

## Introduction

When I turned professional in 1977, the sprinkler heads on golf courses were not marked with yardages to the green. Today, golfers have laser guns and can check distances in the practice rounds. There are yardage books that tell you exactly how far you have from given spots on the course to the front of the green, and to the back of the green. There were no yardage books available, so golfers made their own books. I was very good at walking golf courses and making accurate yardage books. I was usually within 1 yard when walking 150 yards off, so that is pretty accurate. Having good yardages was critical in club selection, so getting my yardages every week was a high priority for me. The tour pros today have perfect books available and they don't have to spend much time on this task. I found the key to getting good yardages was to have a focal point to walk towards. I would pick out a tree, bunker, or distinctive mark and keep my eyes focused on that while I walked. When there was dew on the grass, I frequently noticed how golfers were unable to walk in a straight line. To get accurate yardages, you have to walk in a straight line. They probably did not have a focus point to keep them in line.

On a bigger scale, when I was about seven or eight years old I made a decision to become a professional golfer. I was a fantastic tennis player and could have gone professional in that sport, but I chose golf. During my high school years and college years, every decision that I made was made with professional golf in my sights. I wrestled, but I did it to get stronger and more conditioned for golf in the spring. I always asked myself questions like: How would this prepare me for golf? How would this help me reach my goal? Could this be detrimental to my future as a golf professional. I lived a very purposeful and focused life, and it helped me walk a straight path. When I earned my PGA Tour card in 1978 I was the youngest player on the PGA Tour. Keeping my eyes focused on my goal kept me on track.

A few years after becoming a Christian, the Lord spoke to me out of Ezra 7:10, which says, "For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice *it*, and to teach *His* statutes and ordinances in Israel." God said that I was going to be a teacher, and that I needed to study His word, apply it to my life, and teach it to others. I sometimes think of it in terms of three P's. I am to Prepare, Practice, and Preach. Though I serve people and do many other things, my primary function in the body has been to teach. I have kept my life purpose in front of me, and it has helped me to be fruitful in my ministry.

In our text today, Jesus made a comment that He had come for this purpose. Jesus kept His life purpose before Him and the decisions that He made in His life and ministry were always in line with His purpose. This morning, we are going to look at living a life of purpose. We will see that Jesus was purposeful in His prayer life. Second, we will see that He was purposeful in His ministry.

## 09 A Life Of Purpose (Mark 1:35-39)

1. Jesus was purposeful in His prayer life
2. Jesus was purposeful in His Ministry

(Mark 1:35-39) "In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left *the house*, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there. {36} Simon and his companions searched for Him; {37} they found Him, and said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You." {38} He said to them, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach

there also; for that is what I came for." {39} And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons."

### 1. Jesus Was Purposeful In His Prayer Life

Jesus started His day pretty early. The NASB reads in the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up. The KJV translates it a little differently. It reads, "a great while before day." The Greek word is *ennychos* and it means before day. However, there is another adjective in the Greek text before this word, and it is *lian* (Strong's G3029), and it means exceedingly. So, this is exceedingly before daybreak. Some scholars say it was the fourth watch of the night which is from 3 a.m. to 6 a.m., and that Jesus got up around three in the morning and went to pray.

How many of you get up at three in the morning. If you had a 6:00 flight you might get up at three in the morning. I would guess that you would set your alarm clock if you needed to get up that early. You would probably have your bags packed, clothes laid out, and if you are a man, you would probably shave the night before. You would be very intentional about everything if you had to get up at that hour. One thing that I would try to do is get to bed on time. I would not stay up late and then try to get up that early.

I want to take a look at where we left off last week. In Mark 1:32, when evening came and the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. The sun had set and it was dark, and they BEGAN bringing to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. In verse thirty-three, the whole city had gathered at the door. In verse thirty-four, Jesus healed many who were ill and cast out many demons. He ministered to a lot of folks that night. This was not a five-minute ministry time. This probably took many hours. Jesus was probably exhausted when this was finished.

(Mark 1:32-34) "When evening came, after the sun had set, they *began* bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. {33} And the whole city had gathered at the door. {34} And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was."

