

# Don't Lose Focus of the Goal

by Phil Beach Jr.

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*God's ultimate intention is to save us for His glory and to secure a life that will blossom into a harvest of praise and glory.*

**Scripture:** John 5:19, Romans 8:17, 1 Corinthians 9:25, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 1:3

**Topics:** "Gods Purpose", "Eternal Plan"

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## Description

Phil Beach Jr. preaches about God's ultimate intention in saving us, emphasizing the importance of aligning our lives with God's divine purpose rather than focusing on self-centered desires. He highlights the need to surrender completely to God's will, allowing Him to work in us to fulfill His eternal plan. The sermon delves into the splendor of God's eternal purpose, revealing how God's salvation plan aims to bring glory to Himself and gather all things in Christ. It challenges believers to shift from a man-centered view of life to a God-centered perspective, seeking to glorify God and further His kingdom above all else.

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## Transcript

"Know ye not that they which run in a race all run, but one only receives the prize? So run that you may obtain the prize....I therefore do not run with uncertainty (without definite aim)..." I Cor. 9:25-26a What is God's intention in saving us? Everything God does is governed by His divine purpose. Sending His Son to suffer for the sins of the world is God's means to accomplish His end. What is that end? Why are we here on earth? Is it simply to find a good job, accumulate money, own a home, have kids, watch them grow up and have kids of their own...and then have fun family reunion's with them?

I recently talked with a believer who stated that his life was empty and he felt confused and very dissatisfied, deep inside. Yet, outwardly, he was doing very well, good job, lots of money and a growing family! What was the problem? After listening to him for some time, I realized that he lost sight of God's ultimate intention and is suffering because of it. We will look at God's purpose and see it is not man centered, but centers on His Son. We will see that we must be corrected from a man centered way of viewing life and come to see life as God views it.

If we do not get adjusted to God's view, we will spend our lives filling them with things but remain empty and miss the prize set before us. Beloved, it is possible to miss God's intention for our lives, just as Israel missed God's purpose in the wilderness and died, never entering God's promise land! Let's pray we are able to both see and obey the Lord so that we do not fall short of His highest purpose! The Splendor of God's Eternal Purpose "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us

with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ" (Eph. 1:3-12).

How liberating it becomes when, by the grace of God, one is able to interpret, experience and participate in the greatness of Christ's salvation in an ever increasing manner -- with God's glory, Christ's exaltation and the Father's praise as preeminent! We are often reminded of how well the Holy Spirit has shown us this very truth through the letter of Paul to the church at Ephesus. In looking at these verses we are amazed at how everything which pertains to our salvation in Christ is directly related to how it affects and furthers the glory and majesty of God.

We begin in verse 3 where blessing is ascribed to God our Father "who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Such blessings are not intended for us as a means to live a happy, self-centered, soulical kind of existence. No, beloved. The blessings to which Paul refers are of a spiritual nature and are wholly derived from our being placed in Christ who becomes our very life! There we have it. Christ our life, in all His fullness, is the comprehensive, all encompassing object, substance and basis of our blessedness in the new birth.

Too often we look for things as the object of our blessing in the Christian life. Frequently in the gatherings of God's people, the focus shifts from Christ and the receiving of His life down to a merely religious sphere of activity, special features, musical entertainment, or even the personality of the preacher. We must seriously and searchingly ask ourselves how much of our Christian lives; our homes, our gatherings and times of fellowship revolve around the person of Christ and the earnest seeking of Him in greater, more complete fullness?

How much of our Christian life consists of a real, deep working of the word of the cross, severing us from the old life which must be denied, crucified, set aside and forever forsaken by the working of faith in Christ's finished work and by realizing our identity with Him in His death? Similarly, how much of our lives and church activities revolve around the splendor of coming more and more into union with the newness of life in Christ? So much Christian activity is nothing more than a call to grasp for more in this temporal life rather than a call to live a life of selfless service, motivated by God's sacrificial love.

Being enabled by His Holy Spirit to do His will all the days of our life should be our deepest desire. Today there is a dangerous trend to focus on man, what man can do and become and so often, the Bible itself is reduced to a book of positive principles and is being taught as a means to prosper and receive honor in this world. Yet, God's Word is not intended to be a book of principles, but rather, the place where the Holy Spirit can reveal the majesty and glory of the Son of God and His eternal ways and perfections.

