

Finding One's Mission

by J.R. Miller

To find our mission in life, we must put ourselves under God's specific guidance, listen to our conscience, and watch Providence, focusing on the present moment and the duties He brings to our hand.

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, Jeremiah 29:11, Ephesians 2:10

Topics: "Divine Purpose", "Guidance from God"

Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes that God has a unique mission for each individual, designed to fulfill a specific purpose in life. He asserts that true fulfillment comes from aligning with God's plan rather than pursuing personal ambitions. Miller encourages believers to seek God's guidance through prayer, scripture, and attentiveness to their daily responsibilities, as these lead to discovering one's mission. He reminds us that every role, no matter how small, holds significance in God's eyes, and that we should focus on fulfilling our current duties rather than worrying about the future. Ultimately, a life well-lived is one that faithfully follows God's direction, step by step.

Transcript

One of the most inspiring of truths, is that God has a distinct plan for each one of us in sending us into this world. Not only does He create us all to be useful, to take some part in the world's affairs, to honor and glorify him in some way--but he designs each person for some definite place and some specific work. He does not send us into life merely to fill any niche into which we may chance to be lifted by the vicissitudes of life; or to do whatever bits of work may drift to our hands in the vast and complicated mesh of human affairs. God has a great plan, embracing "all his creatures and all their actions;" and in this plan every person has an allotted place, and an assigned part. God has, therefore, a distinct plan and purpose for each one of us; and a true life is one in which we simply fulfill the divine intention concerning us, occupy the place for which we were made, and do the particular work set down for us in God's plan.

A distinguished preacher has said, "There is a definite and proper end and outcome for every man's existence, an end which to the heart of God, is the good intended for him, or for which he was intended; that which he is privileged to become, called to become, ought to become; that which God will assist him to become, and which he cannot miss except by his own fault. Every human soul has a complete and perfect plan cherished for it in the heart of God--a divine biography marked out, which it enters into life to live."

Surely this is a great thought, and one that gives to life--to each and every life, the smallest life, the obscurest life--a sacred dignity and importance. Nothing can be trivial or common, which the great God thinks about, plans, and creates. The lowliest place in this world, to the person whom God made to occupy that place, is a position of rank and honor, as glorious as an angel's seat, because it is one which God formed an immortal being in his own image, and with immeasurable possibilities, to fill. George MacDonald says, "I would rather be what God chose to make me--than the most glorious creature that I could think of; for to have been thought about, born in God's thought, and then made by God--is the dearest, grandest, and most precious thing in all thinking."

The question of small or great has no place here. To have been thought about at all, and then fashioned by God's hands to fill any place--is glory enough for the grandest and most aspiring life. And the highest place to which anyone can attain in life--is that for which he was designed and made. The greatest thing anyone can do in this world--is what God made him to do, whether it be to rule a kingdom, to write a nation's songs, or to keep a little home clean and tidy. The true goal of life is not to be great, or to do great things--but to be just what God meant us to be. If we fail in this, though we win a place far more conspicuous, our life is a failure.

An intensely practical question, therefore, is, How may we find our place--the place for which God made us? How can we learn what he wants us to do in his great world, with its infinity of spheres and occupations? How may we be sure that we are fulfilling our part in God's great plan? In the olden days, men were sometimes guided to their missions by special revelation. In the absence of such supernatural direction, how may we know what God made us for?

It is very clear, for one thing, that we must put ourselves under God's specific guidance. We get this lesson from Christ's perfect life. He did only and always his Father's will. On his lips continually were words like these: "I must work the works of him who sent me;" "I came not to do my own will--but the will of him who sent me." Even in the garden, in the hour of his bitterest agony, it was, "Nevertheless not my will--but yours, be done."

Moment by moment he took his work from his Father's hand--he had no plans of his own. He knew there was a definite part in the Father's great plan which belonged to him--and he wished only to do that.