But, let me back up even further. In Mark 1:21, we find out that this was the Sabbath, and Jesus had gone to the synagogue and taught. Remember that they were amazed at His teaching because He was not teaching like the scribes. Jesus was teaching with authority. Then, after preaching, He began ministering to them and He healed the sick and cast out demons. He poured Himself out at the synagogue. When I get home from church on Sunday afternoon, I am exhausted. I pour everything I have into leading worship and preaching and I come home exhausted. Jesus was probably pretty exhausted when He got done preaching at the synagogue.

(Mark 1:21-27) "They went into Capernaum; and immediately on the Sabbath He entered the synagogue and *began* to teach. {22} They were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes....{27} They were all amazed, so that they debated among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him."

But that is not all. After leaving the synagogue, He went to Andrew and Peter's house, where Peter's mother-in-law was sick in bed with fever. Jesus healed her and she got up and waited on them. We don't know how big the gathering was at Andrew and Peter's house, but my guess is that it was a pretty large family gathering. I don't think Jesus had lunch and took a nap. He was

probably tied up with family and friends all afternoon. He was probably answering lots of questions. This was one busy day, and our text starts when it was already dark.

(Mark 1:29-31) “And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. {30} Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to Jesus about her. {31} And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she waited on them.”

They did not have alarm clocks in those days, so Jesus did not rely on His alarm clock to wake Him up at that hour. I believe that this was the habit of Jesus. I believe He regularly got up early in the morning, a great while before day, and went to a lonely place to pray. His body was in a rhythm and He got up at the same time because His body was accustomed to getting up early. Notice in Luke’s account that it said that Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray. This was not an isolated event. This was a lifestyle for Jesus. He was in the habit of getting up early and going to a quiet place and praying.

(Luke 5:15-16) “But the news about Him was spreading even farther, and large crowds were gathering to hear *Him* and to be healed of their sicknesses. {16} But Jesus Himself would *often* slip away to the wilderness and pray.”

Another factor to Jesus’ ability to get up and pray at that hour is found in Isaiah 40:28-31. Isaiah starts by asking a couple of questions. “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired.” Jesus is God. He is the Everlasting God. He is the Lord. He is the Creator. John said that apart from Him, nothing that was created was created. God does not become weary or tired. Jesus is the Son of God, but He is also the Son of Man. He was God in the flesh and He was subject to weariness just like us. The prophet went on to say that those that wait upon the Lord will gain new strength. They will mount up with wings like eagles. They will run and not get tired. They will walk and not become weary. Jesus’ prayer time was time with the Father. It was time waiting on God the Father, and it was a time that He gained new strength. Jesus was running at a pretty fast pace, but He was not tired or weary because He was waiting on God the Father.

(Is 40:28-31) “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. {29} He gives strength to the weary, And to *him who* lacks might He increases power. {30} Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly, {31} Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up *with* wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.”

Jesus got up and went to a secluded or solitary place and prayed. Finding a quiet place to meet with the Lord is important. Karen does not have here quiet times with me. We pray together every morning, but that is our joint prayer time. She wants that alone time with the Father. She wants undistracted time with the Father. I would distract her. It is important for us to spend time alone with the Father. That can be difficult. Jesus was at Andrew and Peter’s house. Peter and his wife were there. We don’t know if they had children. The other disciples were there. There were probably a lot of people in the house and Jesus wanted some alone time with the Father, where He would not have interruptions or distractions. The only way He was going to get that time was to get up and leave the house, and go to a secluded place, and that is exactly what He did.

What was Jesus praying about? I cannot tell you what He was praying, as our text does not explicitly tell us. But, when the disciples found Him and told Him that everyone was looking for Him, He said, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for." I think that this is what Jesus was praying about. He was praying about His next steps. He was praying about preaching about the kingdom. He was praying for the cities and places that He would be ministering in. Then, Mark said that "And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons." He did the things that He had been praying about. Jesus said that out of the mouth comes that which lies within the heart? What was on Jesus' heart? Fulfilling the purposes for which He had been sent.