God's Ultimate Intention As we read on in verses 4 through 7 we see that God, in Christ, redeemed us, predestined us, called us and enabled us to be holy and without blame before Him in love. Herein are just a few of the unsearchable riches that constitute the "spiritual blessings" (vs. 3) which we have received in Christ. Yet beloved, we must ask ourselves, for what purpose did our wonderful God secure such a great salvation and, in Christ, include us? Here is the answer right from the Word itself.

In verse 12 Paul says, "That we should be to the praise of his glory." Additionally, in verse 10 we read, "that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both... in heaven, and... on earth; even in him." Here God's eternal purpose is revealed in a most incredible way. We may be able to sum up these verses from Ephesians chapter 1 by saying that God's purpose in His salvation plan is to firstly secure in us a kind of life that will blossom into a harvest of praise, glory and honor unto Himself and secondly, that in the fullness of time He would gather together in one, reuniting under one ultimate headship, "all things in Christ" (vs. 10) that Christ may be all and in all!

This refers to Him in His person as Head, the God-man, the eternal Son who became man; as well as to His kind of life, that eternal life which He manifested in the days of His flesh which perfectly reflected the character and nature of His Father. His position as the Head and Godman will belong to Him alone, which distinguishes Him (as Deity and Eternal Son) from His body which is the church. In Himself He is and forever shall be sovereign head over all things. Every enemy has been put under Him and will be forever vanquished that He may indeed rule for eternity with no rival.

Yet we are partakers of that kind of life which reveals the utter beauty of the Godhead, and which we, out from Him, share for all eternity! So we can clearly see the Father's intention and how we are included, and how our inclusion relates to being in Christ, "...that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18). Therefore all that Christ has done for us must be related to what He has done to secure His Father's good pleasure. We must never interpret our salvation as isolated from God's eternal purpose.

Tragedy occurs when folks only know Christ as He relates to their need instead of how they in Christ relate to God fulfilling the eternal purpose which He purposed in His Son! Spiritual maturity is virtually impossible as long as we are seeing Christ, His salvation and our receiving the gift of eternal life only as they relate to us in a self-serving way. When we, by God's mercy and grace, are liberated from the man-centered mentality of what we get in salvation, and are enabled to see the glory, praise, honor and majesty of which Christ is worthy, we will then seek to lose our life (all the self-centered inclination of the old, natural man) that Christ may be expressed in us, thereby bringing glory to the Father.

His life, when compared with our natural life, is altogether different. His life is one of absolute selfless service to the Father in heaven. His life is one of total, helpless dependence upon the Father in heaven! As He lives His life in us He enables us to know in a real way a life of submission, obedience and dependence upon the Father! Such a life, however, requires an additional appropriation of grace which enables us by faith to reckon ourselves as dead with Him. In the early church, when her eyes were focused on the blessed Son of God, as her Head and life, she was marvelously able to mirror the moral perfections of the Son of God.

This is precisely what the Lord longs to see when he looks at us...the beauties of His Son, the light, love, light and nature of His very heart, bursting forth in our earthen vessels! The Old Creation Entirely Set Aside in Christ I suppose one of the greatest reasons why we always see Christ as to how He can benefit us is that we fail to recognize that salvation and our receiving the gift of eternal life results in a new

creation. We in ourselves -- that grasping, self-preserving, self-relating nature -- are wholly set aside and Christ's life, nature and beauty are imparted to us in spirit.

This is the new life -- His life -- upon which we are to live in humble dependence. When we live by His life, we cease from relating His work to selfish ends and we experience by Him a life of fullness unto God for the praise of His glory! Conversely, when we fail to apprehend the setting aside of our own life and nature and try to live the Christian life by it, then we interpret all Christ has done and is doing as to how it relates to the needs of that cursed life of the flesh, and all of its selfish ambitions.

Inevitably, God becomes our means to fulfill the lusts and drives of our old man (by whom we are trying to serve God) How tragic! This is why Christ so often appears to fail us! Notice I said appears, for in actuality He never fails. However, if we seek to serve God by the old man, our own drives and nature (resulting in the inevitable conception that God will enable us to fulfill those lusts which correspond to the natural man), we will meet with great defeat. God will fail the old man!

