

A Future with a Purpose

What is God's will for your life? That's a hard question for a lot of Christians. Maybe you've met people who seem to know exactly what God wants them to do—like who they should marry, where they should live, or what they should do in life. That would be great stuff to know, but don't feel like you have to have these answers now. For most Christians, discovering God's purpose for them is a gradual process. Take a look at how this process worked in the lives of these two people.



Tim Oswaldel is a police officer in the Los Angeles area.

Listen to what Tim has to say about how God led him to his exciting career.

Q. At what point in your life did you decide police work was in your future?

A. During middle school I thought about being an FBI agent. After college I became more interested in becoming a police officer. I became a jail guard for the City of Glendale (north of Los Angeles) before I was hired as a police recruit. Finally I returned to Glendale, this time as an officer.

Q. How does your faith in God give you peace on a day-to-day basis?

A. Being a police officer is exciting because you never know what is going to happen. I can see how that would make some people uneasy. God knows what is going to unfold even before I respond to a call. Jesus is the best partner any police officer would want! Also, I thank the Lord for giving me a great sense of humor because police officers see a lot of funny things!

Q. You once thought about going to seminary instead of the police academy. How did you seek God's will

in the midst of this hard decision?

A. After finishing college, I worked in the business world. After a few years I felt the Lord calling me to something else. I talked to a lot of people about what I should do. And I prayed about the things we talked about. It seemed my best choices were to either attend seminary and become a chaplain in the military (like my dad) or become a police officer. While I was struggling with this choice, I heard the testimony of a Los Angeles police officer. I realized that being a Christian *and* a police officer was the perfect match for me. I have had many opportunities to talk about spiritual things with officers that I never would have had otherwise. I thank God for my career because I get excited to go to work every day. The job also led me to the woman who became my wife, Michele. She's a 911 dispatcher!

Q. What advice would you give to a Christian middle schooler who is considering becoming a police officer?

A. I get excited when I hear young people say they want to become police officers. The fact that a young person is already a Christian is the best place to start. I would advise these middle schoolers to pray about the direction God has for them. Also, seek out and speak to police officers about their jobs. (That's good advice for any sort of career decision—talk to people who are already doing what you think you want to do!) Most importantly, commit your life to Christ and follow His guidance.

Matthew 5:9 is a verse that encourages me in my line of work, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.”



Kevin Witte's current title is Commander, Weather Flight. Listen to what Kevin has to say about how God directed him in his career in the Air Force.

Q. How did you know that God was calling you to predict weather patterns for the U.S. military? Were there any life experiences prior to this occupation that helped you make this choice?

A. I first became interested in studying the weather when I was 10 years old. I remember walking home when the loud county tornado siren sounded. I ran home and stayed in the basement with my family for a few hours. Tornadoes hit my hometown that afternoon and destroyed several businesses, a few houses, and a school gym. This tragic event is what first got me interested in weather. I remember a few years later, members of our class visited a television studio in Chicago and were led on a tour by meteorologist Harry Volkman. (A meteorologist is a person who studies the weather and tries to predict what it will do.) I really liked what I saw and wanted to be involved with forecasting the weather from then on. There were some bumps in my path, however. After taking the SAT test in high school, I reviewed the results with a counselor. I was told that I had little aptitude for science and would be best suited as a physical therapist. It wasn't until 10 years later that I found

the counselor had misread the data. She had reversed the scores on the aptitude parts of my test. In reality, my aptitude was high in geology and engineering (pretty close to meteorology). Years later I joined the Air Force and pursued my interests in meteorology.

Q. What unusual places have you been able to go to as a result of being in the Air Force?

A. The most unusual place I've ever been to is Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. I spent four months in Riyadh as a weather commander after Desert Storm. On weekends I went on field trips where I saw huge sand dunes and pictures drawn by people who lived in Jesus' time. I also went to Korea where I learned about Korean culture and the history of the Korean War.

Q. What advice would you give to a Christian young person who wanted to pursue a career in either the military or as a meteorologist?

A. I guess the advice I would give to any young person would be to set your goals, and don't listen to people who say you can't do this or that. Try to find someone who will support you and ask you good questions. If you want it bad enough, it can happen, especially if it is what God has in mind for you. Figuring out God's will is hard. I spent a lot of time worrying about what I was supposed to do with my life. Finally, with God's help, things worked themselves out.

So how do you know when you're fulfilling God's purpose for you? When you're doing something you really enjoy, and that work is meeting people's needs, then that's probably the direction that God wants you to go. Love God and follow your heart!



Moses

In Training

**Exodus 2:3-10, 15;
3:1-10; Acts 7:22**

God had big plans for Moses. That's why He had Moses spend his first 40 years in the soft life of a palace getting educated. Then God had Moses spend the next 40 years in the rough life of the desert.

1. Create and fill in a chart about Moses' background so that you can get to know him better. **Read Exodus 2:1-10, 15 and Acts 7:22** to fill in information about these areas of Moses' life: family background, education, languages, travel, and dangerous experiences.