I want to take a minute to look at something else. In Luke 11 and Matthew 6, we are given the Lord's Prayer. This was not something to memorize and pray or sing. There is nothing wrong with any of those things. In fact, it would be a good passage to memorize, meditate on, pray, sing, and apply in your life. However, I believe the Lord's Prayer is really the Model Prayer. Jesus gave us a prayer model to emulate. I am not going to take the time to go in depth. Years ago I did a six-week series on the Lord's Prayer, and did a separate message on each point of the prayer. But, I do want to take just a minute to go through it and give some examples. I will use Matthew's rendering this morning. Before I get to Matthew's account, I want to read Luke's preface.

(Luke 11:1) "It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples.'"

The disciples had been observing Jesus praying. They had seen the results of His prayers. They knew that there was a connection between the activity of the Holy Spirit and His prayer life, and they wanted to learn more. So, they asked Jesus to teach them to pray. So let's now go over to Matthew 6:9 and look at His prayer model.

(Matt 6:9-13) "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. {10} 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. {11} 'Give us this day our daily bread. {12} 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. {13} 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]"

Jesus said to begin with addressing our prayers to the Father and to hallow His name. To hallow means to make holy, sanctify, or to consecrate. We hallow His name by giving thanks and praises to Him. In the morning, Karen and I spend a large part of our time just giving thanks and praises to the Lord. Many times I will have a theme in our time of hallowing His name. We might thank Him for being our Shepherd. We will thank Him for leading us and feeding us. We will thank Him for watching over us. We will thank Him for letting us hear His voice. We will thank Him for leading us by still waters and making us lie down in green pastures. We will thank Him for His rod and staff. We will praise Him for being the good Shepherd that laid His life down for us. We may use some names like Jehovah Rohi, which means the Lord God our Shepherd. We may praise Him for being our Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4). We begin our prayers with thanksgivings and praise. That is also what Psalm 100:4 instructs us to do. We are to enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise.

(Ps 100:4) “Enter His gates with thanksgiving *And* His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name.”

The next area of the Lord’s Prayer is to pray for His kingdom to come and His will to be done. I believe that Jesus was praying just that when the disciples found Him. He was praying about preaching the kingdom of God to all those other cities. Jesus was constantly praying for the Father’s will to be done. Even when He was about to be arrested and crucified, Jesus prayed, “Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me, yet not My will, but Yours be done.” He had asked the disciples to pray with Him, but they kept falling asleep. After the second time, He again prayed the same thing, “My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done.” Jesus was praying for God’s will to be done. We should pray likewise.

(Matt 26:39-42) “And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.... {42} He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done.”

The next area is to pray about our daily bread. Karen and I pray for God’s provision in our lives. We also recognize that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, so we also pray for God to give us spiritual bread. We ask Him to feed our souls and to transform us with His word. We also thank God for His faithful provision.

The next area is to pray for forgiveness. Karen and I do not spend much time praying this together. When I miss the mark, I ask God to forgive me. When others sin against me, I forgive them. I don’t wait for our prayer time together to do those things. I pray about these things as they come up. We are to forgive those that trespass or sin against us. We are also to ask God to forgive us for our sins. Again, we should ask God immediately to forgive us for our sins. God wants a zero balance on our ledger with Him and with others. We must ask for forgiveness and we should give forgiveness to others.

The next area of the Lord’s prayer is to pray that we do not enter into temptation and for God to deliver us from evil. When Jesus was in the garden praying right before His arrest, He took His disciples with Him to pray. He gave them instructions about what to pray. Jesus knew what was going to happen. He knew that Peter would deny Him three times before a rooster crowed. He knew that they were going to be tempted, and so He told them to pray that they would not enter into temptation. He went away to pray and when He came back, He found them sleeping, rather than praying that they would not enter into temptation. He asked them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not enter into temptation.” I am sure that the Lord, who had been tempted in all things and was without sin, knew how important it was for them to pray that they would not enter into temptation. Jesus prayed it for Himself. He taught the disciples to pray that they would not enter into temptation. In the model prayer, He teaches us that we should pray that we will not enter into temptation, and that we should depart from evil.

(Luke 22:40-46) “When He arrived at the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation.... {45} When He rose from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping from sorrow, {46} and said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not enter into temptation.”

Jesus began the model prayer with praise and He ends His prayer with praise. He said, "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." We want everything that we do to glorify God. We want His kingdom and His power to rule and to reign.

