



**BACK TO SCHOOL TEACHING SERIES
LESSON 3**

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BACK TO SCHOOL TEACHING SERIES

Lesson 3: WHAT IS MY PURPOSE IN LIFE?

BIBLE: *Ephesians 2:8-10*

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

BOTTOM LINE: When you realize *God has a purpose for your life – to know Him and make Him known*, you are free to chase after the things you love, knowing God designed and purposed you to be uniquely you.

SUPPLIES/PREP

Game:

- In-Person:
 - 10 tools some of the preteens would recognize (car tools, welding tools, woodworking tools, cleaning supplies, painting tools, etc.)
 - piece of paper and pen for each small group
 - table
- Online Version:
 - 10 tools some of the preteens would recognize (car tools, welding tools, woodworking tools, cleaning supplies, painting tools, etc.)

Series Prep:

- Online Version: Set up breakout rooms in advance.

Game Prep:

- In-Person:
 - Collect 10 tools and make sure some of them are not ones many preteens will recognize (car tools, welding tools, woodworking tools, cleaning supplies, painting tools, etc.)
 - Give each small group a piece of paper and pen.
- Online Version: None Needed

INTRODUCTION

Welcome, Preteens!

What have we learned about so far in this series?

Allow for answers.

We answered the questions, “Who am I?” and “What is a real friend?”

Another question many people ask is, “What is my purpose in life?”

Today we are going to answer part of that question with an answer about what ALL of us are purposed to do.

We’ll also talk about each of us having a special purpose.

Let’s play a game where we start to answer the question of purpose.

OPENING GAME (IN-PERSON): What do I do?

How to Play the Game:

- *Set the tools out on a table so the class can see all of them in a line.*
- *Hand each small group leader a piece of paper and a pen.*
- The object of the game is for your small group to work together to determine what each of these tools does.
- You will have someone who will write 1-10 down on your piece of paper.
- Then, you will work as a team to write down what each tool IS then what the tool actually does.
- It’s important to work as a team because one of you may know what a tool is and someone else may know what the tool *does*.
- *Depending on the size of your class, you can have a representative from each small group come to the front and say what they think each tool is and what it is used for, you could have a representative come to the front from each group for each one of the tools, or you could have some one from each group raise his/her hand and call out what the tool is and what its purpose is.*
- *This game can be as interactive as you want it to be.*
- *If a preteen representative is incorrect about the tool or what it does, you can give him/her another chance to guess at the answer, ask for help from one of the other representatives, or ask for help from his/her small group.*
- *When all the tools have been named and their uses determined, you can have all the representatives sit down.*

OPENING GAME (ONLINE VERSION): What do I do?

The object of the game is for the preteens to determine what each tool is and what it is used for.

Show the tools one at a time and let the preteens determine what they are and what they do.

It's okay to give them hints so they can guess.

TEACH

What if we lined up (*10 – or number you determine*) of the people in our class then the rest of the class would have to say who we are and what our purpose is.

Let's start with ME.

What is my name?

Allow for responses.

What is my purpose?

Allow for responses.

You may think of me only as the (*Children's Pastor/Preteen Ministry Teacher/whatever your title is*), but God has a big purpose for me.

He has a big purpose for your life, too!

BIBLE CONNECTION

Ephesians 2:8-10 says

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Each of us is God's masterpiece, His workmanship.

He is the Creator, and He created us to DO good things.

Most of the tools that we identified are created to do something really cool.

If they don't do what they were created to do, they are just like a paper weight—holding papers in place so they don't blow away, but they weren't created to do THAT.... unless they are actually paper weights.

We are all created to know God and to have a relationship with Him.

We are also created to make Him known to others.

We are made in God's image, which means that when people see us, there is something about God they can see in us.

That's pretty amazing.

Think of someone you know who looks a LOT like his or her dad or mom.

We are supposed to know God so well that we begin to look like Him, to represent Him.

Each of us is created to represent Him in different ways in different places.

I am going to tell you some things that are unique about me.

Some of these facts could be true about other people, but when they're all put together like a puzzle, it's ME!

Fill in the blanks.

I was born in _____.

I grew up with *both parents/one parent/blended family*.

I grew up going to church/didn't meet Jesus until I was _____.

When I was _____ years old, I accepted Jesus' gift of salvation and have been living to know Him and make Him known ever since/started living for Him when I was _____.

I read my Bible/pray/go to a Bible Study/am in an accountability group/am mentored by _____ to know God more.

To make God known to other people, I teach this class/write about Him/intentionally build relationships with (*kinds of people*) to show them Jesus.

Sit for a moment and think about how YOU would fill in these blanks in your life.

Your answers are different than mine on purpose!

Read the statements for them to "fill in the blanks" silently about themselves.

God doesn't make people the same.

He is creative, and He sends people who relate to different people.

When you realize **God has a purpose for your life—to know Him and make Him known**—you are free to chase after the things you love, knowing God designed and purposed you to be uniquely you.

