

SCRIPTURE RESEARCH – VOL. 4 – NO. 3

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During late spring and the early part of summer, 2003 I conducted Bible classes over the Internet. I titled the various lessons, WHAT DOES GOD REALLY WANT? These lessons garnered a large amount of interest and positive response from a number of those who received the teachings via electronic mail.

In response to the positive comments it was decided that the email lessons should be edited and put into a monograph, hence, this booklet.

Encouraging me in this endeavor were two of my daughters, Crystal and Scarlett. They also provided me with critical perusal of this material and suggested that I "clear up" many paragraphs, so that all can understand this important subject. Crystal said, "Daddy, remember the little old lady who is reading this book. Talk

to her and the rest of us will get it." One of the main ideas that Scarlett gave to me was to change all of the sentences that have to be read twice. Love to you two!

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FORWARD

What is here presented to the student of theology is an invitation to focus upon the first design of the heavenly Father. The beginning blueprint was never terminated nor replaced at any time in the history of redemption. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that we discover what the intention of God was, at the beginning of time.

Our greatest need is a true knowledge of God and what He really wants. We learn this as Paul prays in Ephesians 1:17:

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him."

The most important lesson is found in understanding God's first intention. This divine purpose lies at the fountainhead of Christian faith and knowledge of God. One cannot have faith in God if he/she does not know God's divine intention. When we begin to understand the design of our loving Father in heaven, we cannot help but place ourselves, our families and businesses in His trust.

Our trust will be in proportion to our understanding of the first intention of our loving, heavenly Father.

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## **WHAT DOES GOD REALLY WANT?**

By Jerry Wayne Bernard

### **INTRODUCTION**

*We do not cease to pray for you and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding (Colossians 1:9 KJV).*

Wisdom and spiritual understanding comes with maturity and removes darkness that surrounds acknowledging God's Will. As we will later see that "**wisdom and spiritual understanding**" was first brought to light by the arrival of the Lord Jesus Christ in the first century. Those who come in faith to the Son of God will begin to understand "**the knowledge of God's Will.**" The text that follows gives us a glance at "**His Will**" or the first and ultimate intention of God as a Father concerning His children. It was His first design that was motivated by love. Before the inauguration of time and matter He made plans to be...

***One God and Father of all, Who is above all and through all, and in you all.*** (Ephesians 4:6, KJV)

In this lesson, we will see that the purpose of the ages was always:

***... that God may be all in all.*** (I Corinthians 15:28 KJV)

As we begin to develop this study, we shall start by quoting from a portion of Ferrar Fenton's translation of I Corinthians 1:30:

***Christ Jesus brought a philosophy from God to us.***

Therefore, if the Biblical based philosophy reflects this truth of God being in all, we will discover the answer to the vital question, *What Does God Really Want?*

The answer to this all-important question was revealed in the philosophy that the Lord Jesus Christ brought to the world from His Father. Continuing further with Ferrar Fenton's translation of I Corinthians 1:30:

***Christ Jesus brought a philosophy from God to us, as well as a righteousness, and purity and redemption.***

Once we understand the relationship between the Lord Jesus Christ and His heavenly Father, we will begin to realize the Father's first intention. We will see that His purpose was to live in flesh and cause it to be lifted up unto the heights of His continual presence and love. This He did in the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **GUIDANCE CENTERS IN HUMAN EXPERIENCE**

Without exception, everyone has a "guidance center" that directs his or her life. If this guidance center is off, by default, everything that is effected by it will also be off. Someone has said, "We cannot change what we do not acknowledge." So, we must begin by taking a good look at the character of our present guidance center. If we acknowledge the truth about our present life style or world-view, it can be changed to a God centered guide.

Any change in this center will challenge all activities, service and faith of the individual. This newly altered center will also cause one to understand what a loving God/Father really wants. So, if we want this vital change in our lives, we

must have a correct guidance center that causes one to think differently and according to the first design.

*For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he.* (Proverbs 23:7, KJV)

As we understand our relationship to the Father in His "first design," it will give us the ability to think and act according to the design of His divine will. What we now think of ourselves may be off-centered and not all what The God/Father thinks of us.

The Evangelist, John was overwhelmed with the thought of being a child of God, for he states:

*Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.* (I John 3:1, KJV)

Today, some leaders in the "Christian" community are accustomed to; and prefer the existing order of things. They dread changes in old and established tenets. This is because they hold their doctrines as a sacred collection of revelations, rules and regulations and care not that those tenets are accepted without modifying lives.

The teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ was very different. To Him, it was not rules. His words unlocked the philosophy of life that brought honor and glory to His Heavenly Father. The philosophy (wisdom) that the Christ brought to the world must first be absorbed consciously in personal experience until it becomes an unconscious center or "modus operandi" that determines our reactions to every circumstance.

Having stated the foregoing, the burden of the few thoughts that follow is this! The hour is too desperate for us to continue to play with surface issues. If we truly serve God, we must turn from our pattern of self-centered actions. We must cease in our attempts to make Christianity serve us. It is so imperative that we turn from recitation of tenets and defense of doctrine to the basic issues and principles of Faith. We must choose deliberately to become nonconformists to the present system, not because such an attitude coincides with the bent of our personality, but because we are living by a new principle. Therefore, to do this, most of us will have to drop the mask and become real to ourselves first.

