

# PURPOSE ABANDONED

Leader pages on pp. 106-109

**THE POINT:**  
GOD CREATED US WITH  
PURPOSE, BUT OUR SIN  
KEEPS US FROM LIVING  
OUT THAT PURPOSE.

## PSALM 8:1-6; 14:1-7

### MEMORY VERSE

**Ps. 8:<sup>1</sup> LORD, our Lord, how magnificent is your name throughout the earth! You have covered the heavens with your majesty.**

<sup>2</sup> From the mouths of infants and nursing babies, you have established a stronghold on account of your adversaries in order to silence the enemy and the avenger.

<sup>3</sup> When I observe your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you set in place,

<sup>4</sup> what is a human being that you remember him, a son of man that you look after him?

<sup>5</sup> You made him little less than God and crowned him with glory and honor. <sup>6</sup> You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet:

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Ps. 14:<sup>1</sup> The fool says in his heart, "There's no God." They are corrupt; they do vile deeds. There is no one who does good.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD looks down from heaven on the human race to see if there is one who is wise, one who seeks God.

<sup>3</sup> All have turned away; all alike have become corrupt. There is no one who does good, not even one.

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<sup>4</sup> Will evildoers never understand? They consume my people as they consume bread; they do not call on the LORD.

<sup>5</sup> Then they will be filled with dread, for God is with those who are righteous. <sup>6</sup> You sinners frustrate the plans of the oppressed, but the LORD is his refuge. <sup>7</sup> Oh, that Israel's deliverance would come from Zion! When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

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### KEYWORDS

**LORD, our Lord (v. 1)**—The first title for God, Lord (*Yahweh Jehovah*), is His personal, covenant name which He revealed to Moses at the burning bush.

**Work of your fingers (v. 5)**—God is spirit. He does not have actual fingers. This is known as an anthropomorphism, attributing

human characteristics or behaviors to God to explain who He is and what He does.

**Refuge (v. 6)**—A refuge (*machaseh*) is a shelter, literally or figurative, which the weak and vulnerable enter for protection.

# HOW DOES OUR SIN INTERFERE WITH GOD'S PURPOSE?

A few years ago, I was given a grand piano. It didn't cost me anything except the lunch I bought for the men who helped me get it home. While I love to play, I had no intention of playing this piano. A local church wanted it gone because its soundboard was cracked and would no longer stay in tune.

Over the next several months, this grand piano resided in my garage as I slowly worked on it and gave it new life—as a bookcase. With nothing more than another free meal, more men helped me haul this piano bookcase to my office where it resides next to my lamp—which was once a clarinet.

I love my piano bookcase, but there is something far greater I'd rather have done with it. I wish I could've played it. That's the purpose for which it was built. It's the same with us. We've lost the purpose for which God created us, but instead of returning to Him to regain that purpose, we settle for something less in our lives—something far less.

## Created for the Purpose of His Glory // Psalm 8:1-6

Do you remember the first time you saw a mountain rising from the horizon, or do you recall the first time you stood on the beach and saw

nothing but an expansive ocean before you? I don't know about you, but experiences like that capture my attention. That's because the greatness of creation reflects the greatness of the Creator. It makes me want to shout with David, "LORD, our Lord, how magnificent is Your name throughout the earth!"

His magnificence is not hidden. The planet we live on shouts this in a million wondrous ways. When we look beyond the science and physics that make this world go around and take in the wonder of it all, we see the majestic God who is behind the laws of science and physics.

God's creation and His greatness aren't limited to just our planet. "You have covered the heavens with Your majesty." Consider the moon. Scientists have learned that if the moon were any larger, it would cause all sorts of problems.

The earth tilts at a perfect 23.4 degrees, for example, but a larger moon and its resulting stronger gravitational pull would cause the earth to tilt so far in one direction that one side of the planet would experience unbearable heat and the other side would only know a subzero climate.



