

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

The Greatest Mission of All Time

(The Epic Life)

Matthew 28:19-20
2002

Introduction

Why are we here?

Most of us aren't really sure why we're here. We found Christ, but now what? For many, being a Christian means that we superimpose a Christian commitment over our existing lifestyle, dreams, hopes, aspirations, etc. Our moral and ethical choices change, but our life's purpose often remains unaffected by our newfound relationship to Christ.

How we attempt to find meaning and value in life:

Even though we've been given new life in Christ we continue to search and seek desperately for happiness, meaning, purpose, fulfillment and value-- usually, through jobs, money, family, adventure, entertainment, relationships, vacations, etc. Unfortunately, none of these will fulfill our longing for meaning and fulfillment.

We have a *mission*!

Why? Because that is not our mission. God never intended for us to stick around here in order to experience the meager rations of making temporal things our focus.

In the same manner that only Christ can fill our heart's God shaped vacuum, likewise we can only find long-term fulfillment in this life when we fully participate in God's strategic mission to rescue the world.

The real reason He has left us here:

It's my contention that God has left us here for something far greater, far more significant than working to buy food:

So that we can work to pay our rent or mortgage so that we have a place to stay

So that we can work to buy clothes to wear to work

So that we can work to pay car insurance and gas to get to work

So that we can work so that we can have an income so that we can rack up credit card debt so that we can have the things we want so that we can live beyond our means so that we can feel good about ourselves so that we have value so that our life has meaning.

Ecclesiastics 1:2 "Meaningless! Meaningless! says the Teacher. Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless!"
 Wisdom is meaningless
 Pleasures are meaningless.
 Work is meaningless.
 Advancement is meaningless.
 Wealth is meaningless.

Everything is meaningless; a chasing after the wind. (Ecclesiastes 1:14)

I The Greatest **Rescue** Mission Of All Time

A. The objective: To seek and save the **lost**

- Luke 19:10 "The Son of Man came to seek and save that was lost."

B. The plan: To redeem His people from sin

- Gen. 3:15 The first mention of Christ's role in defeating the enemy

- Ezekiel 34:11-12, 16 "For this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness ... I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

- Matt. 1:21 "She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

- 1 Tim. 1:15 "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ..."

C. The strategy: To send Christ to **ransom** and save us

- John 3:16-17 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."

- Mark 10:45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

- 1 Pet. 3:18 "For Christ died for sins, once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit."

What's interesting is not only what he sought to do, but what he didn't seek to do.

1. He did not seek to **please** himself - Jn. 5:30; Rom. 15:3
2. He did not seek his own glory - John 8:50
3. He did not seek his own **will** - Matt. 26:39; Jn 4:34;6:38
4. He did not seek his own good - 1 Cor. 10:33-11:1
5. He did not seek to do his own thing - John 17:4

- 6. He did not seek to be **famous** - Phil 2:6-7
- 7. He did not seek to become **rich** - 2 Cor. 8:9

He came to fulfill His mission. He was undeterred, unrepentant, unafraid, unstoppable.
He would not rest until he could say, "It is finished."

II The **Invitation** To The Mission

Matthew 3:19 "Come follow me", Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

A. The objective: To **enlist** others in the mission (see I-A)

B. The plan: To **multiply** himself

C. The strategy: To impart the **vision** to a few and train them

1. Come, follow me

a. More important than **family**

- Matt. 8:22 "But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

b. More important than **security**

- Luke 5:27-28 "After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. 'Follow me,' Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him."

c. More important than **career**

- John 21:19-22 [Jesus last conversation with Peter about tending sheep] Then he said to him [Peter], "Follow me!" ... "You must follow me!"

d. More important than **money**

- Mark 10:21 "Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

Why we have a spouse: As a partner in the mission

Why we have children: To train them for the mission

Why we have jobs: To provide our basic needs so that we can continue in the mission and so that we can meet the needs of others

Why we have houses: To provide shelter and rest while not engaged in the mission.

Why we have food: To sustain us physically as we give ourselves to the mission.

What God intended to be a temporary residence (aliens and strangers in the world), we have turned into a permanent home! We live like we're going to be here forever!

2. I will make you fishers of men

III The **Training** For The Mission

- Matt. 10:1-42 "He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. The twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions ..."
- Lk 10:1-24 "After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go ..."

A. The objective: To find the lost and preach the Good News (see I-A)

B. The plan: To send the disciples on a short-term **mission**

C. The strategy: To give authority, instruction and supervision
 He called his disciples to a vision
 He gave them authority to carry it out
 He sent them out to accomplish the objective

IV The **Commissioning** For The Mission

- Matthew 28:19-20 "Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

A. The objective: To make **disciples** of all nations (see I-A)

1. Baptize them
2. Teach them to obey everything God's commands

B. The plan: To transfer the mantle of ministry to the disciples

1. The One sent, now sends
 - Jn. 17:18 "As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world."
 - Jn. 20:21 "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

C. The strategy: To launch the **cycle** of multiplication

1. Our mission as ambassadors
 - 2 Cor. 5:18-20 "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."
2. Our mission as **disciple** makers
 - 2 Tim. 2:2 "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."
 - a. Evangelism

- b. Discipling
 - c. Equipping
 - d. Releasing
3. Our mission's timetable
- Matt. 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."
 - 2 Pet. 3:9 "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

Conclusion

What are you living for?

Everything in this life is going to burn.

Why not become a participant in God's great rescue mission.

Ecclesiastics 12:13 "Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil."

This lifestyle is not meaningless; or a chasing after the wind.

The Epic Life

Radical adventuring for Jesus! Loving God and loving others!

Enemies of the Epic Live:

1. Leading a "balanced" life
2. "Security"
3. Laziness – procrastination, status quo
4. Lack of direction – usually the result of little prayer
5. Distractions
6. Fear: Fear of failure, fear of risk
7. Competing priorities – spouse, children, career
 - a. Loving God – Jn 14:21; 15:9-10
 - b. Loving others – 1 Cor 5:11-21; Jn 13:24-25

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