

Intro: Watching morning TV on NY Day and saw an interview with Bill O' Riley. Asked him if he would ever run He gave an amazing answer... (Didn't say NO!) But he did say, "Right now I am doing just what God put me on earth to do! When I heard that I thought wow, what an amazing answer...and so very different from most of what you hear!

As we finish up the series "God's Greatest Gifts" I want to talk with you about one final gift that God gives each of us... At least those of us who are willing to search for it. God Gives us PURPOSE:

PURPOSE: *the reason for which something is done or created or for which something exists*

The reason O'Riley's statement made such an impact on me was not just WHAT he said, but HOW: Confidence!!! I KNOW why I am here...what I am supposed to be doing with my life...and I am doing it!

As we finish the series and start a new year...I want to ask you: Can you say with confidence...

"Right now I am DOING just what God put me on the earth to do!" Do you know your Purpose? If not...This sermon is for you!

Gift #6: Purpose Eccl 3:1-22

4 Questions That Help You Determine Your Purpose

1 Am I Living For MORE Than Today, Or Just Living?

Vs 11b

- As we start a new year, if we are honest...some of us are just living, just getting by! Get up, Work, Sleep, Play...@
- For some of us, The words of vs 1-8 are true...There is a time for Everything:
- Vs 9: But not everything produces something of value: **Gain:** lit = *something of lasting significance*
Sometimes what we discover is that we do what is before us...but it doesn't matter at all! Tomorrow forgotten
- What we should be living for is found in Vs 11b: "He has also set eternity in the hearts of men."

There is something in everyone's heart that says, I want to do something that will last, something that matters, something that will truly touch eternity. I want my life to have mattered when I exit this world...even if it is just in the life of one other

Reality is, We all live for SOMETHING!

- **Pleasure:** Life is all about what we have, enjoy, love, feel good about...what makes ME happy
- **Protection:** Life is about protecting myself and the ones I love. Creating a safe, secure, untouchable life. (Nothing wrong with enjoying life...God wants us to: Nothing wrong with protecting family...as much as we can...) But shouldn't life be about something more than that? Something bigger than just what I want, desire, makes me happy? Shouldn't my life count for something in the life of others? When I'm gone shouldn't the world be less?
- **Purpose:** Life *IS* about something bigger than me...bigger than you...bigger than pleasure and protection!
Life is about making a difference, being significant...bringing glory to God and fulfilling His purpose
That is why Solomon writes, God has put ETERNITY in our hearts...we want to MATTER!
Purpose is an amazing Gift from God!
When you can say...I am doing JUST what God put me on this earth to do...I am fulfilling my purpose:
Not only does it bring an incredible satisfaction to YOUR soul...It touches and makes a difference in the life of others.

Q:#1: Am I living For MORE than Today, Or Am I Just Living?

If you are "just living" You aren't really living...you are like the Zombies...the walking dead! Here, not alive!

2. Am I Doing GOOD With My Life, Or Just Doing?

Vs 12

Ec 3:12 "I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live."

Illus: I remember one day a couple of years ago at the end of a long day of CityServe: working on church Not This one! WB Looked at steeple, paint, sanctuary carpet, outside landscaping...Everyone was gone...Jim, you and I in parking lot Jumped in truck, went down to WB Fire Dept...talked with the firefighters...I had not done the work...helped vision, direction, resourcing...doing what I do...

Thought on the way home "THIS is what its all about!"

Today, years later...Ben O'Neal, a young man who grew up in this church Pastors there...peoples lives are being changed

Mic 6:8 "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

- Doing good is not always "spiritual" Painting a wall
- Doing good is not always recognized or applauded Never seen
- Doing good is seldom for yourself...usually for others! Someone in need
- Doing good usually requires a sacrifice on your part! Costs you something
(Time, Resources, Energy, Gifts, Personal desires)

Illus: Think of Food Pantry, Tyler Heights, CityServe, BOB breakfast, Mission Trip, Prayer Group,

Every single one of them requires an investment from you! You have to take your Saturday, your evening, your time off You have to sacrifice your money, your time, your talents...Pour it all into someone else!

