

# CHRISTIAN MONEY \$ENSE

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## Purpose-Driven Finances- Saved to Value People

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Why doesn't God immediately take us to heaven after we accept Christ as Savior? I've heard and pondered that question more than once.

There is only one spiritual activity that a Christian can do on earth but not in heaven – evangelism. Depending on your background, evangelism can be a wonderful word or can leave a bitter taste in your mouth. In its best sense, it means helping people move from spiritual death to life (John 5:24). In its worst sense, it is equated with memorized presentations and pressured commitments.

Pastor Rick Warren highlights five purposes that God has for all Christians in The Purpose-Driven Life (worship, ministry, evangelism, fellowship, discipleship). We are taking those five areas and applying them to our finances so we can better live God's goals for our lives. In previous weeks we covered worship (created to be stewards) and ministry (equipped to be partners).

### Evangelism – Saved to Value People

Evangelism is part of God's purpose for your life. You may be scared by that thought. You may think that you are not a good public speaker or cannot memorize Bible verses. But at its core, evangelism is not about formulas. It is about people.

From God's perspective, we are pretty selfish. Listen to yourself the next time you pray. Most of the topics are about your life or family. And most of your requests deal with making your life easier. Because of sin, it is hard to break the cycle of self.

God wants us to be changed by our relationship with Christ. The Bible uses terms like transformed, renewed, and converted to describe this change. But God does not want this to impact our private world only. He also wants our relationship with

Christ to change the way we view other people. He wants us to love others like He does.

Jesus once told a story of a crooked servant who used his master's wealth to win friends for himself because he was about to be fired (Luke 16:1-13). The servant had a little bit of time and a little bit of opportunity to use worldly wealth to secure a better future for himself. At the end of the story, Jesus made a startling statement. "Make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth; so when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal dwellings" (16:9). We are to use our wealth so more people turn to Christ.

I believe the Bible teaches predestination. But, we are not talking about us changing God's mind; God wants to change our minds. Part of sanctification is God transforming us into people-lovers. Biblical evangelism is loving people enough to share Christ, yet knowing that God alone saves.

My eight-year-old daughter regularly tells her friends about Jesus. This past Christmas, she also wanted to give money to help buy Bibles for children in other countries. She was living out Purpose-Driven Finances. Here are some ways to apply this to your life:

- Support organizations that directly focus on changing spiritual lives (evangelism).
- Give to special projects that directly impact evangelism (rather than pure overhead).

God wants you to care about the spiritual destiny of others. Give money to help people find God.

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BBC Foundation has been ministering to churches and individuals regarding biblical stewardship since 1992. Send your questions on finances and stewardship to: BBC Foundation, 538 Venard Rd., Clarks Summit, PA 18411. Phone: (800) 451-8668, website: [bbcfoundation.org](http://bbcfoundation.org); e-mail: [info@bbcfoundation.org](mailto:info@bbcfoundation.org)