

# Challenge

TEACHING & NEWS

FROM BARRATT MINISTRIES

01.09.06 Issue 79

## God's Purpose, God's Process Radical Christianity Series

This sermon is now included in the Radical Christianity teachings as number 3.

In this two part article I want to look at God's **purpose** for our lives, and the **process** he uses to bring about his purposes. We must understand that the process of holiness is two-way. God has an active part in the process.

God's purpose for mankind is to find and perfect a small group of people, a minority who will show to the majority his character- light in the darkness

I am sure this will sound ridiculous and simplistic to many Christians, because the church has assimilated the world's mentality that 'big is beautiful', and as the adverts say 'How can a million housewives be wrong?' Unfortunately, very easily. In fact the majority are always wrong. Jesus gave a very honest appraisal of the situation in this world. Talking to **his disciples** he said in Matthew 7:13-14, *Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few find it. Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and the majority are on it.*

Evangelists sometimes take this verse out of context and use it as a gospel message: But this is a serious misinterpretation of scripture. The Sermon on the Mount is for **disciples**, and the very reverse is true: grace is the widest possible gate; it covers the whole world. Grace is as wide as hell itself. Jesus took away the sin of the whole world. It was nailed to the cross.

The only thing that stops anyone being forgiven is the refusal to personally accept this fact. Grace is a wide gate, not a narrow one. The narrow gate and road that Jesus talked about is the narrow way of discipleship.

In Deuteronomy 14:2 God told Israel, *You are a holy people unto the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all nations that are on the earth.* This is not an isolated scripture; God had already told them many times that they were to be separate and different. Leviticus 20:24-26 reads, *I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people ... And you shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and I have severed you from other people, that you should be mine.*

'Holy' means separate or different. How, in what sense, were

they to be different, or separate? It must be that they were to be **different from the majority**. Another word used in this verse is 'peculiar': *a peculiar people unto himself*. The word peculiar means different, distinct, or separate. If a person is different to, or separate from, the



Maurice Barratt

majority, they become 'peculiar'. When the majority become 'peculiar' then the equation turns around, and those who were peculiar become normal. Those who were normal have now become the minority, and **they** are now the ones who are known as different or peculiar. So the peculiar are always the minority. The last part of the verse says, *above all the nations that are in the earth.* Israel were to be different from all the other nations. God's purpose for his people was not to subdue the earth. It is true that he told Adam to do this before he had sinned, but **since** sin entered into

the world God has never again given this commandment. God wanted a remnant who would show and declare his character as a witness to the whole world, because the world was now under God's judgement. God will never execute his judgements without there first being a witness to his holiness so that his punishment is just, and seen to be just, by angels, devils and the whole of mankind.

God told Moses in Deuteronomy 11:24, *Wherever the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours*. They were to conquer and subdue the land until it had peace. This verse also gives the boundaries of the land that they were to subdue, which were *from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the Euphrates, to the uttermost sea*. This is an area smaller than Great Britain. Israel had no mandate from God to conquer any other land than this. They were to show God's character to the rest of the world; they were to be a peculiar people, a nation of priests, holy unto the Lord.

Biblical history records that they failed to do this, and time and again they became entangled with the customs and idols of the surrounding nations. They could not keep themselves separate or holy. Even Levi, the tribe which God had separated for himself from within Israel, the tribe which was to be particularly 'peculiar' and holy, failed miserably. The very priesthood, who came from this tribe, as soon as they were consecrated, offered *strange fire unto the Lord*.

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I find exactly the same instructions in the New Testament for the church, although it seems to contradict much popular modern teaching. Peter in his first letter says exactly the same things to the church that Moses told Israel: You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth *the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light*. (1 Peter 2:9) The same principles of

holiness and separation must therefore apply to the church, and this is consistent with the teaching of Jesus and the apostles.

He told the disciples that **they** were to be light, but that they should expect the same opposition that he faced. In John 15:20 Jesus plainly tells his disciples that they were not to expect **recognition**, but rather **rejection**. *The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my sayings, they will also keep yours*.

The 'great commission' given in the gospels does not tell us to take the world for Jesus. It does not ask the church to subdue the world, nor even to Christianise it. Neither does it suggest that wherever our feet tread will be ours. There is not one scripture that tells us to claim our cities for Christ; on the contrary, we are told to *shake the dust off our feet* when we leave a city that has rejected our message. If God has respect to the free will of men, so must we. If people choose to reject the gospel, that is their prerogative. Our commission is simply to give the whole world the opportunity to accept or reject the gospel.

Mark's gospel says in Chapter 16:15, *Go into all the world and tell the good news to every creature*. The church has

no excuse if it does not tell every living creature of God's love and grace; but we are not politicians, and therefore we must not use lobbying, slogans, or similar methods to pressurise or manipulate people in any way, because the free will of man must always be respected. Verse 16 says, *those that believe will be saved and those that do not shall be damned*. Just a simple statement; God will add to the church such as should be saved. If people do not receive our message, Matthew 10:14 tells us to *shake the dust off our feet* and go elsewhere.