## **CHRISTIANITY IN REVOLUTION**

We are currently living in a "Post Modern Era," and as such, truly serving God will become a revolution. We are in the nighttime of uncertainty -- a time of political, social, religious and philosophical shaking. Everything that can be shaken is shaking. We can expect it to increase in tempo and momentum until only that which is unshakable remains. However, we need not be alarmed, for God has determined to build anew on His SURE FOUNDATION -- a foundation that cannot be shaken. It is for this reason that (I believe) it is time for a revolutionary note to be sounded in the world of faith.

A careful observation will disclose that the philosophical appeal of our current evangelistic endeavor is essentially selfish. The church extends an offer that consists primarily of hope of gain and fear of loss for the individual – this suggests a "net" way of life! The fundamental "hook" of the invitation for men to come to the church is to get something for self. Even our deeper life conferences are usually promoted on a man-centered level that suggests participants may obtain Christian victory and profound blessings for the heart's satisfaction.

We are in a revolution when many authors should throw away their newly published books. Why? They have built their whole theology on a man-made hope. Concomitantly, we are in a new reformation. It is hoped that the church is awake enough to discover the change that is coming.

### **A NEW REFORMATION**

As one reads religious news letters and church bulletins, it can be seen that the problem over the past 100 years or so, is that the church has followed mainly three approaches: a so-called traditional approach; a new modern evangelical approach; and an approach that it calls a fundamental approach. This has been its central philosophy. It would have been better for us all had the church involved itself in a truly God-centered approach. Instead, church history reveals that Christianity was a Church-centered growth ministry all the time.

If we observe the pattern that God has followed since the Reformation, it can be observed that there was a continuous recovery of biblical and historic truths. Such a restoration was imperative if servants of God were to arrive at full maturity and bear fruit accordingly.

Through Luther, God restored justification by faith; through Calvin, the importance of reasoning from God down to men; through Whitfield, Wesley and others, the emphasis of a holy, separated life; through Darby and others, glorious truths concerning the Body of Christ and other church truths.

You may interpret this recovery of truth in your own way; but who can deny that God has used different men and movements – not to cover truth but to recover and herald truth to the building up of the entire spiritual Body.

Every major awakening has centered in a major recovery of a truth necessary to mature and balance other aspects of truth. It appears that the hour has come when God is initiating another major recovery. This time it is not just a truth, but the restoration of something so imperative that it will give the ultimate perspective to all truth.

Is it possible that the Church is unable to fully appreciate or interpret the truth she has, simply because her perspective is wrong?

A personal correspondence (email) from Dr. Paul Carlin, as it relates to this study is in order:

(Jerry) Your article titled *What Does God Really Want?* is excellent. To extend the problem more deeply and specifically into the lives of church members, the

church has bought into the psychotherapy lies until about 50% of the average Sunday morning attendees are so medicated they cannot even appropriate The Word of God.

The "soul" has lost its meaning and even plausibility. Faith, hope and love can no longer be seen as virtue or grace as they are processed in flesh and blood. The clergy will find, whether he wants it or not, he is also a front-line mental health worker or he will so be regarded by the specialists in the mental health field. It is only the pastoral role and the task of shepherding that the psychological disciplines have the greatest impact in theological work.

In recent years pastoral counselors have separated from their parishes and emerged as a psychotherapy profession. This professionalization process includes a shift away from parish-based counseling centers or medical settings, declining interest in Christian practices and convictions, increased interest in psychological practices and theories, the charging of fees and increased institutional and professional barriers to those individuals perceived as poor counseling clients or unable to pay.

There is also a growing deviation from a Christian orientation to a pseudopsychiatric orientation in the church. The tradition, heritage and practice of true pastoral counseling has been progressively displaced by therapeutic counseling until presently it is almost nonexistent.

### **CHANGING ONE'S VIEWPOINT**

It is so important that one has the "right pair of glasses" in order to see and come to understand the path that God will bring us into His ultimate plan and truth. Having stated this, as believers, we should strive to see God's purpose and what God is seeing as His finished product. It is at this point that the ultimate issue of *What God Really Wants* can be appreciated.

In order to understand whom God chiefly is one must stop taking into account man's problems and dilemmas. We must look away from the awful emergency that sin caused and look upon the purpose of One who has accomplished His intention according to schedule. Again, it must be asked, how can we give Him all honor, glory and satisfaction if we do not understand Him and His purpose? If He is not the center, then we make ourselves the center and everything orbits around us and for us.

Observe the typical sermon. It teaches many times, what we get out of all this. Even in what is called "Deeper Life Conferences," the teaching is about the Christian and what he should do in order to get victory or overcome the enemy. The speakers ask one to trust, not try. And yet one must try to trust. Confusing? It is centered in and on man's ability to try and trust.

As long as we are victims of wrong philosophy and approach to truth, we cannot avoid reckoning from a self-center. For you see, when the center is wrong, everything is wrong. The correct center is imperative to truth.

Until we place ourselves in God's hands for His readjusting of our thinking/guidance center, we may be centered in an experience, a group, an emphasis of truth, a spiritual person, our work, or a religious cause. All of these are marginal! As false centers, they become false viewpoints, and lead to a faulty understanding of truth concerning what God wants.

It takes quite an abrupt readjustment for a person to organize his/her life around a new center. A certain measure of healing is found in any center of life outside of one's self, but there is no ultimate healing until that person finds the ultimate center for their life. Follow closely now, if you, the reader, are anticipating a "shock" of this kind to bring you to the ultimate truth of a God-centered life, allow The God that is in you to place His finger on the false center around which your life revolves. When you begin to understand what He is pointing out, that which clouds your vision, you will then see something of the freedom that is found only in God as "*all things in all.*" If this seems to be strong language, just remember that your viewpoint MUST be changed as the self-center is usually set in concrete.