He also created you to represent Him to people who like similar things, do similar things, and spend their time in similar ways.

Share an example of someone in your church (preferably a small group leader in your class) who reaches out to a specific group of people at work, in their neighborhood, etc.

You can be FREE to do the things you love just like *(person you just described)*, knowing God created you that way to be His representative to specific people at specific times!

Pray together then split into Small Groups.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY: Jesus' Representatives

The object of this activity is for you learn about people God placed in specific places to reach specific people for Him.

I am going to tell you about some people who are Jesus' representatives and then you are going to answer questions about each person.

Corrie ten Boom was a watchmaker who lived in the Netherlands and worked with her father and sister to protect people and save lives during World War II. She was caught, sent to a concentration camp, and continued to tell people the truth about Jesus. When she was released, she traveled around the world, speaking about forgiveness and Jesus' love. She also wrote books telling people the truth about Jesus.

1. Who was this person?
2. Where did God send this person to represent Him?
3. Who was impacted by this person's purpose and obedience to God's call?

Jim and Elisabeth Elliot were among a five couples who went to be missionaries among the Auca Indians in Ecuador. Jim and the other husbands were killed by the Auca Indians. When Jim died, Elisabeth took their daughter and lived among the Auca Indians and shared the truth of Jesus with them. Elisabeth wrote books about her experience to tell about the power of Jesus' love and forgiveness and to share the truth about Jesus.

1. Who was this person?
2. Where did God send this person to represent Him?
3. Who was impacted by this person's purpose and obedience to God's call?

Billy Graham was an evangelist (someone whose job is to tell other people the truth about Jesus). He went to Bible college, became a preacher, and spoke anywhere and everywhere he could about the truth of Jesus... including on television. He and his wife, Ruth, have 5 children. Some of them went on to go into speaking, leading, and serving ministries, as well. Billy wrote books about the love of Jesus, was an advisor to some of the American presidents, and continued speaking until he died.³

1. Who was this person?
2. Where did God send this person to represent Him?
3. Who was impacted by this person's purpose and obedience to God's call?

Our purpose may not be to save 800 people from concentration camps like Corrie ten Boom, live among a tribe to reach them for Jesus like Elisabeth Elliot, or impact the entire world for Jesus like Billy Graham, but God has a purpose for each of us and we can trust Him to lead us wherever He calls us!

References:

¹[www.effusion.nl](https://www.corrietenboom.com/en/information/the-history-of-the-museum), Effusion -. "History." History | Corrie ten Boom House. Accessed June 26, 2021. <https://www.corrietenboom.com/en/information/the-history-of-the-museum>.

²Peña, Written by Madeline. "Jim and Elisabeth Elliot: Devotion to the Unreached." BGU's College of Missions, April 14, 2020. <https://bethanygu.edu/blog/stories/jim-and-elisabeth-elliott/>.

³"Remembering Billy Graham (1918 – 2018)." Billy Graham Memorial, March 2, 2018. https://memorial.billygraham.org/?_gl=1%2Au6it1c%2A_gcl_aw%2AR0NMLjE2MjMwMTUwMzMzMuQ2owS0NRanc1UEdGQmhDMkFSSXNBSUZJTU5jT1BGYXJuRV M3M0E3NIhKazRzQ2IZLTgzZUp6MGhucXN5RIRmd0VvTVBVTWZEeEcwZXpmY 2FBdmNsRUFMd193Y0I.&_ga=2.145654643.654259150.1623015033-808490524.1623015033&_gac=1.83808740.1623015034.Cj0KCCQjw5PGFBhC2A RIsAIFIMNcOPFarnES73A76XJk4sCiY-83eJz0hmqsyFTfwEoMPUMfDxG0ezfcaAvclEALw_wcB.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is something that stood out to you from this lesson?
2. What is something you learned that was new today or something you were reminded of about God in this lesson?
3. Which of the tools we learned about the opening game remind you most of yourself? Why?
4. Why is it important to learn that we all have the purpose of knowing God and making Him known?
5. Why is it important to learn that each of us has the unique purpose of representing Jesus wherever He has placed us?
6. What does it mean that you are God's masterpiece?
7. What is something that is unique about who you are that you think God might use to bring others to knowing Him?
8. What is something that is unique about someone else in our small group that God might use to bring others to know Him?
9. Which of the people we learned about in the Small Group Activity stuck out to you most and why? Corrie ten Boom, Jim Elliot, Elisabeth Elliot, or Billy Graham
10. How can we pray for you today?

That's all we have for today, but I'll see you next week to continue this new series!

Let's look at our prayer point and close in prayer.

PRAYER POINT: When you realize ***God has a purpose for your life—to know Him and make Him known***—you are free to chase after the things you love, knowing God designed and purposed you to be uniquely you.

Let's pray for each other and thank God for the purposes He has for our lives!

Close in prayer.

