

“Women of Purpose”
(Part 3)
By Jesse Rairdon
Sunday, May 15th, 2016

Please remain standing as Linda A. comes to lead us in prayer for the message.

Linda: Holy God, I want to thank You so much for your presence, today, and, Father, we ask, Jesus, anoint us, today, dear Jesus, and let Your anointing go all the way through to our hearts, God, that we not only hear the words, but we actually listen and apply them to our lives. Heavenly God, I just want to thank You so much for the Holy Spirit I feel, here, today, Lord Jesus. Thank you for Jesse, and thank You for all my brothers and sisters. In your name, I pray. Amen.

Amen. Please be seated. Morning, church. So, this month is: Women of Purpose, and our Scripture theme for the month comes from Acts:

Acts 1:13-14 *And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*

So, we're talking about women of purpose this month.

Week one, really quick, Chris Ulrich talked about respect, the title of the message was "Respect," and his main speaking point were:

1. We have to be able to learn from women; learning from women. Setting the example so that we can learn from them.
2. Appreciating the Differences. Yes, there are differences between men and women we ought to appreciate the differences.
3. And he talked about Unsung Heroes, those that do great things, great works for God, and are not mentioned often. Amen?

Week two, last week, Parrish preached a "Mother's Day message." He talked about:

1. Lessons from Sarai & Hagar
2. God is not finished.
3. Last words for Mothers.

If you want to review those notes, they're already up on our website, so you can go review those. I purposely go and, actually, not only review the notes and listen to the messages again as I'm preparing mine, so that I can, kind of, not reproach the message, but be in the same Spirit, the same mind, the same heart. Amen? We also meet every month, too, the preaching team, to kind of discuss these things and go over what we're going to talk about.

Title of today's message is "Women of Purpose Part 3." We're going to cover four women of purpose today:

1. Esther- "Why am I here, what is my purpose?"
2. Priscilla- "Not competing, but completing ministry."

3. Tabitha- "A legacy of good works."
4. Abigail- "Good advice leads to good results."

Esther- Why Am I Here, What Is My Purpose?

Esther 4:7-17 *And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them. Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew it unto Esther, and to declare it unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people. And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai. Again Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai; All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days. And they told to Mordecai Esther's words. Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer, Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish. So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.*

See, there was a problem: The Jews were facing, basically, destruction, total destruction. They were going to be destroyed. And the history with Mordecai and Esther was that he raised her as his own daughter because her parents were killed. They were in captivity, there was a lot going on. Her parents were dead, so he raised her Esther as his own daughter, so he could, basically, speak to her as if she was his daughter. Even though she was the queen, she was chosen to be the queen. So, at this time in history, the king had made a decree, before all this, and said, told his queen come before him, and, basically, make a show of her, in front of all the princes, and elders of the land, and she refused, and he said, "Okay, you're no longer queen." "Pick another queen." So, they went out, and picked another queen, and that queen happened to be Esther. She was beautiful, and God gave her grace, and that's the queen that was chosen. So, Esther had a purpose, and it wasn't just to look pretty, even though it got her foot in the door, Esther had a purpose. It was more than just to show up, she had a purpose and she needed to be reminded of it Mordecai had to tell her, "You know, how do you know you didn't come into this kingdom for this time? God will bring deliverance another way if He chooses to everybody in your house is still going to be destroyed. But you have a place, you have a purpose, right now, to stand up." But she said, "But, if I go before the king, there's one law, and I could be killed. I could be dead, if he doesn't raise his scepter to me, and allow me to come talk to him." Basically, that's how it was. Even if you're the queen, you don't go before the king unless you're summoned. So, there was a lot of fear that she had to deal with and overcome, here, but she had a purpose. So, she said, "Call everybody to a fast. Let's seek God for this purpose, that God will open this door, and I'll be able to do this." And God brought deliverance.

Ladies you have a purpose, and it's more to show up and just look beautiful. What is your purpose? And, believe me, you look beautiful, especially my wife. Let me just say that. What is your purpose? Why are you here? Why are you in this ministry at this time?

Esther had to overcome her fears and meet the challenge of her purpose. You can't say because I am a woman, I don't have a purpose. You can't say that, because I'm shy, I don't have a purpose. Many women, especially young women, struggle with their purpose and why they are, and who they are. They struggle with that. They need Godly young women to stand up and show them that there is a purpose for them, too. They struggle with depression, they struggle with identity, they struggle with anxiety, they struggle with who they are, and what their place is in life. And all the world tries to tell them who they are and what they should be. Facebook and all the social media is trying to influence them, but you could be the one that brings deliverance to them, like Esther. You could be the one that makes the right stand, even in your school, or your college, or wherever God chooses to open those doors, just to overcome their fears. Let your light shine. You have a purpose; you have a place. It doesn't matter how old or young you are, you have a purpose in God's ministry. Amen?