As a student of the scripture, I am convinced of the importance of this message. I am seeing an impact and revolutionary effect that has been produced in some pastors and laymen who are gripped by it. Their lives speak louder than any appraisal I might attempt.

### **DISILLUSIONMENT AMID FRENZY**

In a previous paragraph, Dr. Paul Carlin pointed out that; "many people are not suffering from clinically definable neurosis, but from the senselessness and emptiness of our lives." He suggested that this is the "central neurosis of our times." Among the deep-seated disillusionment amid the frenzied activity of the Church, there is a strange emptiness. Therefore, there must be a call to a halt to all this beating of the air and fumbling around with surface issues. Someone must step forward and awaken men to the deepest need. The most dedicated to religion simply cannot survive in an empty, meaningless universe. It is alarming to see those inside the church, going to pieces. Most are tired of being pushed into an empty routine of Christian activity. When the individual comes to hate his own selfishness and approaches the deliverance from the emptiness of serving self in a religious system which encourages each to find happiness and satisfaction in serving the Lord, he will be on the road to recovery.

Knowing that our deepest need is to see the ultimate intention of God, Paul the Apostle states:

*Christ Jesus brought a philosophy from God to us, as well as righteousness, and purity and redemption* (1 Corinthians 1:30, Ferrar Fenton).

By this divine philosophy, man's greatest questions and problems are answered, and through obedience to it, he is utterly rectified to God. Here we should point out that the word "philosophy" means love of wisdom and has to do with the

study and knowledge of the principles that cause and explain facts and events. It is urged that, you the believer, do not fear the term, but rather learn to distinguish between the philosophy of men and that of Divine Philosophy which is given in God's Son.

To get the true perspective of this philosophy, as students of The Scriptures, the believer should not use a microscope to study The Word but use a telescope to discern, *What Does God Really want?*

## **GOD AS THE CENTER**

We must develop a truly God-centered philosophy of life to progress to the maturity, of which the book of Ephesians speaks. This of necessity means we must see all things as properly related to God and His ultimate intention for His creation. Usually, one tries to relate everything to one's self. This clouds the truth of what God wants. Ferrar Fenton's translation of 1 Cor. 1:30 (above) indicates that the work of God in Christ brought man through the greatest questions and problems in humanity into the fulfillment of God's divine intention, "***God in us.***"

We somehow need to get our lenses corrected and develop a focus of God's point of view. We then will begin with God as the center.

*The Liberal* sees the desperate needs of mankind and would emphasize the social work that needs to be done by man.

*The Fundamentalist*, while recognizing social needs, knows the emphasis must first be placed on understanding that which God has done for man.

*The third segment*, often called the holiness groups, insists that all this too shallow and they would place the emphasis rather on the work that God must do in man.

"By man;" "for man;" "in man" is still a man centered focus. Over the years, there has been a consistent, unending battle that rages between the above groups. And, the real issue has/was always altogether missed. The three groups are primarily occupied with man as the center.

There is another side that must be considered if God is to be honored and glorified. When the Church is man-centered, starting with man centered in his needs, conscious of his welfare, and seeking his blessing -- we have the wrong center of (spiritual) gravity. However, there is much that God has done for man and in Him, man is still out of proper orbit until his deepest and most basic need has been recognized and met. THIS GREATEST OF ALL MAN'S NEEDS IS AN ULTIMATE RECTIFICATION FROM HIMSELF AS THE...

## **CENTER UNTO GOD AS THE CENTER.**

As long as the Christian is interested in going to heaven and enjoying the singing and praise instead of the ultimate satisfaction, glory and honor of God, he will miss the whole picture of *What God Really Wants*. Paul sums it up in Romans 11:36:

*For of Him and through Him, and to Him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen*

Paul said that all things are "*of God*" not from God. He said again that all things are "*through God*" because it is "*in Him we move and have our very being.*" Paul further states that all things are "*unto God.*" Therefore, this takes everything that came out of God back into Himself. So, our first step to see where we are "off base" is to look at "*of God,*" "*through God,*" and "*unto God.*"

## **MAN'S NEED FOR REDEMPTION**

A biblical-historical comment in regard to this matter of What Does God Really want? is in order.

How can we stand where God is standing... and look at our own situation with any kind of divine purpose in the "mix?" Going back in time may answer this question. Let's begin in the book of Genesis where Adam falls. Can the first purpose of the ages be viewed/interpreted from the events of the fall? If this is done, the history of the redemptive purpose(s) can be observed as the start. Perhaps then the whole picture would be from the standpoint of man's need for redemption. And, in considering this, one finds that it is only one part of the picture. Surely, there must be a greater purpose in all of this.

If we think of redemption as the over all purpose, that makes man the center. This necessitates that we go back farther in time, by definition, before the fall of Adam. That is, before God commissioned Adam *to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and subdue it"* (Gen. 1:28). By starting here, this leads to an historical interpretation or a kingdom purpose. This seems to be the center if man is to rule his kingdom. However, these two starting places do not satisfy the idea of a *supreme purpose*. Consequently, we must go still farther back in time, to where God starts in Genesis 1:1 – with God as Creator. Now, we have a picture of the purpose of God as architect or sovereign. This now places God into the "mix" as creator and sovereign. Yet, it must be realized that these places are not far enough back to get the whole divine picture of the first intention of a Father.