Christ is not at all committed to bless or grant to us those desires which arise from that which is in us that is outside of Him! Once a believer can see by God's mercy what God is after -- the setting aside of one kind of life and the blossoming and fullness of the life of the Son -- a great liberation occurs. We no longer seek to save our life but gladly offer it over to the judgment which Christ pronounced upon it on the cross: forsaken of God, accursed. And in losing that life we find life in the Son!

A life that corresponds to the kind of life that belongs to Jesus! Such a life is a life of divine, sacrificial love and purity, which satisfies the heart of God and keeps His moral law, not by compulsion but by sheer pleasure! This life does not seek after the lusts of the flesh, nor after the lust of the eyes. Additionally, this life does not boast or brag in what one may have nor find security in earthly things. Such a life is pictured in our blessed Lord Jesus, a life of pure devotion to the Father's will, unspotted by this world's filth and folly.

Life in the Son, when being expressed in the believer finds its highest joy in knowing and doing the will of God. God-Centeredness As we continue to look at various aspects of Christ's work in His securing for God the salvation of men, we must continue to relate each aspect to the whole of God's intention. Never must an aspect or part of Christ's glorious, finished work become in any way unrelated to the ultimate purpose of God. Much damage and spiritual nearsightedness result when we have seen one of the facets of our great salvation by illumination of God's Spirit, and fail to let it be brought into proper perspective.

Perspective can only be maintained as proper relatedness is held. All the many facets of the work of Christ are like the spokes of a wheel with each spoke leading back to the hub. Christ can be said to be the hub in this wheel of redemption. Each spoke represents a truth or an aspect of His salvation. However, never can any one spoke become something in itself as all comprehensive or inclusive. This is where we err! Christ Himself and our being transformed and changed into His moral image, resulting in praise and glory to our God, is the goal to which all must lead us.

Many have seen justification or victory over sin or the sanctified life or spiritual gifts and have not remained flexible so these aspects could simply lead them on unto a continual enlargement. Rather, folks camp on facets of light and become crystallized, refusing to recognize their light as only one shaft of many -- all intended to lead us to a more complete focus upon Christ Himself and His utter greatness, and God's purpose for Christ as it relates to His absolute preeminence in our lives as His body, the church He purchased by His own blood!

All too often men will begin to revolve around aspects of truth and miss Christ Himself who is the substance and fulfillment of all truth. One example of this is that many see God's longing for true worship. Jesus said that God is spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. God seeks such who do this. But instead of letting worship lead them to the Son of God, they begin to worship worship and praise praise, with music and soulful feelings. When this happens, the Lord Jesus is removed from center stage and men, with their music and ego's become the main attraction.

This results in deception and eventual blindness and deafness to being able to see and hear the Lord. How important it is for the Holy Spirit to bring our hearts into focus upon the Son of God and keep them fixed there. Today the need is great to experience a brand new emancipation from the littleness of our conception of Christ and from the tangents we have become captive to. How often believers begin to camp on parts of truth which have become real to them and thereby become fixed, inflexible and become, as it were, disqualified from moving into the fuller light.

We do not refer here to altering or compromising the essential truths or fundamentals of the gospel or extra-Biblical light. We must never move away from these. Rather, we refer to light which enables us to move on into the fuller purposes and life in Christ which the very foundations of the Christian faith are intended to produce. Christ's Salvation Not Chiefly Related to Our Blessing but His Purpose Remember when Jesus in the days of His flesh was looked upon by so many as the one who could do something for them?

Many saw Jesus merely as a means to be free from the Roman dictatorship. Others saw Him as one who could feed them and meet their lusts and desires -- sort of like a cosmic Santa Claus or genie who, after the rubbing of his lantern, comes out in a puff of smoke saying, "I am your servant. You are my master. Ask me whatever you wish and I will do it!" A great spiritual travesty has entered by the poison of Satan who has made God relative. Men see God only as He relates to their world.

What do you see Jesus as today, friend? Does He only seem to be for you something that can benefit you, help you get something you long for, make you happy, wealthy or successful? Does He hold the answer to obtaining your dreams? Beloved, are you falling prey to the perverted idea of wanting to "use God" instead of being used by God to reveal the beauty of His Son? The great spiritual emancipation which we must experience will deliver us from man-centeredness to Godcenteredness.