If we would find our mission, and fill our allotted place, and do the work assigned to us--we must do God's will, not our own. All our personal ambitions must be laid at his feet, all our plans submitted to him, either to be accepted, and wrought into his plan, or set aside for his better way. If we have truly given ourselves to God--we have nothing to say about the disposal of our lives; they are in his hands to do with as he pleases. If he interrupts us in our favorite pursuits, or breaks into our plans with some other work, or by laying us aside for a time--we should not chafe or fret. Our time belongs to him, and he knows what he wants us to do any day. If we are truly taking our life's direction from him--we must always be ready to forego our schemes and plans, and take instead whatever he allots. This is where the hardest battle has to be fought, for we are reluctant to give up our personal ambitions. But when we have gotten thus far along, what remains is not so hard. One who is really ready to do God's will, and be just what God wants him to be, will surely in some way be led into his true place.

As for the direction itself, God gives it in many ways. The Bible is the basis of all right living. There we learn the divine will--and our duty. No one can ever find his allotted place in God's plan--who does not follow the divine commandments. There is no use asking about our mission, unless we are walking in the

straight and clean paths marked out by the Holy Scriptures.

For specific guidance at points along the way, conscience, the voice of God in our own soul, must be listened for continually, and promptly and affectionately heeded. Providence also must be watched. God opens doors and closes doors. He brings us face to face with duties. He leads us up to opportunities. If we are ready to be guided, and have a clear eye for the handwriting of Providence, we shall not fail to be directed in the path on which God wants us to walk.

People sometimes chafe because, in their circumstances, they cannot do any great things; as if nothing could be really a divine mission--unless it is something conspicuous. A mother, occupied with the care of her little children, laments that she has no time nor leisure for any mission that God may have marked out for her. Does she not know that caring well for her children may be the grandest thing that could be found for her in all the range of possible duties? Certainly for her hands, for the time at least, there is nothing else in all the world so great. Organizing missionary meetings, speaking at conventions, attending charitable societies, writing books, painting pictures-- these are all fine things when they are the things God gives; but, if the mother neglects her children to do any of these, she has simply put out of her hands the greatest things--to take up those which are exceedingly small. In other words, that which the Master gives anyone to do--is always the grandest work he can find. The doing of God's will for any moment--is ever the sublimest thing possible for that moment.

Another thing to be remembered in asking after one's mission, is that God does not usually map it all out at the beginning for anyone. When the newly converted Saul accepted Christ as his life's Master, and asked what he should do, he got for answer, only that moment's duty. He was to arise, and go into the city; and there he would learn what to do next. That is the way the Lord generally shows men what their mission is--just one step at a time, just one day's or one hour's work now--and then another and another as they go on.

A young man at school grows anxious about what he shall do after he completes his course, what profession he shall choose, and frets and worries because he can get no guidance. He wonders why God does not make his duty plain to him; but what has the young man to do now with his profession or life-calling, when it must be years yet before he can enter upon it? His present duty is all he has to think of now; and that is simply to attend diligently and faithfully to his studies, to make the best possible use of his time and opportunities. One step at a time is the way God leads. One day's duty well done--fits for the next.

A young school-girl is sorely perplexed over the problem of her life-duty -- ought she to go to a foreign-mission field, or devote herself to work at home? It will take her at least five years to complete the course of education on which she has just entered. Very clearly she has nothing to do, as yet--with the question which is causing her such perplexity. Her present duty is all that concerns her at the present time; and that is, to lay broad and strong foundations for a thorough education. What her ultimate mission in this world may be--God will show her in due time; about her mission just now--there need not be a moment's perplexity, for it is very plain. She has just to do well each day's routine of work, spending her time in diligent study.

Common duties are the steps that lead upward and heavenward. God lights only one step of the path at a time; but, as we take that step, the light falls on another, and so on and on, thus lighting the whole path for our feet--until we are led at last to the gate that opens into heaven!

The way, therefore, to find out what God's plan is for our life, is to surrender ourselves to him in simple consecration, and then take up, hour by hour, the plain duties he brings to our hand. Do not worry about our mission as a whole; our only concern is with the moment we are now living, and the thing God wants us now to do. If each hour's work is faithfully done--we shall have at the last, a whole life-work faithfully done. If we neglect the duties of the common-place days while waiting for our mission, we shall simply throw our lives away, and utterly fail to fulfill the purpose of our creation.

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