## **THE POINT:** **GOD CREATED US WITH PURPOSE, BUT OUR SIN KEEPS US FROM LIVING OUT THAT PURPOSE.**

A larger moon also would slow the earth's rotation, making each day last much longer than 24 hours and creating a harsh climate for life.

The farther we look into space, the more we discover. Our own Milky Way galaxy has hundreds of billions of stars, and scientists now consider it to be one of the smallest systems in the whole universe.

When we ponder the greatness and glory of God, we might naturally be drawn to things that are majestic in size, but the minuscule things in His universe also point to Him. Just look at your hand and consider its complexity. Look at how its parts are joined and function together.

### **HOW DOES GOD'S CREATION INSPIRE YOU TO WORSHIP HIM?**

In his psalm, David mentioned "infants and nursing babies." Though small and often dismissed by others as being of little value, they point to God's glory. We might think of them as the weakest in all humanity, but weakness in human eyes diminishes neither their strength nor their great worth in God's view. Even the tiniest infant, who is incapable of coherent speech at this stage of life, is "a stronghold" that speaks mightily of God "to silence the enemy and the avenger."

After establishing the magnificence of God's glory, David contrasted that to the relative insignificance of humanity. "What is a human being that you remember him, a son of man that you look after him?" David may have felt small and insignificant as He observed the universe, but David knew he wasn't insignificant in God's eyes. "You made him little less than God and crowned him with glory and honor." David wasn't now declaring the greatness of humanity, but he was pointing again to the greatness of God.

We were created with a purpose. Humanity was created to take care of God's creation, to bear His image, and in so doing, bring Him glory (Gen. 1–2). Our first parents, Adam and Eve, were given this specially ordained status as God's image bearers to rule over creation. We were created to give God praise and glory as we exercise our privilege to rule creation on God's behalf.

### **WHAT ARE SOME REASONS PEOPLE DISCOUNT OR DENY GOD AS CREATOR?**

#### **Corrupted by Our Purposes // Psalm 14:1-3**

No one likes to be considered foolish. It spans across cultures, but so much of our humor involves someone doing something silly and foolish. We laugh at jokes where someone is acting dim-witted and



### **DIGGING DEEPER CROWNED FOR HIS GLORY**

James 1:12 says, "Blessed is the one who endures trials, because when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him." This is not a crown worn by kings and queens but a symbolic honor to those who faithfully serve. While this crown of glory is a blessing, it must fall into submission to the only One who was truly worthy. In Revelation 4:10-11, John paints a beautiful picture of heaven. Here we see the twenty-four elders fall down before the One who sits on the throne and worship Him. They "... cast their crowns before the throne ..." and acknowledged that the One on the throne is Lord and God. He alone is worthy to receive glory and honor. One day, believers will see the Lord face to face and all will lay down their crown and worship before the one true God, who deserves all praise comma all glory and all honor.

**What would it look like for a believer to lay down their crown before God here on earth even before they get to heaven?**

foolish. Many of us have said something wrong or planned to embark on some adventure or task only to have someone tell us, “Don’t be foolish.”

“The fool” mentioned by David in this psalm is not merely someone acting like a buffoon. The Jewish people would have understood a fool to be someone acting senseless in an ethical or moral sense. This isn’t a person who’s acting like a clown; he is draped in immorality. We see this in a man David encountered named Nabal—whose name is the Hebrew word for fool! Nabal knew who David was and what he had done for him, yet he refused to return the favor and be kind and generous to David and his men; instead, it was all about him (1 Sam. 25:3-11).

This type of fool is also godless. As we saw earlier in Psalm 8, the magnificence of God is clearly seen in the whole of creation around us, but the fool is a person who refuses to see it. That truly is senseless! Without a belief in God or fear of Him, the fool becomes his own god, and what such a person does can only be described as corrupt as he worships himself.