The apostle Paul started back in the heart of an eternal Father, before the beginning of the ages. PAUL STARTED WITH GOD'S FATHERHOOD. Paul did not start with the activities and wondrous attributes of the Father. He started with the PERSON. God is chiefly the FATHER. Being a Father guides His ultimate intention or eternal goal. When the question is asked, "What would a Father do?" We begin to understand why the heavenly Father has done all He has. What did the eternal Father intend in the eternal past? Take a moment and consider. Had sin never entered the world, we would have only seen the Father's ultimate intention.

Paul unveils in the Ephesian letter that which had always been in the mind of the Father. The entrance of sin did not alter God's purpose, it was still the same! Our attention has been placed on man's fall and redemption, so much so, that the Father's first purpose has been set aside. Most men see God's primary purpose as

set forth in redemption. This can be seen in the overshadowing theme of religious writings about man's fall and need, with God providing. It is from this viewpoint that God is always related to man's benefit, blessing and future. And again, in a redemptive program, man is seen as the object and center.

However, is this God's ultimate intention? Do we stop here and say we understand who God is? A concept can be right and at the same time, warped. The fall and redemption is not the ultimate intention of God.

## **THE DIVINE DESIGN - FATHERHOOD**

Consider that God, not only is central in the universe, but how His vital Fatherhood is the controlling factor determining His plan, purpose and intention. Having stated this, what is the ultimate intention of the Father in the eternal past, had sin never entered into the world? To understand this, one must open up the scriptures to Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Here we find that God's purpose was not altered by sin. Nor was God's purpose to deal with men under the concept of sinners. The sin crisis arose because of man's action outside of God's purpose. God's purpose has never changed. However, allow me to ask again, What Does God Really Want?

Through the maze and mist of today's preaching, can one come to a place where it is clear that there was an eternal purpose hidden in the Father?

The Apostle Paul arrives at the close of his ministry in about AD 68 and writes a letter that is circulated to all the churches in the area around Ephesus. This letter arrives at Ephesus and is called "the epistle of Paul the apostle to the Ephesians or ***"to the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus"*** (Ephesians 1:1). Paul introduces something that none of the other NT writers seemed to have put forth:

***Blessed be The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenlies 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..."*** (Ephesians 1:3-6).

For us to be in Christ set the stage for God to be in us. In this text we see that God acts according to His own pleasure. The Son was associated with the Father's Will before the event in time when sin entered into the world. To be "*in Christ*" was the first intention and design for humanity. When sin entered into the picture, redemption became the work until it was completed. After redemption was accomplished, reconciliation occurred. The message was then added, "***Be ye reconciled to God.***"

***That in (Gk. eis) the dispensation of the fullness 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 [Ephesians 1:10 KJV].*

This time frame that Paul was speaking of ("*the dispensation of the fullness of times*") was the time that God dispensed Himself to humanity in the person of Jesus Christ. The "*fullness of times*" speaks of all the past ages pouring into that last age (in the first century AD) and filling full that last age of all of the past ages. We now live in the "*ages to come*" where we observe the exceeding riches of His grace.

That first century AD was the dispensation of the fullness of times. It was when the Father gathered together into Christ Jesus everyone on earth and in heaven. His ultimate intention was accomplished in the Son of His Love. The divine intention was previously a secret (Gr. *mysterion* = mystery) that Paul unveiled in the Ephesian letter. The Father had intended before creation that His Son would have a body to express His (God's) life in the world. This was to be an ongoing LIFE. God was to dwell in His people on earth and in heaven. THERE WAS NO INTENTION HIGHER THAN THIS! This Divine intention was "*according to the good pleasure of His Will.*" Deserving or undeserving was not in the "mix." This was simply according to the Father's pleasure, not our worthiness.

Up to this point, it was seen how the Father's ultimate intention for the Son and His Body, the church, springs out of His paternal nature and desire alone. Before the foundation of the world, the Father marked out for Himself a vast family who would share His life, nature, spirit, vision, purpose and dedication. All of this was to be accomplished both through and for His Son. God never intended for the redemptive phase to overshadow the original eternal purpose of dwelling in humanity.

Placing "*redemption*" in the center of our attention, we have too often thrown the ultimate desire of the Father on the "back-burner." Most theologians only look at the history of humanity as going back, circa, 6,000 years in the past and about 1,000 years into the future. This view only reaches back to the fall of man and a supposed return of the Son of man. However, as we embrace God's viewpoint, our vision goes farther into eternity past where we find clues of eternity future. As the popular, historical view only reaches to the end of fulfilled prophecy. The Father's viewpoint reaches into the *on coming ages* where His Will is fully realized. The purpose of the Father was for the *Parousia* (His Presence) to begin "*without sin,*" (Hebrews 9:28).

**THE REDEMPTION STORY IS NOT THE END AND CLIMAX OF GOD'S INTENTION.** It is a recovery program to get back on the course of what God really wants. As the Father's heart's desire is viewed, purpose and intention can be observed. Here one sees a very different Christ fulfilling the divine desire. If we stop looking at the Father's plans for man's needs to be met, our viewpoint of the divine intention will take on new meaning and we will see this give the Father honor, glory, pleasure, and satisfaction.

Using a personal illustration in the matter of what does God really want, there is something that I enjoy doing. I love to play the keyboard and sing old hymns. If

someone became interested, while I was playing, and came to watch my fingers as I played, would that be my intention? Would I perform hymns so people would watch my fingers striking each note of the keyboard? No! My intention would be for them to enjoy the melody and harmony and be blessed by the message. This, it appears, was the same common error that happened in confusing the means and methods of the Father with the end result.

