

The Christian Arsenal

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**CREATED TO BECOME LIKE CHRIST
The Purpose Driven Life**

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Part 4

INTRO: You were planned for God's Pleasure – that's called worship.
You were formed for God's Family – That's called fellowship.

"From the very beginning God decided that those who came to Him - and He knew who would - should become like His Son..." Rom 8:29 (LB)

God doesn't want us to become a god; He wants us to become godly.

"God wants us to grow up... like Christ in everything." Eph. 4:15 (Msg)

MY 3rd PURPOSE IN LIFE IS TO BECOME LIKE CHRIST - "Discipleship"

"We look at the Son and see God's original purpose in everything..." Col. 1:15 (Msg)

HOW DOES GOD HELP ME GROW SPIRITUALLY?

- He uses the Bible – It takes truth to transform us.
- He uses people – we learn from each other.

"In all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." Rom. 8:28 (NIV)

THREE UNEXPECTED TOOLS THAT GOD USES TO GROW US

1. GOD USES TROUBLE TO TEACH US TO TRUST HIM.

"...troubles produce patience. And patience produces character, and character produces hope." Rom 5:3-4 (NCV)

God is always more interested in what you are (character) than He is in what you do (career).

The goal of life is not Comfort.

Write this down: EVERY PROBLEM HAS A PURPOSE.

It is to make me like Jesus Christ, to build character in my life.

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"They came to a garden called Gethsemane and Jesus said to His disciples, 'Sit here while I pray.' ... Distress and anguish came over Him, and He said, 'The sorrow in My heart is so great that it almost crushes Me.'" Mark 14:32-34 (TEV)

"Father," He said, "everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from Me. Yet I want your will, not mine!"

Mark 14:36 (NLT)

He surrendered to God's plan. He says, "Whatever fulfills your purpose in my life."

If you're going to become like Jesus Christ, you've got to learn to trust God completely, even when things look like it's terrible and falling apart.

HELPFUL HINTS

- ***Keep a spiritual journal***

"At the Lord's direction, Moses kept a written record of their progress." Num. 33:2 (NLT)

- ***Remember the reward***

"Our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all." 2 Cor. 4:17 (NIV)

song lyrics by Sara Grove: "In your hands the pain and hurt look less like scars and more like character; less like a prison, more like my room; less like a casket, more like a womb; less like dying, more like transcending; less like fear, less like an ending. And in your hands the pain and hurt look less like scars and more like character."

2. GOD USES TEMPTATION TO TEACH US TO OBEY.

Temptations are situations designed by Satan and they're intended to harm us. That's what temptations are. God never tempts us to do evil.

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil." Matt. 4:1 (NIV)

THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT TEMPTATIONS

- ***It is not a sin to be tempted.***

Martin Luther: "You can't keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from building a nest in your hair."

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- Everyone is tempted in the same ways.

"Get out of here, Satan" Jesus told him. "The Scriptures say, Worship only the Lord God. Obey only Him." Matt. 4:10 (LB)

1. My temptation is greater than anyone else's.
2. You will never outgrow temptation.

"But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it. When you are tempted, He will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it." 1 Cor. 10:13 (NLT)

Temptation always tests whether you love God more than the temptation.

TWO HELPS WITH TEMPTATION

- Keep focused on good thoughts

"Fix your thoughts on what is true and good and right." Ph. 4:8a (LB)

Temptation always starts with getting your attention, and when it gets your attention, it gets you!

- Get a spiritual partner

"You're better off to have a friend than to be all alone... If you fall, your friend can help you up." Eccl. 4:9-10 (CEV)

3. GOD USES TRESPASSES TO TEACH US TO FORGIVE.

Trials are situations designed by God to draw us closer to Him.

Temptations are situations designed by the devil to draw us away from God.

Trespases are situations designed by other people to hurt us.

"People passing by shook their heads and hurled insults at Jesus ... and the elders made fun of Him... Even the bandits who had been crucified with Him insulted Him in the same way." Matt. 27:39-44 (TEV)

"Jesus said, 'Father, forgive these people, because they don't know what they are doing.'" Luke 23:34 (NLT)

"They called Him every name in the book and He said nothing back. He suffered in silence, intent to let God set things right." 1 Peter 2:23

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TWO HELPS WITH TRESPASSES

- Remember God has forgiven me

"Forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ." Eph. 4:32 (CEV)

God will never ask you to forgive anybody more than you've already been forgiven by Him.

- Remember God is in control

"You meant to hurt me, but God turned your evil into good to save the lives of many people, which is being done." Gen. 50:20 (NCV)

I AM CONVINCED OF TWO THINGS:

- Your greatest testimony as a believer is how you handle hurt.
- You are most like Christ when you suffer in order to save others.

QUESTION: WHOM DO YOU NEED TO FORGIVE?

God is going to:

- Take you through a Gethsemane and experience trouble, where you learn to trust His love.
- Take you through a desert, and experience temptation, where you learn to obey Him and do the right thing.
- Take you to the cross, a time of trespass, where you learn to forgive.

PROMISE:

"We go through exactly what Christ goes through. If we go through the hard times with Him, then we're certainly going to go through the good times with Him." Rom. 8:17 (Msg)

OUR RESPONSE:

"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus." Phil. 2:5 (NIV)

Life makes so much more sense when we realize that it's not about our career, it's not about our comfort, it's all about our character and becoming like Jesus.