

## The Purpose of Life (side 2)

To God, we recognize that He determines right and wrong.

We have no other God before us.

He is the one who defines the way we should go.

Nor do we make any likeness of God or of anything else that we may conceive of.

There are two commandments here.

Now I know, of course, that there are those who have assumed that these were the same, but this is not the case at all.

One is to have some God in place of the true God.

The second commandment involves the question of making something that symbolizes God.

God is a spirit and does not ask, in fact, expressly forbid that we make any replica of himself.

Further, we do not abuse or misuse or take His name in vain, and, of course, that we conduct ourselves in such a manner that we howl any time He has howled.

And God, of course, gave the Sabbath day, not at Sinai.

He gave it to Adam and Eve at the end of the week of recreation, when He rested and beheld what He had done, and asked men to rest on that day to consider, to contemplate, to study what God has done.

And those who do not observe this day are made up of those who simply do not know either what God has done or what He is doing.

And that's why the world has the doctrine of evolution, which presupposes a creation without a Creator.

And last, in my thought, but by no means least, and I'm picking it up from different points of view, not in the order in which they're given, He addresses children who become adults that we should honor our Father and our Mother, that is, to pay respect to those to whom we owe our existence.

This is a very important thing.

Sometimes young people fail to realize that if there had been no Father and Mother, there would be no children.

As our children have said on more than one occasion, it was nice to be wanted, that today we often abort in the world.

It's the opposite of what God intended.

In any case, God is revealing now to a nation which is also a church.

The broad outlines of His commandments, these define God's character.

We may not have seen it this way, but they define essentially how God lives, how He thinks, and how we should think.

He also asked them a little later to build, since they were a physical nation, to build a temporary dwelling for Him, and He asked the family of Aaron to serve Him in that temporary dwelling.

That was the tabernacle, which later became a structure called a temple, and the people who served Him, the family of Aaron, were called priests.

And they had people to assist them, the rest of the family of Levi, because Aaron was of the family of Levi, but all those who didn't descend from Aaron served the priests who did descend from Aaron.

And many other laws were given.

We won't go into detail, but I want you to note that God defined human conduct.

As it should be, in the Ten Commandments and many of the other laws given.

He also gave the physical nation the opportunity to recognize that God was in their presence, in their midst, in a temporary dwelling called a tabernacle, and that they could come to Him in physical service, and they could offer from time to time animal sacrifices, which involving the shedding of blood would look forward to someone who would shed His blood to pay the penalty for their sins.

Now it is significant that in that church, to whom God had revealed His truth as He revealed it to no other people, to no Indians in the New World, to no people in Europe or Africa, to no other people in Asia and most certainly not to the Aborigines of Australia, but to these people in the southwest of Asia and the Sinai Peninsula, He revealed to them the body of truth that defines properly what human character should be like.

And He also told them that they were not now being offered eternal life, that as God was not coming to dwell in them, but only among them.

And so they had a physical priesthood with sacrifices from year to year to remind them of their sins, to look forward to an event yet to come, which was the ultimate fulfillment of the Passover, and there was a temporary building showing that God did not permanently plan to be apart from the children of Israel in the building, but would ultimately be in there.

This nation was given God's government, but they got away from time to time and then returned back to that government, that's the story of the judges, will in fact look over the whole of what we call the Old Testament period and summarize it in such a simple way as this, that the nation that God called and the church that He formed to be the recipient of the truth, divided in an active rebellion following the death of Solomon, and only the house of Judah, but not the ten tribes living further north, retained the Bible.

And among the Jews, we today look for that revelation of God that we now call the Old Testament, that's not the way it was called, Jesus called it the law and the prophets and the writings, or the holy scriptures.

They were the recipients of this revelation and it preserved it for us.

It was the church that God used to whom, at a time in the days of Herod the King, Jesus came, Jesus, who was the word before, the Yahweh of the Old Testament, was born from Mary, by the Spirit of God overshadowing her and she conceived.

And the being that was born from her whom we know as Jesus was the one who pre-existed as the creator of the universe, who executed the will of God.

And so now his father recalls God, the father, and Jesus recalls his son.

This person was born of the house of Judah, not of the house of Levi associated with Judah in the nation.

Jesus was not a priest among men.