Man's conformity to the image of Christ was not the end of the Father's Intention. It was only a means to a greater end. Some preachers have made salvation or entrance into heaven to be the ultimate end in their messages. Others preach that the end is for God to have completed His glorious and spotless Church.

Some still hold to their "*end of all things.*" These latter teachers are looking for the universal reign of the kingdom as the end result. These are only means to arrive at the greater end. As long as one keeps coming short of what the Father's ultimate intention was, man is kept at the center and one misses the true dimension and meaning of life and the purpose that has been hidden in the Father, before the world began.

For a moment, consider Ephesians 1:3-4:

WHO?... "**He**" (God, The Father), verse 3; WHAT... "**chose us**" (picked us out as sons for His family); HOW... "**In Him**" (Christ-The eternal Son involved in all aspects, verse 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10); WHEN... "**before the foundation of the world..**", verse 4; WHY... "**for Himself,**" as His own (for His pleasure, glory, and satisfaction); WHERE... that we should be "**before Him**" (in His presence) verse 4.

This is a bird's eye view that was revealed to Paul. And Paul called it a secret (Gr. *mysterion* = mystery), that had never been revealed before to the sons of men (Eph. 3:4, 5). This was in the mind of the Father, before He started the vast activity, of which the Body of Christ would realize.

From this point forward, think of God as Father rather than creator. The noun, Creator does not take one back far enough to realize the Father's divine intention. When He is looked upon as the Father, one begins to understand what God really wants.

Quoting from the apostle Paul again:

***That ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.***  
(Ephesians 3:17-19, KJV)

Several years ago a Christian quarterly paper emphasized "The Righteous Government of God" as the primary program of God. At the same time this author received a monthly letter from an Evangelist promoting "Evangelism, the Program of God" as the primary intention of God. Coincidentally, another local church was emphasizing "Missions" as the primary program of God. A friend

indicated that the "New Testament Pentecostal Time" of the Bible was the primary program of God and that we should return to that time of power, joy and ministry. The confusion will disappear when we begin to see a loving Father watching over His family.

We will never truly understand God's household government until we see Him as a Father, lovingly governing His family. Evangelism brings the wonderful news of God's search for His lost family in the great garden. However, we need to see the whole picture from the Father's perspective, not man's urgent needs. And missions is only a part of reaching into the dark spots of the world and lifting these forgotten ones into the light of His love for fellowship and dwelling together. This becomes truly a mission when one looks from the Father's viewpoint of bringing a family together.

The time of the Pentecostal period or Acts period was to "shock and awe" the world of Christ revealing the father. The Pentecostal period was a time for all the past ages to pour into, making that time period an age of accomplishing His redemptive plan and setting the stage for His ultimate intention.

All of the foregoing is wound together in one strand to bring us to His primary program. Yet, we have to look at the Father's ultimate intention for His family.

Personally speaking and as a minister of the gospel message, I made "**redemption**" the one and only purpose of God in my ministry. However, after reading a book authored by DeVern F. Fromke, regarding God's divine intention, I saw that redemption was only one of the strands of His will and intention. I then saw the redemption of man in its highest glory, to be the Father's work to bring us through a trouble spot in time to His original purpose. God's capacity for redemption was there, many eons before the fall of man. God created Adam in His image and likeness. God's intention was for Adam to not only share in the Father's image and likeness, but also to share in His unique and uncreated Life, Spirit, Nature and Mind. In sharing in this divine intention, Adam could have become the glorious means for revealing the eternal Father. However, after the fall, we see the second Adam accomplishing all this and gloriously revealing to the world the Father.

The apostle Paul explains the "**breadth**" of life as how fully or interestingly one lives in Him. He speaks of the "**length**" of life as being more than living a long life. It is living in Him without an end. He speaks of the "**depth**" of life as our devotedness to Him in all the moments of living in Him. Then Paul speaks of the "**height**" of life as our heavenly walk in Him along the dirty paths of earth. Then he speaks of knowing in every aspect of our lives, the "**love of Christ**" as the means of being filled with all that the Father is or has ever been.

## **THE PURPOSE**

As we look at scripture from the viewpoint of God, we see all "**these things**" like divine government, evangelism, missions, "New Testament" times as related to the whole theme of the Father's purpose. Each one of "**these things**" cannot give

us the whole picture of the Father's purpose. We must look at the first intention in order to understand each facet of the ONE GREAT DIAMOND of His highest intention. At the resurrection of the Lord, we remember, the Savior said to Mary,

*Go to My brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God, and your God* (John 20:17, KJV).

When the subject of Grace is thoroughly researched in scripture, it will be realized that God's Grace reached back farther than our finite minds can grasp. Paul made a significant statement to this effect to Timothy:

*(God) hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His Own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began* (2 Timothy 1:8-9, KJV).

Paul knew that Timothy must stand strong in the midst of the great apostasy, afflictions and pressures that were going on at that time. Timothy must understand that he was not merely called "*according to the grace of God,*" but also "*according to (God's) own purpose.*" After man took a downward turn in sin, God took a detour into the administration of His wonderful Grace, rescuing humanity. However, the Father did not intend for man to be so attracted to the calling of grace that he would overlook the call to the Father's ultimate intention.

