israel to do with that purpose? If His purpose is to save man, then why did He not go straight to the nations, rather than spend two thousand years dealing with Israel first? And what did the two thousand years between Adam and Abraham have to do with that purpose?

The problem is that if God's ultimate and highest purpose is to save man, then God is man-centered and not God-centered. This makes man an idol to God and that surely cannot be. Yes, we like to think that it all revolves around us and that everything that God does is about us, our salvation and our ultimate

happiness. But that kind of thinking takes us straight back to the garden where Satan tempted Eve to think about things from her perspective, rather than God's.

Others will say that the church - the bride of Christ - is God's highest purpose. For them everything revolves around the church and the church is the ultimate end of all of God's dealings with mankind. But that is also not true since it once-again makes us, the members of the church, the focal point and makes Old Testament saints inferior since they are not part of the church.

Unfortunately, modern Christianity has become so man-centered so that the Lord and His purposes hardly figure in any of our thinking. It has all become about us and what God can and does for us. We have forgotten that the highest of all beings is God Himself. He is greater than you and me and He is greater than the church. God himself said that we should not have any other gods before or next to Him (Exodus 20:3). To many their salvation, the church or themselves have become things they worship and that has become the end of all things.

But God is the end and center of all things. "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him? For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen" (Romans 11:33-36).

Look at the end of that verse again. "...of Him and through Him and to Him are all things". He is the source of everything, everything has to be done through Him and most importantly, all things are to Him. This means He is the purpose and end goal of all things. Jesus said "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End" (Revelation 21:6). Everything begins and ends with Him, not with me, you, the church or our salvation.

Colossians 1:16-18 says: "All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence." There is the key - all things are so that He might have the preeminence - that He might be the first, the only, and the most important of all. 1Corinthians 8:6 says: "there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him". Did you get that? We are for Him and His purpose, not the other way around.

So God's highest purpose is Himself. This does not make God selfish or prideful. He is the Supreme Being and He is the First, the All-in-all. Thus He is entitled to the preeminence. What makes man's self-centeredness wrong is the fact that man is not entitled to being the centre of the universe - that is God's place and when we place ourselves there, we usurp God's position.

To be more specific, the ultimate goal of all things is to bring glory to God. The angels exist to give Him glory and even the earth was not created as a wonderful place for man, but rather to give glory to God: "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1). Man was created to glorify God but rather "although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God... and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man..." (Romans 1:21,23).

In the Millennium we will see Jesus restored to His rightful place as King of Kings and Lord of Lords as He becomes the focus and Sovereign of the whole world. "And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the

Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 14:16).

Even Heaven, the New Jerusalem, is not about us as many think. Heaven is about the Lord and about the worship of the Almighty. The glories of the New Jerusalem are not primarily for our enjoyment, but are a perfect setting to reveal the Glory of the Great King, just as a ring is crafted to display the glory of the stone it houses.

When the angels announced the arrival of the man Jesus, they did not begin their announcement with the words "mankind is so fortunate", no, they began by saying "Glory to God in the highest" (Luke 2:14). Jesus, in giving a model for prayer opens with bringing glory to the name of God and closes with "Yours is... the glory for ever" (Matthew 6:9-13). Almost every book in the New Testament contains the words "to whom be glory forever and ever" yet, we never pay it much attention to those words.

Creation, man, our salvation and the church are not the end goal. These things are all simply there to bring Glory to the One who is the source and end of all things. God's goal should be our goal as well. Everything we do and say should have one purpose - to glorify Him. If we do things for any other purpose we have lost the point of it all.

Does every aspect of your life glorify God?

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen (1Timothy 1:17).

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