He was not a descendant of Aaron.

He was, in fact, reared in the synagogue, which represents the public buildings of God's own church.

He came to define the character of God.

He came as a rabbi, and I think few of us really realize that when Jesus was on earth, he was not addressed as priest, he was not addressed as father, he was addressed as rabbi.

That was his role.

He doesn't ask that we become either priest or rabbi.

When, of course, he sacrificed himself and offered himself to pay for human sins, he entered into the role of a priest at a level unlike Aaron.

But we won't cover that for the moment, we'll go back to Jesus' teaching.

While on earth, in his ministry, the best summary I will find in Matthew chapter 5, Jesus again stated the basic premise of God's character.

He takes a look at the Ten Commandments and other parts of the law, and he expounds them, and we call this the New Testament.

The difference between the Old Testament and the New is very simple.

Most people have conceived of the idea that everything was wrong with the Old and had to be corrected for the New, so that today we have substituted one thing for another.

This is not the case at all.

Jesus said, the law as I revealed it on Sinai stands as it is.

You read it as it is.

I have not come to change a single letter or a single bit of wording of the law.

I, however, ask you that when you look at the law, you don't look at it as the nation Israel did at Sinai, but you look at it as I intended it to be understood by people who have the Spirit of God, not by people who don't.

That is, I am going to come and by my spirit dwell in you or beget you so that we may be called the begotten sons of God and we may be born into his family.

But if we have the Spirit of God in us, then when we read the commandment, which says you shall not kill, we also perceive it says that we shouldn't even hate.

There are people who hate that think they have kept the law because they didn't kill the one whom they hated.

Jesus says that everyone who is even angry with his brother without a cause is ultimately liable to the judgment.

He asks us to examine the commandments, not by changing them, but by understanding them better than the physical nation Israel at Sinai ever could.

So we not only learn not to kill one another, we learn in what Jesus said that we don't even share animosity as people often do or grudges.

We learn all the way through here not only not to commit adultery, but not even to lust or covet someone else.

So Jesus went through all of the laws briefly and he named six basic areas and then he comes to the seventh and in the end, as the seventh one, he merely summarizes it and says in simple terms, be you therefore perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Having defined human character for what it should be, Jesus died.

He became a priest after the order of Melchizedek who was described in the book of Genesis.

That means that Christ, unlike Aaron and Aaron's descendants, offered himself up once to pay the penalty of sins for all.

The family of Aaron had to offer sacrifices every day and every year and it was repeated year by year.

Paul said in Hebrews that if those sacrifices could have actually forgiven people according to the conscience, why they wouldn't have had to repeat them again, that they were only animals, ghosts and sheep and cattle and dogs and pigeons and even sparrows.

They were just reminders and blood we shed, but here was a man who was falsely accused and Pilate turned him over to be executed even though he knew he was without guilt and Jesus offered himself once for all.

And having done so and given his life, he was buried and rose again after three days and three nights, ascended to heaven and was accepted of the Father in heaven as the offering of the way she's described in Leviticus 23 was also offered.

That's another story you should all know from the festival of Pentecost, period.

The Father accepted him as that perfect sacrifice.

He has no need ever again of sacrificing himself either on the cross or in symbolic form on any altar.

Having offered himself once for all, he now sits at the right hand of God the Father.

And he now has raised up his church, first by converting a significant number among the Jews to which he then added Greek, and as we turn, we note in the book of Romans chapter 10 and especially verse 13 that whereas the children of Israel were meant to be God's nations, they disobeyed and liked branches of an olive tree that didn't bear proper fruit were broken off into which tree gentiles like branches may be grafted in so that the nation Israel that God will use in the world tomorrow to govern the world over human beings will be composed of all those to whom the spirit of God has been given.

They include men such as Abel and Enoch and Noah and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and Joseph, judges and kings and prophets.

They also include many Jews who were converted in the Apostles' Day and Greeks.

And as time went on, some people who were converted when the church migrated out of the Byzantine realm into Armenia, later moved from Armenia to the Balkans and into the Alpine regions of Europe, where God raised up Peter Waldo.

And then the message was brought and people were added to the church in England following the introduction of the truth of God there in the period of the 12th century by Walter Lollard.

The message was brought to the United States in the 1660s to the then colony of Rhode Island.