Jesus did not mention once that there would be a world-wide revival, or that the church would govern the world before his return. In fact he said the very opposite when asked by his disciples about the end times. Warning the disciples in Matthew 24:4 he said, *Take heed that no man deceive you*, and then went on to talk of deception and persecution before his return. The teaching of the apostles is no different from this. Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 also says, *Let no man deceive you by any means*, exactly as Jesus had said. He then exhorts them in verse 15 to hold fast in a time when great deception and persecution is coming.

We have many doctrines and methods of evangelism, but true evangelism is a simple, natural consequence of holiness. It happens spontaneously and automatically. A holy life has its own energy to lighten the darkness. When Christians make evangelism a **cause**, and not a **consequence** as it should be, then it in fact becomes counter productive to the true life of Christ.

In conclusion, let me take you through a few verses in Ephesians 4; for here Paul clearly shows us God's purpose for our lives.

Verse 11 lists the five ministry offices which cover all that is needed in the church. These are **apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers**. What is the overall vision that these key people should have in their minds as they minister? The next few verses are revealing, because they tell us the purpose for which God gave these offices, and what the results should be: *for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*.

The results of this are: *unity of faith;*

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*knowledge of the Son of God; a perfect man; the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; no longer children, tossed about by every wind of doctrine.* There is nothing at all here about evangelism. The five ministries are solely to produce something mature and pure — the spotless bride. There is nothing throughout any of the epistles exhorting us to 'win souls'. All the instructions are about Christian lifestyle and holiness.

I must emphasise that I am fully behind evangelism (that is, telling the good news to every creature); but the birth of children, naturally or spiritually speaking, is a beginning, not an end. The end is to bring them to maturity. This is the focus of

all New Testament teaching — to bring Christians into the very perfection of Christ.

A full version of this message is available on  
CD, price **£4.50**, code **SOMCD2**,  
or DVD price **£7.00**, code **SOMD2**  
Ring **0161 224 2620** to order these titles.

## Book of the Month

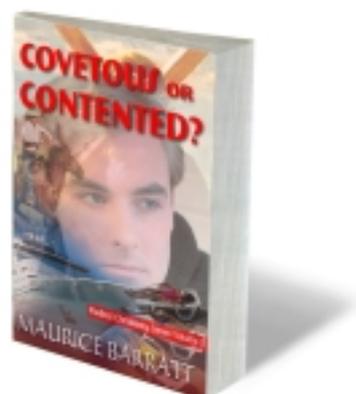
### Covetous Or Contented?

New book from Maurice Barratt

**£7.00**

incl post & packing

In this 5th book on the Sermon On The Mount, Maurice Barratt claims that the root of all sin is covetousness and that for Christians the choice is not between God and Satan, but between God and Mammon. He shows from Matthew chapter 6 that covetousness is the bane of modern Christianity and constitutes the sins of the Laodician Church ... that of being lukewarm. As always he looks at this in a practical way and shows the antidote is to put treasures in heaven. Maurice believes that in the Millennial reign of Christ, the rewards that Christians receive will literally be material things.



## Book of the Month

### Lessons From Life

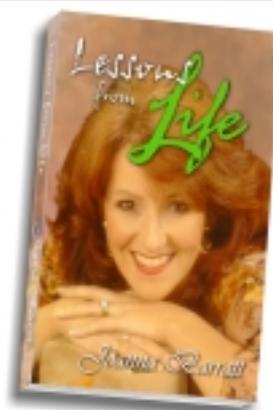
New book from Joanna Barratt

**£7.00**

incl post & packing

Joanna writes boldly and honestly, not afraid to share her weaknesses and failures as well as her strengths and successes, and over the years many people have responded to her articles in *Challenge* and said how they have been encouraged, challenged or spurred on in their Christian walk.

**Lessons From Life** is the third book of selected articles from *Challenge*. Each article is preceded by a summary of the Sermon on the Mount teaching which originally accompanied it.



# PROJECTS

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Barratt Ministries supports missionary projects & work amongst the poor in several countries of the world



## From Samuel Jaikumar:

Greetings in the precious name of Jesus. I wrote to you some time back that we have started the Bible College with a batch of 14 students and I am very pleased to say that the classes have been extremely beneficial to all the students. The classes will end on the 15th November and already we have enquiries as to when the next batch will begin.

I would like to say that all this was only made possible by your prayers and help. I have told the students of how God moved in the hearts of people to get this building in place so that they could be trained. I will send you some pictures soon.

Warm regards.