Priscilla- "Not Competing, but Completing Ministry"

Acts 18:24-28 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ. Priscilla was very much a part of her husband ministry.

Priscilla was very much a part of her husband's ministry. She wasn't competing with her husband; she was completing his ministry. She was very much—they were one. You might say this is kind of a mystery, but to God it's no mystery. In fact:

Ephesians 5:28-32 *So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

We're all the body of Christ, especially a husband and wife, when they're a team and they're ministering together. Everywhere they're mentioned in Scripture, not one of them is mentioned alone. You always hear about Priscilla and Aquila, the church that is in their home. Priscilla and Aquila, working with Paul, they started in his ministry, making tents. Throughout the Bible. It began when they were making tents, and they asked—Whenever Paul asked them to go somewhere or stay somewhere, they were always faithful to obey that call. "Stay here. Go here. Start your ministry here." They were faithful to carry, like Sister Mary was sharing, you've taken God with you wherever you've gone, and you're doing ministry and you're sharing with people wherever you go. It doesn't matter the number of people you're sharing with, it's the heart of working together with your family. Amen?

Not everyone has this type of ministry with their spouse, but everyone can. If this is what you really, truly desire, you've really got to seek God together. First you've got to make your marriage strong, then you can make your ministry strong together. If you're always fighting one another, and there's mistrust, and you haven't really built up your family, your marriage together, you can't go out and do ministry like this together. You first have to have built that up in your life. Amen? So, if that's your desire,

seek God together. It's very possible, it's very doable. God has that for a family ministry, even today. She wasn't trying to compete with her husband, she wasn't trying to shout him down, but they shared with Apollos together. How many people out there just need to hear one more thing, that are so close to the Truth? Maybe even a pastor, or they preach somewhere, but they only know baptism a certain way. So, God may use you, as a family, to go share with that person. Don't be afraid to be a woman of purpose and seek God for those blessings in your life. Amen?

Tabitha- A Legacy of Good Works

Acts 9:36-43 *Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber. And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive. And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord. And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.*

That's where Peter was, by the way, when he had that vision, when Cornelius sent for him. It says, "...continuing in ministry..." but, Tabitha had a purpose in ministry. Tabitha had a legacy of good works. Tabitha took care of those that most people forgot about. Tabitha was one of those unsung heroes like Brother Chris preached about. She went about just making coats for people, doing the things, meeting the needs, making sure the neighbors were taken care of, like Mary was talking about. The little things that most people tend to forget about. That is so needed in our church, so needed in our ministry. Not everybody can teach a Bible study, but everybody can do something. What is your purpose? Everybody can show the love of God through the good deeds and the works that you do. Let your light shine, that your good works would glorify God. Amen?

People sent for Peter and he came right away; she was important. He realized the importance of this person in ministry. Maybe, spiritually, you're like Tabitha: once you had a work for God, and now it's dead. And, maybe, today, God is telling you, "Arise; come alive. Do those works again." You've got a place in ministry; you have a purpose. You have something to do for God. God has given you a purpose. No matter how young or old, no matter how long you've been around, or if you were just baptized last week, God has something for *you*. I can't tell you exactly what it is today, unless God reveals it and prophesies to you. That's something you've got to seek out from God, yourself. God will reveal those things to you. Remember when Parrish was talking about how Hagar and Sarah said, "Well, we're going to bring about God's purpose another way," and failed? God still will bring about His purpose, you've just got to seek Him to get that understanding; allow Him to bring about that purpose the way He's designed to bring it about. Amen?

Maybe you'll be the one to bring a great deliverance to your neighbor, or maybe you'll bring a great deliverance to a lot of us. Who knows? For such a time as this. I was going to title the message, "For Such a Time as This," because I was really, really—but that was really only one big piece of the message. I like to take titles and really spread it throughout the message, but... Maybe you're here, right

now, listening to this, seeking God, saying, "What is my purpose? Why am I in this place? Why am I in Christian Fellowship, Great Lakes right now, at this time?" God will reveal it to you; God is faithful.

Our last part is going to be:

Abigail- Good Advice Leads To Good Results

It's going to be a lot of reading. I'm not going to read the whole chapter please take time after the message today, read this whole chapter. Discuss it at home with your families. See what more God would bring to you. We'll start at verse one:

1 Samuel 25:1-3 *And Samuel died; [the prophet died] and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to the wilderness of Paran. And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish [and I looked up the word, 'churlish,' just because I wanted to see what the definition was, and it was, 'mean-spirited.' Just a mean, ugly person. What a testimony.] and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb.*

Caleb was a great man. He was one of the spies that gave a good report. Somehow, down the line, this guy became evil and mean, but he had a wonderful wife. Abigail had wisdom, and good understanding of things. David needed help and asked Nabal for help. I'm paraphrasing a little bit, because I can't read all of these Scriptures today. Nabal not only refused to help David, but he offended him. That's not someone you want to offend he had some mighty warriors with him. You can read the scriptures about those people he had with him; they were some rough characters. Basically, warriors that were kicked out of the kingdom because of their ability to fight wrongdoings. A bunch of ruffians, they were called, in some places, right?