Using a very homey illustration of the foregoing, my daughter has a very obedient dog, named Cody. The other day, I took him outside to run and exercise. As we exited the front door, Cody ran out first and stopped abruptly. He spotted a bird on a limb just above our heads. Cody was frozen. My intention was for him to run and exercise. However, he was distracted from performing my intention because the bird was so interesting. As far as my intention, Cody was defiant. I made a loud noise and the bird began to fly. Cody began chasing the bird and my intention was realized, and in fact, I received a little exercise for myself. The bird that seemed to be the great distraction was soon the instrument of my intention. This is an example of how man has been distracted from the Father's ultimate intention by the beauty of redemption from sin, eschatology of His presence, types and shadows and Old Testament pictures of the Great Sacrifice. **Humanity needs to be brought back to the Father's ultimate intention.**

The heavenly viewpoint carries one through every trial and testing. Phrasing it another way, Man's viewpoint must change to God's viewpoint. We are prone to interpret God's work as it benefits and relates to us without a deep concern for the yearning desire hidden in the Father's heart.

It would be strange for the heavenly Father to seek fellowship with those whose interests are self-centered. However, we see the Father seeking to move man beyond the shallow ponds of Israel or the church to the ocean depth of His first purpose. He is working on making mankind alive to His principle purpose. We are directed to go on into the "*fellowship in the gospel*" (Philippians 1:5). However, we are not asked to stay there. We must go deeper into the waters. We are encouraged to enter into the "*fellowship of the Spirit*" (Philippians 2:1). The

gospel is good news to hear and live in; but to walk in the spiritual is much more advanced. Then, an even deeper walk is designed by a "*fellowship with His Son*" (1 Corinthians 1:9). This is such a wonderful walk. Walking side by side with the Father's Son is an adventure that no one should miss. However, there is more. We are called unto a "*fellowship of His sufferings*" (Philippians 3:10). This gives the servant of God a fruitful and lonely ministry. Yet, there is found in one of Paul's last letters (Ephesians) that the deepest concern of the Father is in His calling for "*all men to see what is the fellowship of the mystery*" (Ephesians 3:9). THIS IS THE ULTIMATE INTENTION OF THE FATHER. This is that "*which from the beginning has been hid in God*" (Ephesians 3:9).

Paul says that the Father's intention is "*to make known by the Church, His manifold wisdom*" (Ephesians 3:10 KJV). The ultimate purpose of the Father was found "*IN CHRIST*" and "*CHRIST IN YOU, the hope of glory.*" From the Father's viewpoint, He could never look up! There is nothing above Him. He must look down! Theologically and positionally, have you ever tried looking down? You can actually look down if you have truly entered into all that our position "*with Christ in God*" means. If we are "*in Him.*" We are seated in the heavenlies, far above all (Ephesians 2:6). The only view we have from this high position is down. There is nothing above us, in Him.

Can it be said that the past, present, and future had/have come to blend into one big NOW before our eyes? It is the heavenly Father's intention for us to look down at **the big now**. When we view His **eternal now**, eternity becomes one complete whole. The Psalmist wrote):

*The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God* (Psalms 14:2).

What was it that man must understand? We read Paul's understanding and it becomes clear:

*We are asking God that you may see things as it were from His point of view, by being given spiritual insight and understanding.* (Colossians 1:9).

As the Christian "*looks up*" from his own viewpoint, it is from a man-centeredness that he sees the universe. God entered into humanity so that He could raise man to another plane of life. He placed humanity "*in Christ*" in order for all things to become new. What a tragedy to live with a self you can't live with. As long as you are the center of your life, you won't like life or yourself!

A false universe is the one with self as the center. Paul states:

*We thus judge that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, that they, which live, SHOULD NO LONGER LIVE UNTO THEM-SELVES, but unto Him Who died and rose again.* (2 Corinthians 5:14-15)

As The Father looked down, He saw us united in death with His Son. From the Father's viewpoint, we were crucified with Christ... buried with Christ... raised

with Christ... and seated with Christ, in God, in a new heavenly position. Can you look down and...

***"reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, abut alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord"*** (Romans 6:11)?

If you can, then...

***"yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead."*** (Romans 6:13).

You see, it is looking down that gives the divine perspective of *What God Really Wants!*

The only way to understand Romans six is to have the "right center" in mind. If one is self-centered, he will try to find out what he is to do. If one is Father-centered or Christ-centered, he will look for what God has done. Many speak with conviction of the finished work by which they have forgiveness, deliverance, victory and authority. They rejoice in all that has been done for them. Question: Do they see the snare? Have they never changed centers? They have continued to be the center of their universe, missing the deepest severing power of the Cross which would deliver them to a life centered in the Father where all things are related to Him as the center.

On a personal note, I have had some friends to sit and read Romans six together with me. It was always without emancipation from self until they figured out where their center was located. However, it is vastly different thing to experience the radical working of the Cross that liberates one from self to a new center. This is very hard to receive. However, as long as one is still alive to what God does for him or what the Cross realizes for him or what his position in Christ means for him... that individual has never grasped the Father's full reason for placing him in His Son. Oh, that we might come to the same vision, purpose, dedication and philosophy of life as the Son shared with the Father in the beginning. Re-member the words of our Lord, ***"Not my will, but Thine be done."*** When one is living in true victory, they are centered ***"in Christ"*** and living in His victory. One's purpose becomes His purpose. One's dedication becomes His dedication. All things actually and truly become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

In Second Corinthians Five, verse 16, the word ***"Christ"*** should be translated ***"Messiah."*** This will put a different slant on the verse for many, as this is the Father's viewpoint. And it should be ours, as Paul pointed out. Note the Apostle's statement:

***"... from now on we estimate and regard no one from a (purely) human point of view – in terms of natural standards of value. (No) even though we once did estimate Messiah (Christ) from a human viewpoint... we know Him (now) no longer (in that Messiah way of thinking by the Jews..."***

Paul no longer viewed the promised Messiah that all the "Old Testament" pictured would come. He now saw the indwelling Christ. What a difference! With this new

heavenly viewpoint, Paul no longer looked at his own weakness, failure and despair. He saw himself as "**complete**" and finished off as God's perfect work.