In this way of seeing, everything will revolve around our Lord's purpose, His end, His eternal glory and praise. Though in His mercy we are included in His plan, yet our inclusion does not chiefly relate to how it affects us. It does not chiefly relate to how God can give us something. Yet, sadly, how rare do we find in today's church a grasp of this all important truth! All too often, most gatherings revolve around "what's in it for me" mentality. God's ultimate purpose, however, relates to God, how it will bring glory to Him and further the knowledge of His Son through all eternity.

While there are certain fundamental benefits which we do receive such as joy, peace, God's love, release from sin, etc., and these do actually satisfy the deepest cravings of the human spirit, yet they in themselves can only be truly enjoyed as they are related not chiefly to our fullness but God's glory being revealed by them! Paul tells us that God gives gifts to the body, namely; shepherds, teachers, prophets, apostles, evangelists. These gifts are given for a very definite purpose that God has in mind.

This purpose is so that we all can grow up into a full expression of the moral likeness of Christ Himself, so that together, Christ's full moral likeness can be seen and revealed. Today, many leaders are become

superstars, little icons among the flock of God. This is not God's purpose. True leaders among God's flock are servants that do not exalt themselves, do not profit from the Word of God or their gift and do not lead others to themselves. They model a life of selfless, sacrificial love in serving God and others by assisting them to obtain the fullness of Christ's love and life as their life's goal.

They do not seek to entertain the flock but to warn the flock, as Paul did by telling the truth in love, so that all men stay focused on Jesus and His purpose. The Great Issue of the Hour "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:17-23).

There is a crisis hour through which all must go if we are called to know the transformed life in a very real way. God must bring about a severe dealing in us to make us come to the complete end of ourselves and all the hopes we have in something other than Him. Deep within us we yet trust in our own abilities, temperaments and gifts. Rather than a true, intimate knowledge of the Lord Himself, our past victories are our confidence that we can succeed today. There must be a far deeper letting go in all things, abandonment unto Him wherein we cease and live only unto Him and by Him.

One author says, "There comes a crisis-hour to each of us, if God has called us to the highest and best, when all resources fail; when we face either ruin or something higher than we ever dreamed; when we must have infinite help from God and yet, ere we can have it, we must let something go; we must surrender completely; we must cease from our own wisdom, strength, and righteousness, and become crucified with Christ and alive in Him. God knows how to lead us up to this crisis, and He knows how to lead us through."

Indeed the need of the hour is a total deliverance from ourselves so we may be fully captive to His purposes. Yet beloved, the end of God's thought is not just dying to self and sin. This becomes an end to many and great limitation occurs. God has not called us with the end being only our freedom from the curse of the self-life. No! Rather it is only when we are freed from ourselves that our call from eternity can become effectual. This call is to participate in the life of the Son of God and through Him in the age to come, see "the whole creation" delivered from the captivity of death itself! (cf.

Rom. 8). Our call is not just to be released from the bondage of sin. It is a call out of Adam and into Christ where all things are by Him and for Him. God looks and waits for the hour when a people will have been so delivered from the "wretched man" that has been crucified with Christ, that He may pour forth the glory in which His Son-sons shall be arrayed for the demonstration of His power in the whole earth, to be fully carried out at His second appearing. No, this is not something we can muster up with revival meetings or some lofty plans to get spiritual.

Only God can bring this about through the severe dealings of His Spirit in a people who do not harden their hearts nor resist His voice. Neither will this anointing come upon uncrucified people who think they are called to be "a witness" for Jesus. "Restoration" movements, worship seminars, reconstructionism theories and doctrines are not God's means to bring this about and will fail. The realization of these things cannot be equated or associated with any so-called "movement" that man is presently initiating or a part of.

God will share His glory and anointing with none other than Christ and, therefore, those who fully bear His image, who are truly bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh, who by reproduction are what He is in character and nature. To these and these alone will God commit Himself with the fullness of His Spirit and appear, as the Word says, in the heavens to change their bodies of humility and weakness into ones like His glorious body. Now, those who are captured by seeing Him are longing for and awaiting such an hour, when the trumpet shall sound and we all shall be changed to meet Him in the clouds.