So, one of the young men told Abigail what happened, and how David was good to them while he was their neighbor. David entreated them good while they were in the wilderness, and this was how they repaid David was they offended him. Now David was not happy and was going to wipe them all out, basically, 'kill them all, let God sort them out,' type of thing. And this young man knew he couldn't reason with Nabal, so he went to Abigail, a person of wisdom and good understanding.

Pick it up at verse eighteen:

1 Samuel 25:18 *Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, [She didn't waste a minute. This is trouble coming.] and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and an hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses.*

Whatever she could grab, basically, in the house that was ready, she grabbed it, and made haste.

1 Samuel 25:19 *And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal.*

Remember, because he's mean, and he would probably mess this thing up.

1 Samuel 25:20-21 *And it was so, as she rode on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her; and she met them. Now David had said, Surely*

in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that pertained unto him: and he hath requited me evil for good.

So he's still stirred up. In his mind, he's ready to go take care of business. He's ready to just wipe them out.

1 Samuel 25:22 *So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall.*

So any man that's alive, so God do to me, if I leave any one of them alive. That's angry past the point of, "Maybe we can reason with this guy." There's no reasoning at this point.

1 Samuel 25:23-28 *And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid. Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send. Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the LORD hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal. And now this blessing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that follow my lord. I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the LORD, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days.*

Reminding him that he's always done good. "Slow down, David. You've always done good in the sight of the Lord. You might want to think about this."

1 Samuel 25:29-31 *Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the LORD thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling. And it shall come to pass, when the LORD shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee [the kingdom and everything], and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel; That this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when the LORD shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid.*

A lot of wisdom.

1 Samuel 25:32-33 *And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: 33 And blessed be thy advice [good advice], and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand.*

Now, everybody could say that David was rightfully so. He was going to be the king; he could exact vengeance, but, in God's eyes, He might have held this against him. And David realized that, "I might have done something that really might have damaged my kingdom.

1 Samuel 25:34-35 *For in very deed, as the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall. 35 So David received of her hand that which she*

had brought him, and said unto her, Go up in peace to thine house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person.

Good advice leads to good results. Good advice leads to good results. Sometimes I'm wrong, and I'm about to go make a bad decision, one that would really affect my family, and maybe even affect the ministry, and my wife will say, "You might want to think about that. Let's pray about that. Let's stop, right where we're at—I know you're angry about this. Let's think about this for a minute, and the anger will pass." And it does. Good advice. And, men, like Jason said, sometimes we've got to admit when we're hurting; we've got to admit when we're wrong. It's not wrong to do that. It's not less manly to cry. It's not less manly to admit your faults. In fact, it's more manly. If you have humility, God will raise you up. So, when you have a good wife she's going to complete that in your ministry; she's going to give you good advice. And also, sisters in ministry. Men, we've got to be able to take advice, good advice from women in ministry. David wasn't too big to take that advice, and neither should we. Not saying that they're going to rule over you, but we need to take good advice. Sister Davis, I know you mentioned, Chris, has been saved for seventy years, right? Seventy years in ministry. She doesn't speak a lot. She doesn't talk a lot, but when I get a chance to get around her, she gives good advice. I take heed to that advice; I've learned a lot. And I've learned a lot from the sisters in the faith, here, from the way that they live, the example they set, the things that they share.

We'll pick it up at verse thirty-six:

1 Samuel 25:36-38 *And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light. But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became as a stone. And it came to pass about ten days after, that the LORD smote Nabal, that he died.*

His heart died first, then he died later.

1 Samuel 25:39 *And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.*

David realized, "This is a good one. I'm not going to let this one go."

1 Samuel 25:40-42 *And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife. And she arose, and bowed herself on her face to the earth, and said, Behold, let thine handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord. And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of hers that went after her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife.*

Abigail had wisdom and understanding. David in his anger was going to shed innocent blood. Yes, he was going to shed Nabal's, but he was going to shed a lot of innocent blood, too, because of his jealousy, because of his anger, because of his wrath. Abigail used wisdom to bring about a good result, even turn a bad situation into a good situation. Maybe that's your purpose, right now, just take a bad situation, and turn it into a good situation. You don't have to speak a lot sometimes you just be the example. Amen?

You have heard it called women's intuition, I really believe it's wisdom from above. Good advice brings about positive results. Now, wisdom from above comes from this Scripture, here, this is going to be our closing Scripture:

James 3:17-18 *But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*

So, a quick recap of today's message:

1. Esther- "Why am I here, what is my purpose?"
2. Priscilla- "Not competing, but completing ministry"
3. Tabitha- "A legacy of good works"
4. Abigail- "Good advice leads to good results."

Give the Lord a praise as Andy comes to close us.

