

God has a “why”

Sermon Synopsis: God’s purpose is to unite everything in Christ, giving us an exciting framework to live from. Theme: purpose

Ephesians 1:9-10 (ESV)

making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

Simon Sinek: start with why.¹ What you do must be fueled by why you’re doing it.

To truly find meaning, your plan must have a purpose.

God has a plan

which he set forth in Christ as **a plan** (Ephesians 1:9)

Plan: these are the details, decisions, actions, etc. (good examples: love neighbor)

This is where we can get hung up: Should I do _____, or _____?

This is also where cold religiously happens: I guess I’ll go to church.

This is where we get burnt out and tired: Why am I doing this?

See...God has a purpose too.

God’s purpose drives God’s plans

making known to us the mystery of his will, **according to his purpose**, (Eph 1:9, ESV)

The purpose fuels the plan. The purpose fuels everything God does.

And if we could wrap our hearts around it, it would motivate us too. *illust: why dad? Cause I said so!*

We need a why. A purpose.

His purpose:

to unite all things in him things in heaven and things on earth.

Unite (ἀνακεφαλαιόω - anakephalaíomai)

- I. Translated in the ESV as “unite,” it’s literal meaning is to “sum up.”
 - A. Context: orators that would sum up their argument.
 - B. To sum up meant to condense into a summary.
 1. Example: Romans 13:9
 2. *illust:* ever known someone who can just say what needs to be said in one or two words? **LASER**. They can bring together a lot of complex and seemingly contradicting ideas into a simple phrase. That’s what’s going on.
 3. Only in this case, it’s being said about the universe. God’s plan is to “sum up” or “to bring together” the universe.
 - a) Paul is saying, God’s plan is to bring order to everything.²

Examples of “everything” that God is ordering

1. CREATION

Hebrews 1:3 (ESV)

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

2. INSTITUTIONS

The poor

When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. (Leviticus 19:9-10)

Babel

Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.” (Genesis 11:4, NIV)

vs.

Pentecost

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them...we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” (Acts 2:4,11, NIV)

Elitism/classism

In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions³ among you, and to some extent I believe it. (1 Corinthians 11:18, NIV)

vs.

Community

So then, my brothers and sisters, when you gather to eat, you should all eat together. (1 Corinthians 11:33, NIV)

3. RELATIONSHIPS

Ephesians 2:14 (ESV)

For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility

1. YOU

Psalms 23:3 (ESV)

He restores my soul.

Soul (Nephesh) = the whole person⁴

Psalms 119:175 (NIV)

Let me (nephesh) live that I may praise you

<-- let my whole being praise you.

On some of our minds when we see the world is *how* does he do this?

I. I love ice cream.

A. It turns out, ice cream is pretty complex. It involves two liquids that don't mix.

1. What you need is an emulsifier.

a) Emulsifiers are molecules with one water-loving (hydrophilic) and one oil-loving (hydrophobic) end. They make it possible for water and oil to become finely dispersed in each other, creating a stable, homogenous, smooth emulsion.⁵

(1) We need an emulsifier too.

(a) Our souls are disintegrating, our relationships are broken, our institutions are unjust, and as Paul says, "creation was subjected to frustration."

i) We need someone who can take two disparate entities that don't mix well and bring them together. JESUS!!!!

GOOD NEWS

to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. (Eph 1:10b)

PREACH: ways Christ puts our lives together.

Why is this talk about God's grand purpose so important? I've got things to do! Why spend so much time pontificating about comic realities, when I have to pay rent, go to work, deal with this conflict, assess this situation, etc?

Because without a large framework directing WHY you do what you do, you can get lost.
Without purpose you can get lost in your plans.

Without a destination, you can get lost in the details. F&C: engineering & design

Ex: research shows that not having a sense of purpose is highly discouraging at work.⁶

Those who cannot connect their work to a larger meaning can feel burnt out, unfulfilled.
Why? Because we were hardwired with eternity on our hearts.⁷

Identity is formed when God's purpose drives your plans

God has a "why." God has a purpose, not only cosmically, but for you.

God is uniting all things in Christ, and YOU get to be a part of that.

It's all in your perspective.

Problem: we don't see how God's comic activity to unite all things relates to the mundane and the ordinary in our lives. Solution: invite him in! (through prayer of awareness).

Begin to ask questions that develop our awareness of God in what we do:

Jesus, what do you want to do in this situation?

Jesus, what do you want to do in this relationship?

Jesus, what do you want to do in this suffering?

Jesus, what do you want to do in me?

[BAND COME UP]

Examen

¹ Simon Sinek. How Great Leaders Inspire Action. TED. September 2009. https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action?language=en Accessed on September 3, 2019

² Frank Theilman. *Ephesians*. (ECNT; Baker Academic, 2010). 67

³ For context on these divisions, see 1 Corinthians 1:11-12; 3:4; 4:6-7

⁴ See "Nephesh" The Bible Project. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_igCcWAMAM

⁵ Food-Info. What are emulsifiers and why are they used? <http://www.food-info.net/uk/qa/qa-fi63.htm>

⁶ Daniel H. Pink. *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*. (Riverhead, 2009). 129-145

⁷ Ecclesiastes 3:11