



May 2011 - *God's Purpose for the Believer, the Church, and the Creation*

Coming to saving faith in Jesus Christ launches us into a process of spiritual transformation that is called discipleship in the gospels and sanctification in the epistles. The ultimate goal of that process is to be remade into the likeness of Christ himself. C.S.Lewis explains it well:

We can only do it for moments at first. But from those moments the new sort of life will be spreading through our system: because now we are letting Him work at the right part of us. It is the difference between paint, which is merely laid on the surface, and a dye or stain which soaks right through. He never talked vague, idealistic gas. When he said, "Be perfect," He meant it. He meant that we must go in for the full treatment. It is hard; but the sort of compromise we are all hankering after is harder—in fact, it is impossible. It may be hard for an egg to turn into a bird: it would be a jolly sight harder for it to learn to fly while remaining an egg. We are like eggs at present. And you cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg. We must be hatched or go bad.

May I come back to what I said before? This is the whole of Christianity. There is nothing else. It is so easy to get muddled about that. It is easy to think that the Church has a lot of different objects—education, building, missions, holding services. Just as it is easy to think the State has a lot of different objects—military, political, economic, and what not. But in a way things are much simpler than that. The State exists simply to promote and to protect the ordinary happiness of human beings in this life. A husband and wife chatting over a fire, a couple of friends having a game of darts in a pub, a man reading a book in his own room or digging in his own garden—that is what the State is there for. And unless they are helping to increase and prolong and protect such moments, all the laws, parliaments, armies, courts, police, economics, etc., are simply a waste of time. In the same way the Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose. It is even doubtful, you know, whether the whole universe was created for any other purpose. It says in the Bible that the whole universe was made for Christ and that everything is to be gathered together in Him.¹

Many churches and churchgoers in America have lost sight of this fundamental reality. What about you?

*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good,
for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also
predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn
among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom
he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.*

ROMANS 8: 28-30 (ESV)

¹ C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Touchstone), pp 170-171.