

FINDING YOUR GOD INTENDED PURPOSE IN LIFE

“IT IS WHAT WE DO, NOT JUST WHAT WE SAY”

We cannot do anything to merit our Salvation, we can only humbly accept it. But once we have Salvation then Jesus wants us to do a lot of doing. It is possible to do a lot of saying but very little doing. It is possible to be all religious talk and Christian talk and not be doing it.

No one knows the human heart better than Jesus and no book knows the human heart better than the Bible which is the Word of God. When he was on earth Jesus came among a lot of people like this, especially the self righteous religious leaders, so he told them this story found in Matthew 21:28-32.

28) “What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, “Son, go and work today in the vineyard.” 29) “I will not,” he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. 30) Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, “I will, sir,” but he did not go. 31) “Which of the two did what his father wanted?” “The first,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. 32) For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.”

Whenever Jesus told a story it always had a spiritual, something for you to do meaning. The father is a picture of God and the two sons are a picture of us. Just like the father in the story, God has a job for each one of us. God has a purpose for each one of us. He has something he wants each one of us to do with our lives. We all start out like the first son, although we might not say it with our mouths we are just as forcedly saying it with our actions, “I will not!” We all naturally want to go our own way, live our own life, set our own goals.

We don’t want to listen to anyone who tells us that God has something better for us, that to do what God has for us to do will bring to us a wonderful fulfilment and satisfaction. To be and do what God intended for us is something we don’t want to hear. We drown such thoughts in seeking pleasure, our own ambitions and anything else that will block it out of our minds. Sadly many, even those we think of as good people, live their whole lives like this.

But we don’t have to do this, we can do what the first son did, “change our minds” We read, “But later he changed his mind and went.” In the NT the word repent means to change your mind.

The wonderful thing is that it is never too late to change your mind. No matter how much we have got our lives in a mess by going our own way, we can repent. It doesn't matter how much of our lives we have lived, we can change our minds and seek God's purpose and plan despite what our present circumstances are. He will work in our present situation.

The second son illustrates the trap we can all fall in of saying and not doing, even singing and not doing. Like heartedly singing, "I surrender all to thee my blessed Saviour," and continuing to live for self. Can you imagine the second son saying to his father in a very dedicated, almost religious tone of voice, "I will sir!" but we read, "He did not go."

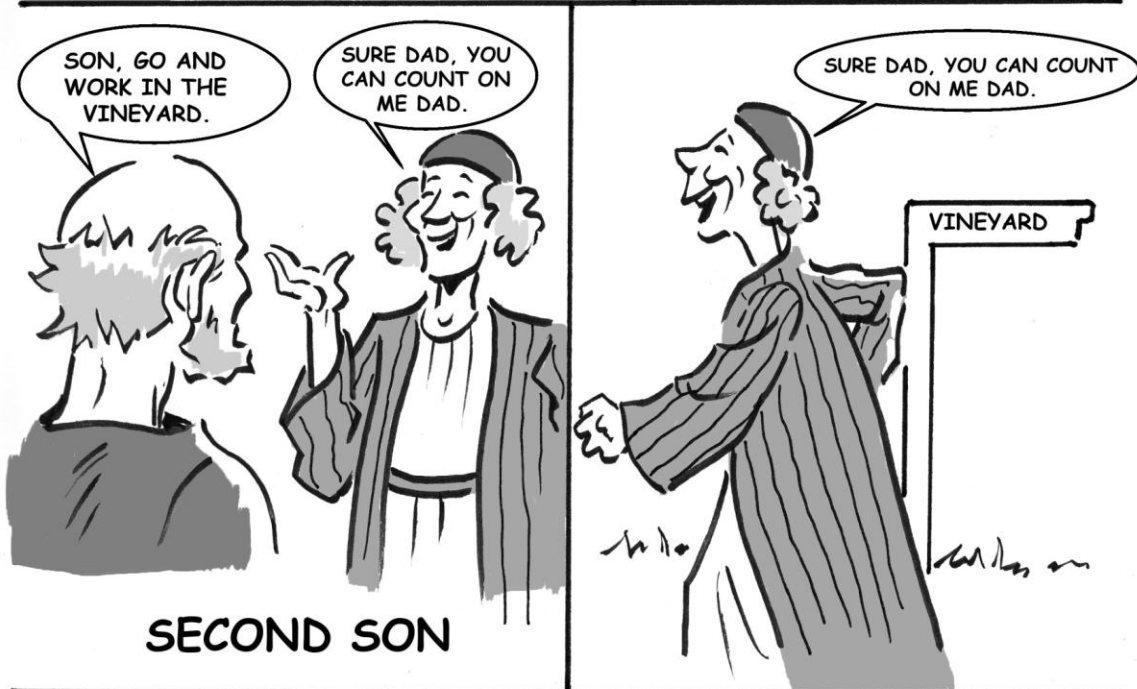
The religious leaders of the day didn't feel they had to repent, it was the tax collectors and prostitutes and all the people they regarded as sinners, they needed to repent. The tax collectors worked for the Romans, who ruled in the land, and were regarded as traitors so that is why they were called sinners. Jesus said that when John the Baptist was preaching it was these people they regarded as sinners who repented or changed their minds whereas the self righteous leaders were all talk and outward show but no real heart obedience.

But what about us, we all need to take a good look at ourselves, so that, what we are saying is being backed up by what we are doing. We are so quick to say and so slow to do. Jesus said in Matthew 12:36,37. "But I tell you that men will have to give an account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

Probably most of us will feel guilty after reading those verses. It identifies us with the second son, but we don't have to be like the second son, we can be like the first son and change our minds. And start doing and saying just like Jesus did and still does. When the apostle Paul spoke about conversion he said, "Turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus." Acts 20:21 and on another occasion he said, "I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds." Acts 26:20.

So here we see what it means to become a Christian, repentance (change of mind about the way we are living) turning to God and putting our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who died and rose again for our sins. Then, proving the reality of our repentance by our deeds, by doing the things God wants us to do, fulfilling His purpose for our lives.

It is one thing to be converted to God and another thing to go forward with God after conversion. As we go forward with God every time we give into a temptation which is part of our old life we need to repent, change our mind about it and afresh have faith in our Lord Jesus, who is the risen Lord with all power to give us victory over every temptation. We go forward by many fresh starts.



**IT'S NOT WHAT WE SAY, BUT BUT
WHAT WE DO THAT SHOWS HOW
COMMITTED WE ARE TO GOD.**

FRANK HUTCHINSON.