Paul had lived many years under the scrutinizing eyes of the Jews and it only brought bondage to him and others like him. Paul said that he was now looking through the Father's eyes upon the unfinished thing and sees it as a perfectly finished product that the Father had intended before the world began. Concomitantly, Paul was now looking at the completed work; the finished stone; the many faceted diamond; the polished pearl.

What a difference would be manifested in lives if all saw themselves and others, no longer after the flesh, but as God sees His work and *What God Really Wants* in His ultimate intention.

If only we could see ourselves as The Father does, i.e.,

***And ye are complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power*** (Colossians 2:10, KJV).

From a practical standpoint, husband, look at your wife from the heavenly viewpoint. Wife, look at your husband from the heavenly viewpoint. Look at your "boss" or head of the company or maid or gardener from this heavenly viewpoint and you will begin to see what the walk "**in Him**" is like, a life that is honoring unto Him. This is how a cold, empty and dissatisfied life is made new. How? Because the full light has dawned and we see that God is not calling us to get ahead in life. We see Him as the center of our lives and a life of giving begins. The Father gives... The Son gives... The husband gives... The wife gives ... The "boss" gives... The gardener gives... In actuality, life becomes new as a life of going the "second mile" and giving.

In GRACE, the center-Father is expecting no one to repay Him. It is His intention to dwell in you and you in Him. This is *What The Father really wants!* My prayer for you, the reader, is that:

***Ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*** (Colossians 1:9, KJV). ***And that: He would make known unto us the mystery of His will, according to the good pleasure which He purposed in Himself*** (Eph 1:9, KJV).

## **THIS IS THE FATHER'S INTENTION!**

### The Answer – A Mystery Never Revealed Before

In the current evangelical/fundamental Christian circles, the leaders, for the most part, are searching for messages and/or songs around the benefits of becoming a Christian. These same leaders are placing man as the center of God's intention and purpose. The pastor-teachers usually center their "pulpit" around the conversion of the sinner. Many listeners are thrilled and impressed listening to this message, but they are not converted. Many are left cold, empty and dissatisfied as they leave the service(s). Not until the Church leaders fully understand Romans 8:28...

***"all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose,"***

...do they understand *What God Really Wants*. This verse is often used as an enticement for dedication on the part of the saved. In the opinion of this writer, the pastor-teacher should move from a self-centered ministry to a Father-centered existence that is all **"according to His purpose."** They need to understand that Romans six teaches that all things, that is **ALL THINGS** are/were brought about **"according to His purpose."** They should declare with Paul that **"All things are of God..."** (2 Corinthians 5:18).

In retrospect, as an evangelist, I now understand what Paul meant when from his new heavenly viewpoint, he related all to God:

***I would that ye should understand brethren, that the things which have happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel*** (Philippians 1:12 KJV).

What a wonderful freedom, knowing that the Father is in me and I have no need to hunt for Him. He is in me...

***"...energizing me to have the desire and the power to do His will"*** (Philippians 2:13).

This emancipation will help you to understand *What God Really Wants*. You will stop using God and allowing Him to use you. You will stop working for God and take a look at what God really wants to do in and through you. He wants you to be occupied with Him and He wants to work through you. *That is what God really wants! You, in essence, have become His dwelling place.*

As a "Christian community," we are on a "slippery slope" as we try to learn how not to work for Him and allow Him to work through us. As individual desires are examined in the matter of serving Him, do we detect the desire of obtaining a profit that this kind of service will bring to us?

Is it for our sake and the sake of others that we labor? Or is it first of all, for His sake? How do we live in His will and purpose so that everything will be done primarily for His sake? This is a new occupation for many, In this selfless occupation; we are to be occupied with a Person and purpose out side of personal benefits. Or, in simple words, worship firstly and work secondly.

If we are to adjust to the Father's intention and living in harmony with Him, what and how is the adjustment from a self-centered life to Father-centered existence, made?

From the pulpit we hear the message, **"Be ye reconciled to God."** And, in addition, we hear Paul's words:

***...God, reconciled us to Himself (into harmony) and gave us the ministry of reconciliation that by word and deed we might bring others unto harmony with Him*** (2 Corinthians 5:18).

We walk away from the church service and ask, "Am I fulfilling or falling short of god's purpose in my life?"

It seems the response is always, I have no idea. Do you want the same thing as God? To learn how to see things as God sees them you must turn to Ephesians 3:4, and there read "**knowledge in the mystery of Christ.**" This mystery that Paul mentions is a corporate Body through which the Father can express Himself. This mystery is "**Christ in you.**" In Colossians, the Father's desire is for Christ to be the Head of the Body. And it is in this way that the Son has pre-eminence in our lives. It is in this way that the Father is revealed and expressed throughout the heavens and earth by the lives of those in His Body (Colossians 1:18). If we can begin to see through the eyes of the Father, we will see His intention to make His Son the center and gathering point for all things in heaven and earth... "**to sum up all things in Christ**" (Ephesians 1:10). Then it will be easy to see that all things were not only created "**by Him,**" but also "**for Him**" (Colossians 1:16).