This passage isn’t just about the really bad people. It includes the good people who sit on a church pew each week. Culture is full of religious people who wave at their neighbors, take in stray cats, and are generally nice people who go to church. Yet, they, too, are vile and corrupt. “Don’t say that! I’m a good person. I’m not like them!” Yes, you are. “All of us have become like something unclean, and all

our righteous acts are like a polluted garment” (Isa. 64:6; emphasis added).

This doesn’t mean we can’t be kind or do nice things. Some of the wealthiest people in our country are self-professed atheists and agnostics, but they still engage in philanthropy that benefits thousands. Whatever good we do, can’t cover over the fact that we are sinners bent on doing things our way. We may not be acting as depraved as we could, but we’re still corrupted by the stain of sin. No good on our part can erase that stain.

Because of sin, we’ve lost our way, and we’ve lost our purpose, all of us. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).

### IN A WORLD THAT CONSTANTLY SEEKS TO TURN US AWAY FROM GOD, WHAT PRACTICES CAN ANCHOR US TO HIM?

## Deliverance from Zion //

### Psalm 14:4-7

We can point our fingers in disgust at all those fools and “evildoers,” but I feel sadness for them. We’ve already seen that, as fools, they are senseless. Choosing to be their own gods, they’ve lost all sense, and they are unable to see or understand just how sinful they are. “Will evildoers never understand?” As long as they choose to “not call on the LORD,” they will act selfishly. That can be true of all of us. We all worship something, and if we don’t call on God as God, we’ll call on ourselves. In our self-centeredness, we make ourselves gods.

An arrogant heart of sin consumes other people, committing these acts in harm against others as if God doesn’t see or care. Their sin is both the selfish injustice committed against others and their flagrant disregard of God.

“In arrogance the wicked relentlessly pursue their victims; let them be caught in the schemes they have devised. For the wicked one boasts about his own cravings; the one who is greedy curses and despises the LORD” (Ps. 10:2-3).

### WHY ARE WE RELUCTANT TO TURN TO GOD AFTER WE’VE SINNED?



## THE POINT: GOD CREATED US WITH PURPOSE, BUT OUR SIN KEEPS US FROM LIVING OUT THAT PURPOSE.

Up to this point, Psalm 14 can feel disheartening, but there is hope!

- **God sees.** God is not oblivious to sin, nor is He oblivious to our pain and oppression. He sees the wickedness, but that also means He sees what is happening to those who call on Him.
- **God judges.** God takes sin seriously. Sometimes it seems like people can sin without any consequences for their harmful actions.
- **God delivers.** God's judgment should cause dread in all of us! After all, this psalm has made quite plain that all of us are sinners. "There is no one who does good, not even one" (Ps. 14:3). Thankfully, God has offered a way out. Christ took our sin upon Himself, removing the guilt, penalty, and consequence of our sin. When we come to Him in repentance and faith, looking to Him as our refuge, He sets us free. He delivers.

I hope you see the hope in this. God sees sin, including our sin. While judgment is coming against sin, Christ took that judgment upon Himself. He loves us that much! With sin removed through His death on the cross, Christ delivers us into a new life full of hope, righteousness, and purpose. We rejoice in the sure hope and promise that "the Lord will restore the fortunes of His people!

### DID YOU KNOW?

In a 2020 study conducted by the Cultural Resource Center at Arizona State University, less than twenty percent of the survey participants view life's purpose as knowing and loving God. Of the 2,000 Americans polled, eighty-six percent believe there is a "universal, shared purpose" that all humans possess; sixty-six percent believe they have a "unique, God-given calling or purpose," while only eighteen percent believe that their universal purpose is the biblical view of "knowing, loving, and serving God. Eighteen percent felt that their purpose in life was to reach their "full potential physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually." Additional results indicated an age disparity with older adults adopting a biblical view of life's purpose while those between the ages of 18-29 were not as likely to acknowledge God in their purpose.<sup>3</sup>

**Biblical Truth:** God made everything and everyone with a purpose.

### How does knowing your true purpose affect the decisions that you make daily?

## LIVE IT

### How will you respond to the truth learned in this study?

God created us with purpose, but our sin keeps us from living out that purpose. Romans 8:1-2 tells us that "there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death." Knowing this Biblical truth should push us closer to the purpose for which we were created.