2. Moses didn't ask God to make him a leader. How did Moses feel about doing the job God had for him? Did he feel qualified?
Read Exodus 3:11 and 4:10, 13.

3. God was preparing Moses all along for leadership. Knowing what you know about Moses as a leader and a prophet, what benefits do you think Moses had in later life from his earlier experiences as a native Hebrew? An adopted Egyptian? In Midian?

4. Draw a picture of Moses' recruiting scene in Exodus 3:1-10. Show God's power and what Moses may have felt at that point.





Today's Scripture

Selected Scripture from Exodus 2:3-10, 15

³But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. ⁴His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

⁵Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the river bank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her slave girl to get it. ⁶She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said.

⁷Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?"

⁸"Yes, go," she answered. And the girl went and got the baby's mother.

⁹Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him. ¹⁰When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, "I drew him out of the water." . . .

¹⁵When Pharaoh heard of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian.



Selected Scripture from Exodus 3:1-10

¹Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up.

⁴When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!"

And Moses said, "Here I am."

⁵"Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." ⁶Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

⁷The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. ⁸So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. . . . ¹⁰So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."



GET a JOB!

YES, you are old enough now to go find a job. Whether you're doing chores around the house, mowing lawns,

walking dogs or franchising our babysitting skills, it's time to learn the basics to building a good, solid work ethic.



1. Find something you like to do, and do it. When you are doing something you enjoy it doesn't feel like work. Think about things you are good at and try to find a way to turn those things into a job. Do you like dogs? Start a dog walking service. Do you like to organize? Ask your parents if you can organize the garage or all the closets?

2. Always show up on time and be ready to work. When you tell someone you will babysit at 8:00 be there by 7:55 so you can be ready to watch the kids by 8:00. If you are working at a burger joint downtown you should have your uniform on and wrinkle-free, a clean apron on and spatula in hand to start flipping at the appointed time.



3. Work while you are on the clock...no cell phones, inviting friends over or taking long breaks. Someone is paying you to work a certain amount of time and you need to work those specified hours. When employers see how well you work, they will be happy to give you breaks.



4. Learn as much as you can while doing your job. Ask your boss questions about how you can do your job better. If you are going to walk dogs, find out about the dogs. Ask the owners if the dogs have special needs or if they act a certain way when for example, they see a cat. Also do research on your own. The owners will be impressed that you know so much about their pets.

5. It's ok to start at the bottom. You learn more with each step up the ladder. You will gather knowledge each level and when you are at the top you will be able to help out in any job at any time...and you'll also remember how the people just starting out feel. Start with mowing your parent's lawn and maybe a neighbor's lawn or two then once you perfect the art of mowing you can move on to making fliers to hand out in the rest of the neighborhood and surrounding areas.



MIX & MATCH



DIP you know there are over 2500 verses in the Bible about finances? Everything you need to know...it's in there! Memorize these Bible verses and they will help you make good decisions regarding working and making money.

Match the statements with the verses.

1. Always do your best, bad work will be found out.
2. Don't let people find blame in you.
3. Work hard for the Lord, not men.
4. Respect your boss.
5. Don't be lazy or you don't eat.
6. Make sure you get paid for your work.
7. Work hard, work fast.
8. Work and make money so you don't burden others.
9. Always give back to the Lord.
10. Don't be obsessed with making money.
11. Always do honest work for honest pay.
12. Make sure you take time to rest.

Ⓐ **Prov. 13:11**

Ⓑ **Luke 10:7**

Ⓒ **1 Cor. 16:2**

Ⓓ **Col. 3:23**

Ⓔ **Prov. 31:17**

Ⓕ **2 Thess. 3:8**

Ⓖ **Eccl. 5:10**

Ⓖ **2 Thess. 3:10**

Ⓘ **Exod. 31:15**

Ⓙ **1 Cor. 3:13**

Ⓚ **1 Thess. 5:12**

Ⓛ **Phil 2:14-15**

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every
day
devos

ACT of the Will

For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. *Philippians 2:13.*

When we let God act through us, we are simply doing His will.

MONDAY Read *Philippians 2:13*. Make a list of ways you can be of service to God this week. Pray about the list, then make plans to act. Remember, you and God are a team.

TUESDAY Think about times you are tempted to *react* to problems rather than *act* "according to his good purpose." How can God help you during these times?

WEDNESDAY Been working on the list you made on Monday? If you've completed everything on your list, good for you! Thank God for His help. If you haven't started, you can start today.

THURSDAY Think about some of the ways God could be preparing you to serve Him in the future. What are some things you like to do now? What talents do you have? How do you think they could be used for God's glory?

FRIDAY Read *Romans 8:28* and *Micah 6:8*. What do you think God's purpose is for your life? How can the Holy Spirit help you to act according to this purpose?

SATURDAY End the week thanking God for His actions on your behalf.



Answers for p. 7 Mix & Match: 1-J, 2-L, 3-D, 4-K, 5-H, 6-B, 7-E, 8-F, 9-C, 10-G, 11-A, 12-I

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