There is absolutely no other way for this to occur than for the Lord to make good in us the full meaning of the glorious fact, "I am crucified with Christ. I no longer live. Yet I do live. Yet it is not I but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20, paraphrase). To bypass the cross and the totality of its stripping power as the way into the fullness of God's thought for this hour is to follow the devil and his lying spirits. Many are seeking anointing, power, dominion, great worship, evangelism, etc. all apart from the necessity of dying a deeper death in Christ.

Yet, all that is produced apart from the cross is of man and his own power, and is fully rejected by Christ. God will have nothing to do with the offerings of Cain, the spirit of human potential! God Is Testing All Our Hearts The great issue of the hour now: Who will endure the fiery testing that is essential for a people to come forth as pure gold? Many will turn away at the cost and offense of the cross and its merciless demand for all of the old to be crucified! Many will be enticed by the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches and the desire for things, and the seed will not bring forth fully in them.

Some, like Demas, who loved this present world system, will leave the way of the cross and find their own "Thessalonica". Here they may engage in Christian activity but will have left the Lord's perfect way of following the Lamb and will eventually dry up spiritually and be set aside, disqualified for the prize, which only those who run the race and finish will obtain! The Lord will test our hearts in this matter, beloved, just as He tested the heart of Elisha. Elisha had several opportunities to settle down and stop following Elijah.

Each time, the Lord tested his heart to see if he wanted to go on to the fullest and highest intention of His heart. This is a picture of how the Lord tests each of our hearts. God has called us to follow the Lamb all the way to the end, to the place where we long to see Him in resurrection power in our lives, to consummate in seeing Him in the air at His second appearing. But before we see that fully, we are often tempted to stop short, and it is God Himself who is testing us, not the devil!

Elijah even seemed to encourage Elisha to stop following him just to be sure that Elisha was not being moved by force or pressure. Elijah only wanted Elisha to follow Him if he was doing it because he loved his Master and willingly was giving up all things for His sake. Likewise, beloved, the Lord only wants us to follow Him because we want to from a love for Him alone. Not because we are being compelled to by a church, or a preacher, or because others are doing it. So...the Lord will arrange circumstance in our lives to make it very easy to settle for less than His highest, to test our hearts.

Remember God tested Abraham too. God loves to test His people. Gideon's army was tested, and out of over 32,000 men, only 300 passed the test and were called to be part of the army that brought God's victory. Jacob had to wrestle with God, alone, and was made to walk in weakness as a sign of his brokenness before God. Likewise, only those who, alone with God, are made weak and willing to follow the Lamb can walk with others of like mind and faith. Eventually the Lord will have a people who will corporately groan for immortality.

So dealt with by the Lord's hand, so made to see the Lord's purpose for His Son to have a people in whom the fullness of His person is made known, and so detached from earth and the things of this life -- that a groaning for life, life, life and immortality comes forth. Such a corporate groaning must spring up in His beloved, now, before the day of His appearing! Christ is not coming back for those who love earth more than heaven and find greater joy among the things of earth rather than in His presence!

Will we let Him do this? Will we consider the cost as nothing compared to what He will get in us and through us for His glory? Paul did! Will we let Him smite all the works of our own hands that are not the fruit of His doing, no matter how lovely and comely they appear to us? Will we let Him so work His Son in us as to get us to where, in real, daily life, we can say in living truth, "I can do nothing of and out of myself. I seek only what the Father enables me to do"? (cf.

John 5:19; 15:4, 5; etc.). Paul lived in this mind set and sought to remain in it all the days of his life. He openly confessed that he had not obtained full adulthood in Christ, but was seeking Christ's perfections with all His heart. This beloved, is the issue of the hour. May the Lord grant us much grace to endure His dealings in us so that He can obtain all that He is after. How easy it is to resist and go our own way, staying religious and keeping to the usual traditions of our daily Christian life and service, find a nice place to make us happy, yet lose out on the high calling and miss the hour of His appearing to and in those who are waiting for Him.

Only those who follow the Lamb wherever He leads, who long for and love His appearing will be ready to meet Him in the air! May the Lord give us ears to hear His Spirit and a passion to obey Him from a heart of love and humility. Amen.

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