



Live True to Your Purpose

God saved us for a purpose. Although being in Christ delivers innumerable benefits to believers, one benefit outshines the rest: the believer’s ability to glorify God by becoming like Christ.

Read the following passages. Write out the purpose statement given in each passage (look for phrases such as “*that*” and “*in order that*”).

Passage	Purpose Statement
Romans 6:4	
Romans 7:4	
Romans 8:3-4	
Romans 8:29	
2 Corinthians 5:14-15	
2 Corinthians 5:21	
Titus 2:11-14	
Titus 3:4-8	

We were saved to be like Christ. But often, we do not accurately reflect His thoughts and values or actively love God and others in our daily lives. Scripture teaches us that while we are responsible for becoming like Christ, we cannot do it on our own. God designed the sanctification process to be a cooperative effort. We must obey, but we can’t obey in our own strength. We need God.

Several years ago, our family decided to try our hand at creating a vegetable garden. We envisioned summer meals of freshly-picked bush beans, sun-ripened tomatoes, and baby cucumbers. But desiring a garden and actually having one are two different things. We had to act on our desire—purchasing everything we needed to make a raised bed, working nutrients into the soil, and planting the seeds. Next came weeks of daily watering, weeding, and warding off the many bunnies who thought we planted the garden just for them. After a time, small sprouts emerged from the ground, the plants eventually matured, and fruit began to appear on the vines.

Sitting around the dinner table enjoying our first taste of all our hard work, our family talked about who actually grew the green beans we were eating. Was it *God* or *us*? Truth is, no matter how hard we work, none of us can make a seed grow or produce fruit. That requires the work of God. But it is equally true that a seed will never grow into a fruit-producing plant without our careful effort. We cooperate with God—applying all we know about gardening, while at the same time trusting Him to bring about the growth only He can produce.

In the same way, biblical change requires both *dependence* and *obedience*. Read **Philippians 2:12-13**, **Romans 8:3-5**, and **Romans 8:12-14**. As you read through each passage, look for what the Bible says about God's role and your role in the process of becoming more like Christ.

- In your own words, describe **God's role** in the change process:

- In your own words, describe **your role** in the change process:

As we learned from Romans 5, our living union with Christ is what helps us in this “already/not yet” stage in which we live: already secure in Christ, but not yet perfect in our sinful flesh. While we are legally perfect before God (this is what the Bible calls being *justified*), He also wants us to become more like His Son in experience (this is what the Bible calls being *sanctified*). Through our union with Jesus, we are enabled to live in the reality of what we are in Christ.

For every believer, there is a hope-filled expectation, grounded in the gospel, that our living, vital, dynamic connection to Christ will make a difference in our every-day lives (Romans 8:13).

- Is there a specific sin that consistently keeps you from whole-heartedly pursuing your purpose as a believer?

- Is there a way God has shown you that you need to be growing in Christlikeness, but you are struggling to do it?

- What next step can you take to intentionally nurture a growing affection for what God loves and values?

Just as we sin in specific ways, we grow in specific ways. Romans 6:1-14, like Ephesians 4:17-24 and Colossians 3:1-18, provides God's prescribed means for putting sin to death and putting on the likeness of Christ. Work through the personal growth study *A Plan for Killing Sin*¹ to begin creating a biblical strategy for putting a specific sin habit in your life to death. Invite a godly, trusted adult to help you implement your plan. How will you cooperate with the work God is doing in you to make you like His Son? Live true to your purpose as a believer!

¹ *A Plan for Killing Sin* is available at lifelineforteens.com/help-im-doubting/.