



Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

Living the Purpose for Which We Were Born

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Dr. Mary Craig

Have you ever wondered what purpose you have on this earth?
Have you desired to know why you were created?

I certainly have. I remember clearly coming home from my second quarter of college at Northwestern University. I sat in Dr. Craig in Haifa, Israel.

Photo Credit: Marcia M.

front of our house in Fort Lauderdale and wondered just what life was all about. I had been exposed to Existentialism https://www.philosophybasics.com/branch_existentialism.html and the popular philosophies of the day. It all left me hopelessly despairing of having any real meaning or purpose. Was there no God, no purpose, nothingness, and was I just on my own, defining my own meaning in life?

Question One of the Westminster Shorter Catechism asks, “What is the chief end of Man?” The answer is: “The chief end of Man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.” (1 Corinthians 10.31) The book of Revelation pictures heaven for us as a place filled with the praise and worship of God as Creator/Redeemer (e.g. Revelation 5.13, 7.12). Redemption culminates in worship, the spiritual service owed to God as Man’s Creator.

What is worship? John M. Frame defines worship as “the work of acknowledging the greatness of our covenant Lord.” John Piper describes worship as the ultimate goal of the church, because God is ultimate and worship abides forever. He says, “Worship, therefore, is the fuel and goal in missions...Missions begins and ends in worship.” (Psalm 29; 97; 67.3, 4; 104.34; 9.2)

Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. O, let the nations be glad and sing for joy! For You shall judge the peoples righteously, and govern the nations on earth. Selah. Psalm 67:3, 4

Of the worship of God, A. W. Tozer wrote: “True worship of God must be a constant and consistent attitude or state of mind within the believer. It will always be a sustained and blessed acknowledgement of love and adoration, subject in this life to degrees of perfection and intensity.”

Wayne Grudem defines worship as “the activity of glorifying God in His presence with our voices and hearts.” We are continually in God’s presence and should be consciously praising Him, living in continual dialogue and common union with Him.

Webster’s Dictionary defines worship as “showing honor or reverence to a divine being or supernatural power; to regard with great, even extravagant respect, honor or devotion; to take part in an act of worship.” Worship is the natural response to the worth of God, who created us and redeems us.

God made man, male and female, in His own image to reflect His glory. He breathed life into man so that he became a living soul. Man was designed to live in perfect fellowship with his

Creator, honoring Him, honoring His Word, reflecting the glory of His attributes. Humanity was designed to rejoice in God's mighty works of creation, to hear and obey the Word of the Lord, to delight in God's nearness.

Instead of ascribing worth to God as their Creator, Source and Sustainer of life, Adam and Eve listened to another wisdom, to another word, obeyed that word, and demonstrated their unbelief in God's goodness and worth. In disobeying God's command, they defiled their spiritual worship. They ascribed worth to a lie and counted as vain the holiness of God. So came the curse with fallen humanity. (Genesis 1-3)

God still purposed that man's chief end be to glorify and enjoy Him. He did not abandon Adam and Eve and gave promise of a Deliverer who would destroy the Serpent (Satan) (Genesis 3.15). God continued to speak to them and to seek fellowship with them. He sought worshipers (John 4.23), those who would worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Worship continued after the Fall. Both Cain and Abel brought offerings to the Lord (Genesis 4), and in the time of Seth, people "began to call on the name of the LORD" (Genesis 4.26). God blessed worship after the Fall, but now people were to worship Him with a consciousness of their sin and guilt and what He had done and was doing to free them from that guilt. Now the worship included praise not only for the mighty acts of creation, but of redemption as well.

With the coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Mediator of our redemption, worship includes the gospel, the good news that Jesus lived the life of perfect, personal, perpetual obedience required by God and died the death required by God's divine justice. Jesus rose from the dead, indicating that those dead in trespasses and sins, those born since Adam's sin in the estate of sin and misery, must be resurrected out from among the dead in order that they might live in the presence of the One who is life and gives life.

Likewise, after Jesus' resurrection and ascension to heaven, the Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead, to empower the church in its mission to bring the gospel to all creation, to lead others to the worship of the one, true God. The Holy Spirit applies to hearts the work of Christ, testifying of Christ and enabling the true worship of the true God as originally purposed.

With the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, comes the powerful witness to the gospel of truth. True worshipers worship the Father in spirit and truth (John 4.23), ascribing worth to the distinctive work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in the salvation of true believers. By the Holy Spirit we come to "glory in Christ Jesus, and...put no confidence in the flesh." (Philippians 3.3)

The worship of the one, true God is worship in the name of Christ by the Holy Spirit. It is worship that ascribes worth to the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and to the Lion of Judah, to Jesus and His Blood shed for the remission of sin. It is worship that ascribes worth to the Father as Source and Sustainer of all life and blessing. It is worship that ascribes worth to the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8.9), who persuades us that we are children of God (Romans 8.16), and that the gospel is God's truth (1 Thessalonians 1.5).

Worship edifies even as it evangelizes. As true believers come together to worship their Creator/Redeemer, joy spreads in the midst. A bond forms among those who ascribe worth to the One who loves them and blesses them and cares for them. Worship breeds compassion and justice (Isaiah 1.10-17; Micah 6.6-8; Hosea 6.6). Authentic worship includes a life obedient to the desires and delights of God. Today, all true believers are priests, offering spiritual sacrifices (1 Peter 2.5, 9), including the sacrifice of praise (Hebrews 13.5) and doing good and sharing with

others (Hebrews 13.16; Philippians 4.18). James says that true religion accepted by God the Father as pure and faultless is to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world (James 1.26, 27), the ethical dimension of worship as it edifies and blesses others.

All of history proceeds to the praise of God's glory. God chose us in Christ before the creation of the world, predestined us to be adopted as His sons, redeemed us through the Blood of Christ, and revealed to us the mysteries of His will which will be fulfilled at the end of history (Ephesians 1).

We were born to worship. It is the whole point of our existence and not to be taken for granted. We were born to enjoy God, to live life in the enjoyment of His blessings.

God doesn't need us or the rest of creation for anything, yet He created you and me for His own glory. (Isaiah 43.7) We bring Him joy. He delights in us. (Zephaniah 3.17) It isn't that He is lonely or needs fellowship with people. John 17.5, and 24 make it clear that perfect love and fellowship exists eternally amidst the Godhead.

You and I are here to rejoice in knowing God, to delight in the excellence of His character, the beauty of His holiness, His limitless grace, His mercy that is new every morning, His love that never fails, etc.

God deserves the glory. He is worthy of such respect and honor because He is holy and pure and true and truly good.

And so we come and bow down, we kneel before the Lord our Maker, we sing praises to His Name, psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. We give thanks. We ascribe worth and honor and glory and blessing. We lift our hands. We shout the triumph over death, devils, and disease, over the grave, over sin. We prepare ourselves to approach a holy God in the pursuit of His glory. Amen.

Adapted from *Worship: To Him Who Sits on the Throne*, Dr. Mary Craig, Fort Lauderdale: Mary Craig Ministries, Inc. 2001.

May you be blessed to know Jesus Christ, the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings.

For His Glory,

Mary Craig

Mary Craig, D. Min.

Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength. Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness. Psalm 29:1, 2



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