

GOD'S PURPOSE, PLOT & PERSON

By James Mullen

God's Purpose

I. **Out of love (Ephesians 1:4; Revelation 4:11) God planned to create and redeem in order to display the fullness of His glorious, triune Godhead, the Trinity.** (1 Chronicles 29:10-11; Isaiah 43:7, 48:11; Romans 11:36)

God's glory in creation and redemption has four components to it as revealed in Scripture:

1. The internal weight of His triune Being (Exodus 33:18; Isaiah 6:3; 1 Timothy 6:15-16)
2. The manifestation of that weight. (Psalms 19:1-14; Isaiah 40:5, 66:19; Ezekiel 10:4, 43:2)
3. The communication of that to the creature. (Psalms 119:7, 18, 34; Isaiah 35:2, 49:3; Romans 9:23)
4. The love, delight and praise of the creature back unto the glory of this triune Godhead (Psalms 96:7-8, 105:3, 149:5; Isaiah 24:16; Jeremiah 13:15; Ephesians 1:6, 12) and the Holy Spirit inspired love of the creature communicating and displaying proper words and actions to others unto the glory of God (Ephesians 5:17-20; Colossians 3:16-17; Philippians 1:8-11)

II. **There's a problem. This God is transcendent, infinite, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, immutable – an invisible, triune Spirit who is present in fullness everywhere.**

"God, the blessed and only ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To Him be honor and might forever. Amen." 1 Timothy 6:15-16

This infinite Being is beyond our finite comprehension.

God's Plot

III. **We need help in "getting it." (Psalms 139:5-6) He's too big!!! Praise the Lord, He's given us help through a theme, a plot – the kingdom theme.**

- 1) A kingdom must have:
 - a) A king
 - b) A realm of subjects to rule
 - c) A reign being carried out (*"There can be no kingdom in the total sense without the ruler, the realm, and the reigning function."* Alva McClain)
- 2) There are two kingdoms revealed in the Scriptures, two thrones.
 - a) The universal kingdom, throne and reign of God. The triune God governs this kingdom. He never relinquishes it. (Psalms 47:7-9; Daniel 4:34-35; Revelation 4:1-11)
 - b) The mediatorial kingdom, throne and reign of God. This is a delegated sovereignty mediated by creatures. (Genesis 1:26-28, 3:15; Colossians 1:12-13; Revelation 11:15)

IV. **This mediatorial kingdom (ruler, subjects, reign) stretches from cover to cover in the Scriptures.**

- 1) Adam was the king of the earth and was given a delegated reign over every creature on the earth. (Genesis 1:26-28; Psalms 8:3-8)

- 2) Christ returning, saving, conquering, judging and ruling as King of kings and Lord of lords as revealed in Revelation chapters 19-22. (1 Corinthians 15:22-26)

V. The revelation of God through His mediatorial kingdom – an overview

- 1) Adam was given a delegated, mediatorial kingdom to reign over in his upright position and condition. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31; Ecclesiastes 7:29; 1 Timothy 4:4)
- 2) In this upright condition Adam had:
 - a) Direct knowledge of God. (Genesis 1:29, 2:16; Ecclesiastes 7:29)
 - b) Righteous standing before God. This gave him the freedom to love God. (Genesis 2:25, Ecclesiastes 7:29)
 - c) Holy submission to God's word. (Genesis 2:22-25; Ecclesiastes 7:29)

VI. This delegated/inherited kingdom was forfeited because of Adam's sin (the Fall). Adam lost this kingdom and his rights over it. (Genesis 3:24; Hebrews 2:8)

- 1) God now delegated this kingdom over to Satan (Genesis 3:15); the god of this age (Luke 4:6; 2 Corinthians 4:4); the ruler of this world (Ephesians 2:1-2); the spirit who is now at work in the sons of disobedience (Genesis 3:15; Ephesians 2:2). Satan is the prosecuting attorney (Revelation 12:10) against mankind and has delegated power to accuse and condemn guilty men (Hebrews 2:14) to eternal death before the Great Judge, God. Satan was given authority over the world to influence and sway fallen man ensuring their:
 - a) Ignorance (2 Corinthians 4:4)
 - b) Guilt, fear and misery (Hebrews 2:14-15)
 - c) Rebellion (Romans 8:7; Ephesians 2:2)Thus, the image of God in man was defaced, perverted and distorted (Genesis 6:5).

VII. After the Fall, God mediated His rule and started to win back His kingdom prophetically and to plant the roots in types, signs and symbols all pointing to the mediatorial king who could, and would, win it back from Satan (Colossians 1:13, 3:1-2; Hebrews 1:3).