(Matt 6:13) "And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]"

## 2. Jesus Was Purposeful In His Ministry

As soon as the disciples found Jesus, He said, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for." Then, Jesus did exactly that. He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons. Jesus knew what He had come for and He kept His eyes focused on what the Father had asked Him to do. He lived a life of purpose.

(Mark 1:38-39) "He said to them, "Let us go somewhere else to the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also; for that is what I came for." {39} And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out the demons."

## Conclusion and Applications

In Genesis 1-2, we have the account of God creating the heavens and the earth. We found that there were four purposes for us. There are four R's for the four purposes God has for us. First, He created us in His image because He wanted to Relate to us. Second, He told us to Reproduce. We are to multiply and fill the earth. Third, we are to Represent Him. Fourth, we are to Rule over the earth. Now, I want to look at Jesus' ministry and see how it lines up with God's purposes for us.

Jesus got up early in the morning so that He could Relate to the Father. He was in constant communication with Him. Notice what John wrote in John 5:19-20. Jesus said He only did what He saw the Father doing. Jesus said that the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing. He and the Father had a great relationship and they communicated with One another. He wants to do the same thing with us, and one of the chief ways that we communicate is through prayers. Our prayer times should have time for us to listen. It should not be a one-way communication. Good relationships take time together and good two-way communication.

(John 5:19-20) "Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. {20} For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and *the Father* will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel."

The second purpose was to Reproduce and fill the earth. We just finished looking at Jesus beginning to gather His disciples. He called them to follow Him and He would make them fishers of men. He was Reproducing Himself by preaching the gospel and making disciples. He was also teaching them to be fruitful. Jesus' ministry was purposeful in that He Reproduced.

The third purpose was to Represent Him. We are to be His ambassadors. We were made in His image for a reason. We are to Represent Him. In John 14:7-9, Jesus said, If you had known Me, you have known My Father also; from now on you know Him and have seen Him....He who has seen Me has seen the Father.” Jesus was the perfect Representation of the Father.

(John 14:7-9) “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him.” {8} Philip \*said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." {9} Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how *can* you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

The fourth purpose was to Rule. Notice what Jesus was preaching. The kingdom of God is at hand. What is the kingdom of God? The kingdom of God is the rule and reign of God. Jesus was bringing about the rule and reign of God here on earth. We also saw what Jesus prayed in the model prayer, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Jesus is the perfect model of living a life with purpose.

How are you doing in living for God’s purpose? Are you spending time in prayer, relating to Him? Are you listening to Him tell you and show you what He is doing? Are you spending time in His word, and allowing it to perform its transforming work in our lives. If we are going to Represent Him, we must be transformed by the renewing of our minds. Our quiet times are the right time to get into His word and let His word get into us.

Are you Reproducing? Are you making disciples? Are you investing and pouring out your life into those around you? Are you bringing about God’s rule here on earth? Are you preaching the kingdom of God? Are you telling people the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the gospel? Are you praying for His kingdom to come and His will to be done here on earth?

Jesus lived His life with purpose. He was purposeful in His prayer life and He was purposeful in His ministry. Jesus wants us to live our lives with purpose. Spending time in God’s word and in prayer is a key part of living a life of purpose.

Perhaps this morning you have never received Christ into your life. The kingdom of God is at hand. I encourage you to receive Christ this morning if you have not done that. Simply tell God in prayer that you believe that He is the Son of God and that He came and died for our sins and rose from the dead. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins and to come into your life as your Lord and Savior. It is that simple. I encourage you to start this wonderful journey with Christ today.

**Introduction** (Ezra 7:10, Mark 1:35-39)

**1. Jesus Was Purposeful In His Prayer Life** (Mark 1:32-34, Mark 1:21-27, 1:29-31, Luke 5:15-16, Is 40:28-31, Luke 11:1, Matt 6:9-13, 1 Peter 5:4, Ps 100:4, Matt 26:39-42, Luke 22:40-46, Matt 6:13)

**2. Jesus Was Purposeful In His Ministry** (Mark 1:38-39)

**Conclusion and Applications** (Gen 1-2, John 5:19-20, 14:7-9)