

Lesson 4

What is God's Purpose?

Family Study Guides • Making God Real Series

Lesson 4: What is God's Purpose?

Making God Real

The Making God Real series covers the doctrines of God and the Fundamental Beliefs of United Church of God with the purpose of addressing the essential questions of life. These Family Study Guides are created to help parents review and better understand the basics of God's doctrines—then have family discussions on those topics. Use the portions of the guides that are the most helpful and meaningful to your family.

Objectives:

- Help your children understand God's role as our Heavenly Father.
- Discuss what a family is.
- Explain Jesus' role as Son of God and our Older Brother.
- Help your family explain that God's purpose is to grow His eternal family.
- Help your family describe who is a part of God's family now and in the future.

Key Scripture

1 John 3:1a Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!

In the previous lessons we saw that God reveals Himself as consisting of the spirit beings known as God the Father and God the Son. You may want to briefly review John 1:1-14.

We have learned a lot about who God is... but who are we? Who are humans and what are we

doing here? Why did God create us? What should we be doing as a result?

God created us as physical beings, however, this lesson will show that being created in God's image goes beyond a just living out a physical life.

Genesis 1:26-27 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness... So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Let's examine the exciting plan that God has in store for us!



You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. -Psalm 139:16

As a family, read the following verses carefully, then discuss how they show what God is planning for people. Also compare these verses to the meaning of the Holy Days.

Ephesians 1:3-4 (NIV) Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

Vs. 5 (TLB) His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave him great pleasure.

This is what God's plan of salvation—as revealed through the Holy Days—is all about. He is in the process of bringing all mankind to him and to make us children in His family! The plan begins with Passover and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

So what are we doing here, and what is He planning for us?

Ephesians 1:9 (NIV) And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,

Vs. 10 (NLT) And this is his plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ everything in heaven and on earth.

Understanding God's plan through the Holy Days enable us to know how God is going to give all people who have ever lived the opportunity to become His spirit being children one day. The right time for some is now, for others it will be in the Millennium, for the majority of people it will be in the Great Resurrection at the end of the Millennium (Revelation 20:5).

How do the verses below relate to God's firstfruits and the meaning of Pentecost?

Ephesians 1:11-14 Furthermore, because of Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he chose us from the beginning, and all things happen just as he decided long ago. God's purpose was that we who were the first to trust in Christ should praise our glorious God. And now you also have heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, (which) he promised long ago. The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us everything he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people...

What does it mean that God will give us what He promised?

Ephesians 1:5 describes what He is doing (noted in two different translations):

1:5 (GNT) Because of His love, God had already decided that through Jesus Christ he would make us his children—this was his pleasure and purpose.

1:5 {NLT} ...God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family...this is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

Family Discussion Activity

Discuss what it means to have family.

1. Immediate family – parent, child, siblings
2. Extended family – aunts, uncles, grandparents
3. Church family

Mark 3:33-35 Jesus answered them, saying, “Who is My mother, or My brothers?” And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, “Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother.”

4. God’s family

• **2 Corinthians 6:17** I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

• Jesus is our older brother—<https://www.ucg.org/bible-study-tools/bible-questions-and-answers/what-does-it-mean-that-jesus-is-our-elder-brother>

Who is part of the family of God?

a. God is our Father.

Have your family look up how many times God is referred to as the “Father” in the Bible

b. God has a Son, Jesus Christ.

Matthew 3:17 “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Discover how many times Jesus is referred to as the “Son” in the Bible.

c. We humans are God’s children – and brothers and sisters of Jesus.

Hebrews 2:10-11 (ERV)

God—the one who made all things and for whose glory all things exist—wanted many people to be his children and share his glory.... Jesus, the one who makes people holy, and those who are made holy are from the same family. So he is not ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters.



d. God, as Creator, is the Father of all beings.

Ephesians 3:14 (EHV) For this reason I kneel before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

v15 from whom the entire family in heaven and on earth receives its name.

Job 38:7 When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God (angels) shouted for joy? (We will talk more about angels in another lesson)

God’s ultimate purpose is to bring all people into His Spiritual family

1. What do we need to do to be a part of God’s plan? And what is His promise for doing that?

1 John 2:24 (ICB) Be sure that you continue to follow the teaching that you heard from the beginning. If you continue in that teaching, you will stay in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is what the Son promised to us—life forever.

2. What is God’s future plan for us – and when will it happen?

John 6:40 (GNT) For what my Father wants is that all who see the Son and believe in him should have eternal life. And I will raise them to life on the last day.”

3. What will it look like when all faithful people will become Spirit-born children of God?

As you read these verses, discuss what your family has learned in this lesson and compare it to God’s future plan as revealed through His Holy Days.

Revelation 21:1-7 (GW) I saw a new heaven and a new earth because the first heaven and earth had disappeared, and the sea was gone. Then I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, dressed like a bride ready for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne say, “God lives with humans! God will make his home with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There won’t be any more death. There won’t be any grief, crying, or pain, because the first things have disappeared.” The one sitting on the throne said, “I am making everything new.” He said, “Write this: ‘These words are faithful and true.’” Everyone who wins the victory will inherit these things. I will be their God, and they will be my children.

Questions from UCG Fundamental Beliefs

These questions are intended to check the parent and older teens’ understanding of the topic. There is one best answer to each question. Select that best answer.

1. Those who are saved and enter the Kingdom of God will hold the office of...

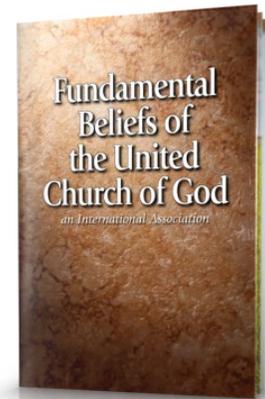
- a. king.
- b. priest.
- c. both “a” and “b.”
- d. Savior.
- e. angel.