When this is realized, we see what the Father intended all along, to make His Son the center of His working. If His Son has preeminence, I am no longer the center. Christ, the altogether lovely One is the center of my life and ministry. If we fall short, it will be because we are not looking out from the heart of the Father. The Father has not changed from what He purposed in Himself from the counsels of eternity past.

This is the design of heaven. It is the divine rule. It is the Heart of the Father. He invites humanity to embrace this divine purpose and philosophy of life by knocking at our heart's door. When the door is open, it is the desire of the Father that eyes would also be opened to see the Father's ultimate intention... is that "**God may be all in all.**" This is what God Really Wants!

Moving beyond what God has done for us to what Christ realized for God is the "deeper truth" of the scripture. Fromke, author and pastor, pointed out in his writings that Romans 3:23 has a deeper meaning than what most Evangelists give it. The KJV version reads:

***All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.***

In the considered opinion of some theologians, "**glory**" means the true estimation of a thing. Hence, the verse would read:

***All (without exception) have sinned (against the Law) and have dropped out of and away from God's estimation of what humanity should be.***

J. B. Phillips put it this way:

***All have sinned and missed the beauty of God's plan.***

Ferrar Fenton translated it thusly:

***All sin and are in need of rectification.***

Paul knew that humanity needed more than turning over a "new leaf" and "doing their best." He knew that humanity must be brought back into God's estimation of what humanity should be. If the individual is not brought back to God's earliest intention, before God began on His course of redemption, the evangelist has lost sight of what Romans 3:23 is saying. God's glory or estimation of what man

should be is the mainspring of all service and if we work from another standpoint all else is wrong. The believer's aim should be to work in the Father's fulfillment of the first divine intention.

The center of our message is a Person, Jesus Christ, Who is the estimation of What God Wants All Men To Be. This is "***the glory of God.***" God knew that humanity would need to know what God's intention was, so He wrapped Himself up in flesh and demonstrated His divine intention that has existed before all creation. Now we understand Paul's message of "***Christ in you, the hope of glory.***"... and God as "***all things in all.***"

Oh, may God help us to see *What God Really Wants.*

To conclude this study, please consider F. Fenton's interpretation of Colossians 1:25-27. He writes:

***...of which I became a minister by appointment given to me for you from God, to accomplish the Divine intention, the secret hidden from the ages, and from the nations, but now made manifest to His saints by whom God has decided to publish amongst the heathen what is the wealth of that mystery of the rectification which Christ is to you - the hope of the rectification - which we proclaim...***

Paul is overwhelmed with the desire "***to accomplish the divine intention***" of the Father. It was after Paul met the risen Christ that he lived without a man-centered vision of all the things that God was doing through him "***amongst the heathen.***" Paul did that:

***...warning every man, and teaching every person in a perfect philosophy, so that we (Paul) may present each one perfect in Christ; to which object I vigorously strive with His mighty energy working in me*** (Colossians 1:28-29, F. Fenton).

Problems did not change Paul except to bring him closer to Christ. Paul did not in any way look for an escape. The hardship and suffering was considered the Will of the Father. Hence, Paul did not indulge in self-pity and self-centeredness. He gives us the example of a life viewpoint with The Father's ultimate intention as the center. It was Paul's desire that God would show "***the glory***" or how the Father sees things. By contemporary application, may we see our lives centered "***in Him?***"

In this newly found occupation of living "***in Him,***" we see the cross of the Christ as an eternal thing, something we must not get away from. We see ourselves "***crucified with Him.***" We see the great humiliation of Christ as He descended from the exalted, heavenly position to the lowly cross of a criminal.

In this, we learn of *What God Really Wants!* Those who humble themselves, God will exalt. The proud are brought low. However, as we enter into His humiliation, we are carried away, through Him, into His great exaltation. *This is what God really wants.* This is what we should see and understand as the Will of God for us individually.

***I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of The Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me (Galatians 2:20).***

There are some interesting theological and pragmatic questions that concern our forefather, Adam, who stood at the crossroads as he looked upon the fruit offered to him by his truly and only sweetheart, Eve. The question now arises, how much did Adam know of God's intention for him? It is clear that God wanted Adam to begin at the place of obedience and as time passed, learn more obedience until it became a way of life for him. Adam was to learn that the exercise of the first moral choice would develop into a life of giving, serving and sharing.

God would progressively reveal His wonderful Will to Adam as Adam obeyed. As God's purpose and plan unfolded before Adam's eyes, would Adam choose God's intention or pursue a private goal. The scripture reveals that he chose to satisfy his limited vision of what was good for him and Eve. This was the issue in the Garden of Eden. Adam chose his own way to feed on knowledge and the development of his natural life, exercising his own rights to freedom and pursuing his own private goals. So, just as the first Adam stood at the gateway of choice, we too must choose to accept or reject God's call to embrace the divine rule of action and allow the "Tree of Life" (the Cross principle) to be wrought in us. We must choose to do one or the other. There is no neutral ground for this decision. Should we live for our own purpose and thereby reject God's ultimate intention and purpose? Or can we get a glimpse of what God really wants for us and make the right choice?

## **CONCLUSION**

If Christ was the flesh that God dwelt in and is the focus of our faith, then look at what Christ ultimately did...

***And when all things shall be subdued unto Him (The Father), then shall The Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all (1 Corinthians 15:28).***

Christ subjected Himself to the Father so that "***God may be all in all.***" THIS WAS THE ULTIMATE INTENTION...to be all things in all people. So...

***Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and***

*things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father* (Philippians 2:5-11).