And it is often hard, an unappreciated, and unrecognized, and un applauded.

But here is what I know...On the way home...somewhere within, where it really matters, still small voice: Well done!

And at that point...it is all worth it! (Facebook invitation to church...from Edgewater Bible Church: Smiled)

3. Am I Finding Satisfaction In My Work, Or Just Working?

Eccl 3:13

- Don't get me wrong! Nothing wrong with working. Protecting your family, earning a living. God expects you to!
- Thess: Make it your goal to work and to lead a quiet life, If a man wont work, then don't feed him!
- But life has to be about MORE than Just work! There needs to be a level of Satisfaction/Joy/Fulfillment/Happy

Ec 3:13 *"That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil-- this is the gift of God."*

Find **Satisfaction**: Lit = to see or experience the joy/satisfaction/pleasure of something that you have done!

Illus: I remember when I was in bible college running a little painting business: cousin came;

I had a habit when I was finished...walking around...admiring...touching up, seeing what had been accomplished!

Now, I don't want to be offensive, and I am in no way demeaning work. Adam told to care for garden...Good thing
But don't you think God had a little bit bigger picture than taking care of some fruit trees?

Don't you think that God has something more significant for you to do than just program, paint, bid, sell, buy?

God put you here for a reason. When you find that reason, begin to live it out, you will be amazed at the joy!

1Co 10:31 *So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*

When you begin to do WHATEVER you do with an eye to how do you bring glory to God in doing it...

How do you honor Him, Point people to Him, Live for Him, Use what you do for Him...

Illus: Some of the people that work with you, play ball with your kids, live next to you, are at the gym beside you

They will NEVER darken the door of this church..or any other...The ONLY way to reach them is YOU!

Do you have that sense of satisfaction in your work? ...And at Home...And in your ministry here at Church?

If you are missing that then you are missing the best part of knowing God!!

When was the last time you walked out of a ABS class, or Group and thought..I HELPED that person?

When was the last time you prayed...and felt...THAT made a difference?

When was the last time you gave...realized...lives will be touched, people will be saved...God will be honored?

When was the last time you realized...GOD USED ME!!! TOUCHED SOMEONE...MADE A DIFFERENCE?

4. What Am I Doing That Will Last In Eternity?

Eccl 3:14

Ec 3:14 *I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it.*

You realize of course that most of what we spend our life doing will not last 50 years...much less for eternity right?

Illus: I remember building the very first building here at RTBC. It was an incredible undertaking...

I still have the results of our first Capital Campaign: 1st 20 weeks: 18,600, Next 24 months: 44,760 total (\$63,360)

About 6 months to get plans, receive permit, clear property and pour foundation and slab so builders could help

And we did it! Poured slab on Wed, and crew started showing up on Friday.

Such a big deal to me, when we poured the footers took a nail and wrote my name, put up steeple...wrote inside

It was going to last forever, I mean...when does a foundation for a church ever go away? Oh, about 15 years and 3mil

Building is gone...but guess what remains...People that came to Jesus there...some of YOU...

Baptisms that took place, weddings that were performed, funerals that were held...People that were touched...CONTINUE

One of them...Ben O'Neal; Now a pastor 20 years later...touching lives...leading people to Jesus...touching eternity

Here is the final and most important question of all: What Am I Doing that will touch eternity?

If, when you survey your life, you cant find anything...there is NO place where your life influences and touches others in a positive spiritual way, I want to challenge you to make 2016 the year that takes place.

Because you see, without that...you are fulfilling the words of Solomon in Eccl 318-21....NO better than the animals

CONCL: But...when you find YOUR place...When YOUR life counts...

- Living for MORE than just today
- Doing GOOD instead of just doing Stuff
- When you are finding SATISFACTION
- When you are doing something that LASTS

THIS is what it sounds like!

Jennifer Phipps

Jim Martin

If you haven't found it yet...Don't just live...and wait...and let another year pass you by

PRAY:

1. Identify what you value
2. Identify where you are passionate
3. Evaluate your talents and gifts...where can I contribute
4. Describe your legacy (How do you want to be remembered)
5. Go to work!