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- **Reflect.** Take time to reflect on the fact that God has created you for His glory. Are you living your life for His glory or your own? Make any changes necessary to give Him all the praise.
- **Confess.** What is a part of your life God is revealing that you may be living apart from His purposes for you? Confess that to Him, repent, and thank Him for His forgiveness.
- **Forgive.** A sign of maturity is sharing God's forgiveness with others. Is there someone who has hurt you? Ask God for the grace to forgive even as He has forgiven you.

# DAILY READINGS

## 1. FORGIVENESS IN CHRIST // 1 JOHN 1:8-10

God's purpose being fulfilled in our lives is contingent upon our obedience. Sin stifles obedience. No human is beyond the capacity to sin for we have all been born in sin and shaped in iniquity, Psalm 51:5. In short, every human sins, saved or lost. No man is perfect, but the key is to place a keen focus on the cross. Even when we sin, we know that we have forgiveness through Christ's shed blood and our purpose is not lost.

**Christ's passion and sacrifice reclaimed our purpose.**

## 2. GOOD COMPANY // 1 CORINTHIANS 15:33

The type of company you keep plays a huge role in the person you become and the extent to which you live out your purpose. The Bible says in Proverbs 13:20 that "The one who walks with the wise will become wise, but a companion of fools will suffer harm." Who we keep company with matters significantly because our environment shapes our paradigm and the way we think. Psalm 1 reminds us that "happy is the one who does not . . . sit in the company of mockers, instead his delight is in the LORD . . ." This is why spending time with God and in His word has such a huge impact on our lives. The more time we spend, in truth, the more truth we will be exposed to and equipped to walk out.

**Keep company with those who complement your purpose.**

## 3. GUARD YOUR MIND // 2 PETER 1:4

God does not tempt us; man's own evil desires lead him away from God's purpose and plan for his life, (Jas. 1:14). While God may allow us to go through a season of temptation, He Himself does not tempt us. What we allow our minds to think on and be entertained by eventually creates a mindset that is either attracted to the things of God or the things of this world. It is, therefore, of paramount importance to be mindful of what we allow to cross the threshold of our soul through our five senses:

sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. Temptation will always approach one of these five areas of our souls, we must, therefore, think on things that are "true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable and praiseworthy" (Phil. 4:8) to stay ever ready to triumph over temptation and live with a Christlike mind.

**Purpose is fulfilled through the right state of mind.**

## 4. DON'T GIVE UP // PSALM 14:3

It takes courage to stand up for what is right. But it takes an individual with strength of mind and resolute character to stand up to the status quo. Legends such as the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. are classified as such because he stood up to hate and injustice. He was even willing to give his life for his conviction. When our hearts are truly surrendered to God and set on His purpose for our lives, the price we must pay to live out our purpose is deemed worth it. A surrendered heart is able to withstand the temptation to abandon our God-given life's purpose because our hearts are set on pleasing God and not our own selfish desires.

**A surrendered heart is fortified with strength to resist the temptation of abandonment.**

## 5. DAILY READING FIVE // GALATIANS 6:7-8

What we focus on the most we will eventually give life to. Our thoughts create beliefs that ultimately lead to speech and what comes out of our mouth will either lead to death or life (Prov. 18:21). Words are seeds. What we hear nurtures our faith as faith comes by hearing what is said including what is said out of our own mouth, Romans 10:17. To have the right focus, we must therefore, be careful to think, and sow thoughts that are biblically accurate into our hearts. As we do so, according to Galatians 6:8, life eternal is reaped. Life eternal is synonymous with our purpose; that which God designed and purposed for us before the foundations of the earth were laid.

**Fulfilled purpose leads us to life eternal.**