2. Those who are saved will...

- a. be spirit beings.
- b. be members of the God family.
- c. live forever.
- d. never sin again.
- e. all of the above.

3. The duties of king and priest include...

- a. teaching people to discern the difference between the “clean” and the “unclean.”
- b. administering God’s government.
- c. teaching the law of God.
- d. all of the above.
- e. none of the above.



Additional resources for your family studies

• **Booklet:** *Fundamental Beliefs of the United Church of God*—“God’s Purpose for Mankind,” pg. 37. We believe God’s purpose for mankind is to prepare those whom He calls—and who elect through a life of overcoming sin, developing righteous character and growing in grace and knowledge—to possess God’s Kingdom and become kings and priests reigning with Christ at His return. We believe that the reason for mankind’s existence is literally to be born as spirit beings into the family of God.

Full booklet: <http://www.ucg.org/booklet/fundamental-beliefs>

“God’s Purpose for Mankind”: <https://www.ucg.org/bible-study-tools/booklets/fundamental-beliefs-of-the-united-church-of-god/gods-purpose-for-mankind>

• **Article:** *God’s Family: The Reason You Were Born*

By Roger Foster. You can know the astounding truth about the purpose of this life.

<http://www.ucg.org/doctrinal-beliefs/gods-family-reason-you-were-born>

• **Booklet:** *Who is God?*

<http://www.ucg.org/booklet/who-god/family-relationship>

• **UCG Study Guides:** *The God Revealed in the Old Testament Was the One Who Became Jesus Christ!*

<http://www.freebiblestudyguides.org/bible-teachings/God-revealed-old-testament-was-the-one-who-became-Jesus-Christ.htm>

• **Teen Bible Study Guide:** *What Is Your Destiny?*

www.ucg.org/bible-study-tools/teen-bible-study-guides/what-is-your-destiny

• **Video:** “Why Were You Born?”

This query has baffled people throughout history. Yet the Bible gives the awesome answer.

By Gary Petty.

<https://www.ucg.org/beyond-today/beyond-today-television-program/why-were-you-born>

Instructor’s Notes and Resources

The idea of God building a family and making His children in His image is one that can connect well through visuals and object lessons. Consider other ways to help our children “see” God’s purpose through object lessons.

ACTIVITY

Give each child a stick or straw and ask them to bend or break it. Individually they are very simple to bend or break. Then give each child another stick or straw. Ask them to put them all the straws together this time. Bind them with a rubber band and ask one student to try to bend or break them. This shows the strength God gives us as a spiritual family and why it is important for us to “stick together.”

The learning summary on the following page can be used to pre-assess students or assess at the end of the lesson.

Name:

Date:

Learning Summary

*Provide 2-3 sentence answers for each of the following questions.
Challenge: Include a relevant scripture.*

What is God's purpose?

How does this affect you now?

How does this affect you in the future?

“What is God’s Purpose?” Youth Lesson

Objectives:

- *Describe* God’s purpose of building a family and how it affects us.
- *Examine* God’s blessings for his children and how they apply to us today.

1. *Say:* Youth will summarize their learning from this month with verbal discussion.

Ask: What is God’s plan? (To make a family.)

Ask: Who is in God’s family? Who will be in God’s family in the future? What will it be like?

2. *Say:* The Bible says we are children in God’s family. Being in God’s family can be a lot like our family at home. Let’s look at how being in God’s family is like our family at home.

Discuss the members of a family, what they do together, what some of the responsibilities are, and how they love each other and take care of each other.

3. *Option:* Break into small groups by age at this point if there is more than one instructor.

Discuss: What are some rules you have in your family? Why do you have those rules? God has rules for his family too. What rules does God have for His family? (10 commandments) What happens when we follow the rules in our family? What happens when we don’t follow the rules?

4. The Bible tells us that God gives us blessings (good things) when we follow His family rules. Let’s look at some of those blessings.

Read parts of Deuteronomy 28:1-14 and talk about what they mean.

Say: Wow! God must really care about His children to give us all these blessings. Can you imagine what it will be like when everyone follows God’s rules? There will be so many blessings!

There are also consequences for breaking God’s rules. You can talk about those with your family at home.

5. Closing activity

Instruct students to draw a picture or write a few sentences describing what they have learned about God and His family. Make sure you are included in the picture or description.

Allow children to share their creations.

6. Optional activity

Give all the students 2-3 pipe cleaners. Have them weave them together to make one big group. Discuss that we are all very different, but together we make one group. God is building a family of many different kinds of members.

“What is God’s Purpose?” Teen Lesson

Objective:

Describe God’s purpose of building a family, how it affects us now, and how it affects our future.

1. Teens will summarize their learning from this month with a quick written assessment.

- What is God’s purpose?
- How does this affect you now?
- How does this affect you in the future?

Give 3-5 minutes. Collect the assessment.

2. Discuss teens’ learning and connections between physical families and God’s family.

3. How does God’s purpose of building a family affect you and me?

- Divide the teens into pairs. Assign one key scripture to each pair: Romans 8:14, Acts 2:38-39, Hebrews 2:9-11, Ephesians 1:5, Ephesians 2:4-6, Ephesians 3:14-17, 1 John 3:1-3, Matthew 6:31-34, Matthew 6:6-14 .

- In groups of 2-3, teens will determine how the scripture affects them now and how it affects them in the future.

Allow 5-7 minutes.

4. Have pairs report out to the whole group—one gives present application and the other gives the future application.

Allow 10-15 minutes

5. Summarize the learning shared by the teens.

6. Closing question (teens share in either written or verbal form).

How can understanding your purpose improve your life (including relationships with God and family)?

Allow 2-5 minutes.