- 1) God mediated this rule through:
 - a) Prophets – knowledge/truth (Exodus 3:40; Matthew 5:17; Hebrews 1:1)
 - b) Priests – righteousness/peace/love (Numbers 28:1-15, 29:7-11;; Hebrews 7:11, 23-25)
 - c) Kings – bringing submission/assurance/protection (Judges 17:6, 2 Samuel 8:1-14; 1 Chronicles 18:1-13; 2 Chronicles 20:29-30; Romans 13:1-5)
- 2) These were types and pictures pointing to the greatest prophet, priest and king who could and would win back the kingdom/inheritance for mankind. (Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11, Colossians 2:16-17)

VIII. Fallen man needed to be restored to spiritual beauty. He needed the image of God in him to be restored and even increased in order to resemble God's holy image (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). A spiritual being consists of three essential powers. They are: 1) the power of understanding, 2) the power of emotions and 3) the power of choice. However, spiritual beauty is not the sum of these three powers alone. The proper inclination of these three powers is necessary. They, these spiritual powers, need to be inclined toward God and His Word. In addition, the knowledge and wisdom, love and holy emotion as well as the righteousness of choice in word and deed driving and resulting from these powers is what spiritual beauty is, how it is experienced, seen and felt. What do these three powers of understanding, emotion and choice hold, contain, experience, know, love, delight in and do? Who is the object of these three powers? Fallen man needed:

- 1) A prophet who was capable of imparting knowledge, absolute truth to his soul and overcoming the ignorance into which he had fallen (Deuteronomy 18:18-19).

- 2) A priest who could make the final, infinitely valuable, atoning sacrifice to remove man's guilt; provide that perfect righteousness that man needed to free him to love by giving him peace; and pray for him with perfect wisdom and knowledge of what he (man) needed. (Colossians 2:3; Hebrews 7:23-27)
- 3) A king, perfect and omnipotent, who had the authority (Acts 2:31-33) and power to send the Holy Spirit to change our hearts restoring the image of God in the inner man (Colossians 2:11), dwell there, illuminate, keep, and sanctify us (Hebrews 12:2). A king who could guarantee our salvation (John 10:27-28) and protection and give us confidence and assurance. A king who was trustworthy in every way.

God's Person

IX. Thus this impossible to know, triune, invisible Spirit came down, down, down and added humanity to His nature. (John 14:8-9; Philippians 2:6-8)

X. The second Person of the Trinity, the Son, added humanity (John 1:14) to His Person. This was prophesied in Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."

- 1) Through His Person and life (John 14:8-9; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Hebrews 1:3) we see God – as He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God. (Colossians 1:15) God becomes knowable in an intimate way in Christ Jesus (John 1).
- 2) Through His (Jesus') teaching we understand God. (Deuteronomy 18:15-19; John 12:49-50; Acts 3:22)
- 3) Through His attributes which are manifested through His humanity we stand in awe of God – His omniscience (Colossians 1:15-18; 2:9-11), omnipotence, eternity (John 8:58), love, compassion, gentleness, courage, humility in becoming a baby dependent upon his parents (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John)

Let's key in on the diverse, varied and different excellencies the God-Man displays in His person, offices and work:

a. Though He is endlessly high, majestic, lofty (Matthew 28:18; Philippians 2:9-11). His riches are immense and inexhaustible (Isaiah 6:1-5; John 12:40-41). He is infinitely glorious and deserves the fullest esteem from creatures. (Philippians 2:6-11)

b. He became a baby born in a manger utterly dependent upon his parents to change Him, feed Him, clothe Him, teach Him, etc., etc., etc. (Isaiah 53:1-3; Luke 2:7)

c. *"He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him."* Isaiah 53: 1-3

d. *"While they (Joseph & Mary) were there (in Bethlehem), the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."* Luke 2:6-7

e. Luke 2:8-12 talks about his first visitors – shepherds who lived in a field (stinky, humble, low, shepherds) who came, saw and worshiped this baby and then ran out to tell others about him.

f. This infinite, transcendent, eternal, omnipresent, invisible, triune, Spirit became fully knowable through the second person in the Godhead adding humanity to Himself and displaying God to mankind through His Incarnation so that we have the ability, by grace through faith, to

“get it,” to feel it, to experience it and to worship Him forever and ever. (John 1:18; Colossians 1:15)

Humility displayed in:

His life – Isaiah 53:4-9; Luke 2:52

His suffering – Matthew 26:38-39; Luke 22:43

His obedience – Philippians 2:6-8; Hebrews 5:7-10

- XI.** Through the Incarnation of the Son, He won back all the delegated rights of the inheritance that man had forfeited and lost in the Fall and more, much more (Hebrews 2). He won for us heaven and an experience of and with God that we could never have had but through His person, offices and work being known, loved, enjoyed and experienced by His sending His Holy Spirit to regenerate, illuminate, inspire, influence and fill our hearts forever and ever to the glory of God forever (Romans 8:16-17). In teaching about the Holy Spirit (John 15-17; Matthew 28:18-21) and in pouring Him out on the church all three persons in the Godhead were revealed in action, communicated, able to be known, loved, enjoyed and experienced (Acts 2:32-33; 2 Corinthians 13:14)
- XII.** At the cross, Jesus legally or positionally defeated the devil and took away all his legal rights in God’s courtroom over the mediatorial kingdom and mankind (John 12:30-32, 16:11; Colossians 2:15). However, He (Jesus) still allows Satan to rule mediatorially over unbelievers (2 Corinthians 4:4).
- 1) Jesus has taken the throne of the universal kingdom (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:18; Philippians 2:9-11; Revelation 3:21), being God and man, and rules sovereignly over everything even Satan and demons to complete the winning back of the godly side/part of the mediatorial kingdom which is now divided – part under satanic rule and part under Christ’s rule as God-Man (Colossians 1:13; 2 Timothy 2:26). The Old Testament “divided kingdom” typified this disproportions and all.
- XIII.** Jesus will return in the future as revealed in Revelation chapters 19-22 and will take back the mediatorial kingdom completely. He will reign and rule publicly, practically and visibly. The whole world will be in subjection to His commanded will (Isaiah 9:7) and immediate judgment. (Zechariah 14:8-9)
- XIV.** Through Jesus Christ, God-Man’s return and final judgment, He will display and manifest God to mankind so completely that knowing this incomprehensible God will be possible. He will become fully knowable, loved, delighted in and experienced forever by His elect (John 14:8-9,17:24; Revelation 7:17).
- XV.** This incomprehensible God can be comprehended (by grace), known, loved, enjoyed and obeyed NOW, in measure, as we look to Jesus Christ (Hebrews 12:2), the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15); the radiance of God’s glory (Hebrews 1:3). The more we see of Jesus in His divine glory, the more we see the Father’s divine glory for they are one in nature (essential characteristics and qualities). The Father is honored, worshiped, glorified and pleased when we, by His grace, trust, pray to and worship His Chosen and Anointed One, Jesus Christ (John 5:22, 14:13, 15:7-8; Ephesians 3:14-21; Colossians 2:2-3, 3:1-4, 3:16-17; Hebrews 12:2-3; 2 Peter 3:18).
- 1) Through His Word (Colossians 3:16 – “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly . . .”)
 - 2) As we consider Him (Hebrews 12:3) and set our thoughts on Him (Hebrews 3:1-2) and pay more careful attention to Him in His person, offices and work (Hebrews 2:1) we can, by the Holy

Spirit, through His Word, know, love, trust (Ephesians 3:17-19), enjoy and experience God in greater degrees everyday through Him (Jesus), by Him (Holy Spirit), and to Him (Father).

- 3) Jesus' Word says that He will return and give us glorified bodies so that all of our fleshy powers and senses will be renewed and complement our spiritual powers (Philippians 3: 20-21). Thus, flesh and spirit will be glorified (Romans 8:23-24).

XVI. His Word energized by His Holy Spirit (Ephesians 6:17) is the second, third and fourth components or means in God's purpose (His glory) (Psalms 138:2; Jeremiah 13:15; 2 Thessalonians 3:1). The second being the revelation (Ephesians 1:17-18, 3:16) of His internal weight and third is the communication of that to the creature's understanding (2 Corinthians 3:17-18). The fourth is that knowledge/Word being the means by which your soul's emotions are stirred (Jeremiah 15:16), kindled and moved to drive your power of choice to choose to praise, worship, adore and glorify God by the Holy Spirit (Romans 11:32-36; Philippians 3:3; 2 Peter 1:3-5).

XVII. Thus this incomprehensible, invisible, triune Spirit is, in all His distinctions (three Persons) and in all His unity (one God), seen, known, loved, enjoyed and experienced through gazing on the image of this invisible God, the God-Man, the Son whom the Father anointed and sent by the Holy Spirit. Christ has been appointed heir of all things (Hebrews 1:2). This inheritance that Christ bought back for mankind is mainly the triune God. Thus God is the gospel (Psalms 16:5, 11; 73:26; Lamentations 3:24; Ephesians 1:13-14) Amen.

John Owen writes:

"Man, by sin, lost his inheritance and forfeited all rights to earth and heaven. But God has invested the whole inheritance in his son, making Him the heir of it all. Now Christ, by His death, has redeemed the inheritance and purchased the possession of it for us . . . Christ is now the great trustee for His people. He holds our inheritance in trust until that day when we shall enter into it. And our interest in this inheritance depends on our union with him. This in turn comes about through our partaking in the Spirit of Christ, as the apostle declares (Romans 8:14-17) 'If you are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.' The whole inheritance was His by right, but He has purchased a joint right to it for us. But in the meantime, before we enter fully into it, we have an earnest or guarantee that we shall have it. We enter our inheritance fully only when our bodies are redeemed fully from the dust of the grave (Romans 8:23). We have 'the firstfruits of the Spirit' and He gives us a foretaste of the glories to come. The inheritance itself, I believe to be the highest participation with Christ in His glory and honor as 'heir of all things' that our natures are capable of receiving." (*The Spirit and the Church*, pp 168-9)