

An Eternal Perspective

Philippians 2:12

The story is told of a man searching a list of restaurants in the yellow pages when he spotted "The Community Church Grille." Intrigued by such a peculiar name, he made his way to the establishment. When he arrived he couldn't resist the urge to seek out the manager and ask how they arrived at that title.

"It's an interesting story," the manager explained. "We began as a mission, reaching out to the people in this neighborhood. We sold chicken dinners after the Sunday service to help pay the bills. Folks seemed to really like our cooking, and the business grew to the point that we expanded to serve meals every day. Eventually the operation became so big that we just discontinued the church service to become a full-time restaurant. It was decided to keep our unique name, 'The Community Church Grille,' even though we no longer do ministry here."

The Community Church Grille had a problem. They forgot their identity, their reason for being. The everyday tasks of paying the bills and meeting the responsibilities of running a small business pushed their higher calling into the background. They no longer had a vision for their eternal purpose.

Like that mission-turned-eatery, we were created by God with an eternal purpose in mind. But for many, that purpose has been derailed by the cares, concerns, and even successes of everyday life. Some, sadly, have turned to addiction to cope with the pressure, obscuring God's designs even more. For them, the joy they experienced upon first entering a relationship with Christ has been replaced by fear, shame, and hopelessness. They've forgotten that the Christian walk is a daily commitment to follow the Lord and, with His help, lay aside the struggles, pressures, and hurts of this world. They need a new perspective, committing to pursue the eternal goals God laid before them in the plan of salvation. Listen to this word of exhortation from the apostle Paul in Philippians 2:12...

Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

Have you lost sight of that eternal purpose? Has your joy in the Lord been replaced by the negative weight of today's problems and needs? Maybe you've even resorted to the destructive force of an addiction to soothe your fears and drown your problems. There's hope today. Surrender your needs, your cares, and your struggles to our awesome God. He has instilled within you plans that you could never comprehend. Destructive habits and addictions will crush those plans. But as you commit daily to following His plans for your life, you can become all that He's intended you to be.

Why is it important to remember that God has a higher purpose for our lives? How can problems like addiction derail that purpose?

What steps do you take each day to ensure that you are moving forward in your relationship with God? What steps do you need to begin taking today?