God's people were added to the church as they migrated through West Virginia, through the Midwest to Oregon where this work developed when God called Mr. Armstrong in the 1920s.

And this work is the result of the effort that God has used him to do.

It is made up of people through all these 19th centuries, God's churches, and the centuries in the days of ancient Israel when a few were given God's spirit, made up of those who are thinking to fulfill the purpose of life.

One by repenting, which is the opposite of what the devil did, instead of inventing alternative ways, we repent of alternative ways.

The world invents, we are asked to repent.

That means we are now willing to go according to the law of God, we're willing to do what the commandment actually says.

All during this time when God's church was small and persecuted, there were great religions around the world and even those which came to be known as Christians, so that the civilization of this world in the West is Christian as some portions of this world have civilizations called Islam, or called Buddhism, or now atheism.

All of these are different ways men have gone.

They label it after men, some even labeled it after the name Christ.

There have been part and parcel to the wars of the Middle Ages.

Nations thought to be Christians go to war, that's the story of, of course, in our lifetime of the First World War and the Second World War, there was Christian Germany, Christian Poland, Christian France, Christian Italy, Christian United States, and Christian England.

And you had two world wars of all these people who not only did not keep the commandment which says you shall not kill, but inculcated the idea of hating your enemies.

That's the way the world view it.

The church is not made up of all those who may be called Christian in the world, but the few who have been willing to repent of doing their own thing, of turning around and going according to the law of God which defines the character of God.

After which they may, if they're baptized in water, receive the Holy Spirit.

That baptism is a burial in water that symbolizes they want to bury their past, to come up with new life, in this case with the addition of the Spirit of God that makes man immortal ultimately, because man was born mortal, there is no immortal soul in man.

Man is a soul, and the soul that sends it shall die.

What man needs, unlike angels who were made spirits, man needs the addition, in this case of God's Spirit, which imparts a bit of his character little by little, and also the beginning of potential eternal life.

Until we read in 2 Peter 1.4 that we have become, if we're converted and receive the Spirit of God, a part of the divine nation which enables us ultimately to inherit the kingdom of God, to be like God is, to have his character and with Jesus Christ to share with him first the rule of the world for a thousand years, then the rule of the world after that for two jubilees, or two fifty-year periods, or a hundred years, when we will deal with all human beings who have lived and died in a good, and the whole world will rethink its life, comparing six thousand years of man's way to a thousand years of God.

And then we come to the end when this kingdom of this earth is delivered up to God and the Father, and he will reign over all, and it is at this point that we look upon eternity when the human experience is through, when angels who rebelled are judged, and when those who obeyed are our servants, and there will be a change in the earth which will be burned up, and the heavens will be transformed also, and we look forward to a new heaven and newer, wherein there is no sin, wherein the government of God will be executed every place, and the universe will be placed under our feet, that is, as Paul said in Hebrews, not everything now has been subjected to man, but there is coming a time when the church, collectively in all the human family that has been resettled, converted, and ultimately born again, functioning as the wife of Christ who is the husband, just as ancient Israel should have been the wife, and Yahweh the husband, that when we are all born into the kingdom of God, we will have all things placed under our feet, but that would not be possible to extend the government of God throughout all the imaginable universe, then not composed of matter as we know it but transformed, if in the first place the character of God had not been formed enough, because God will not share the universe with anyone whom he cannot rule, and he will not share it with any who are unwilling voluntarily to take upon themselves the responsibility of exercising choice and self-control. We are not automatons, we are here to do, and we must choose the character of God, and when that has been chosen and carried out through life, and when we stumble and fall, we ask forgiveness which can be given us, then we shall be qualified for various responsibilities in the kingdom of God. The three gifts of the Holy Spirit means that we can be born into the kingdom of God. That is a three gift.

You don't qualify for eternal life. Christ did that for us. Having then made the spirit of God available, we are asked to qualify for responsibility in that kingdom, and there is a big difference. Here then, as most of you who will be leaving and for those who will be coming back to Pasadena, is a brief summary from a little different perspective, not so closely attached to the Feast of Tabernacles, but another perspective looking at the purpose of life from the point of view of the importance of human character, that it must ultimately be replaced by God's character in us through the Holy Spirit.