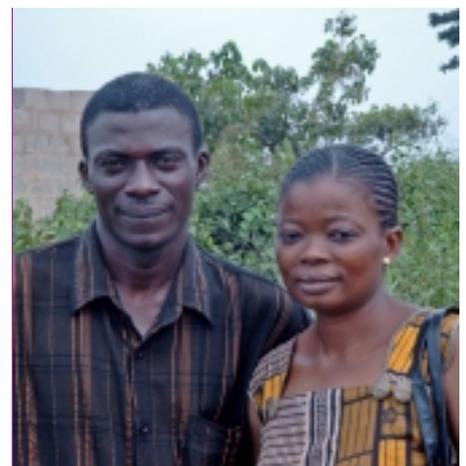


## Message From Surakat Nurudeen

Due to the death of my wife's granny, I had to cancel my scheduled visit to Kaduna to see the children since her funeral fell within the same period. Thanks to all those who grieved with us.

As a result of this development, we decided to send some support to the children through their Churches and we are happy to hear that all of them are doing well. We are also happy to express our gratitude to God and to all the people who are making it possible for construction to commence again very soon at the Orphanage site. May God continue to richly bless you all.

And finally, we wish to say a big "Thank You" to all those who have been praying for us. Though many miles separate us, we are one in spirit!

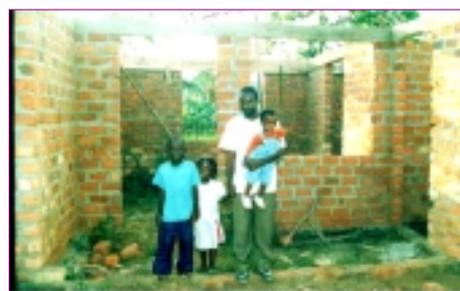


## Update:

Life has been very difficult for Frank Musoke, our brother in Uganda. Not only has he opened up his 2-roomed house to share it with 14 orphaned children, but the pressures of the ministry are always with him. He shared some of his troubles with me in a text during August which read, "First it's been a widow in need of food for her starving family. Secondly a poor sister who shows up daily with a 2 month old baby. Now a sickly woman who has been ousted out of the poor house due to 5 months rent arrears. Elizabeth's (one of his adopted children) mother is also struggling as she is too poor to pay the rent to remain in her home which is almost falling down. The burden is so hard to bear. I am thinking about getting a part time job to be able to support these poor people. I bought 2 street kids aged 2 & 3 years a banana each. 2 Teenage street girls came, slapped the kids and forcefully grabbed the bananas from them. I rebuked them for being merciless, but they answered me that they are also angry that they need something to eat! Imagine ... One of the kids was Will's size (about two years old)!"

Praise the Lord, people responded to our request for help and we were able to send some money to Frank Musoke which paid ... his immediate bills, the next Issue of Challenge which he sends out after translating to Luganda, plus it went a long way to finishing off paying for his 'interim house' which will give them better housing before the proposed orphanage is built. Franks' response was, "Mum, hadn't thought of what you people have done for us - thoroughly incredible! We have so far constructed a pit latrine and a bathroom besides it. Closing one room with a door and two windows, roofing it, plastering it and putting in concrete - it now only awaits the floor before we can move in. It's quite sizeable so we can squeeze ourselves and property in whilst we wait for another miracle to roof and close the remaining two rooms and the kitchen. Please continue to pray especially that we soon put in electricity for this is now the main challenge we are facing, and it really costs much (around £250).

Lastly, with the new home, some of the children have to change schools, whilst others have to become boarding students as a result of distance, but we have to have their fees ready in order to shift them. How can we truly say thank you? The interim dream house will soon be our next home. God richly bless you."



**Frank with 3 of the children.**

We cannot over stress the need to help our brothers and sisters who cannot help themselves. As we have needs each day ... food, somewhere to sleep, education, medical assistance, etc., so do these people. You can rest assured that 100% of whatever financial assistance you give goes directly to the people the funds have been designated for. All who work for Barratt Ministries are volunteers and take nothing out for their labours. Please help on a regular basis for their needs are constant.

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If you would like to help with any of our projects, cheques can be made payable to:

**Barratt Ministries Uganda, Barratt Ministries Nigeria, or Project India.**

Or just make a cheque to **Barratt Ministries** and specify the project you wish to help.

Address and bank details on back page.

# Experiences from life

## The Price of Being Holy

I hear people saying, and even praying, on countless occasions that they want to be holy. But I wonder if they know what this means in reality? The word 'holy' means ... to be different, peculiar, separate, unusual. If God answered could they really handle what they ask for?

I was in Canada for the first time last year (2005) and some newly made friends took my husband Maurice and I to a famous market in Kitchener. The attraction surrounding this market was not necessarily the goods which could be purchased, but the fact that I would see



by Joanna Barratt

Mennonites, as there was a large community of them in this district. It was like taking a trip back in time to over a hundred years ago. I watched with interest these people who had made the decision not to be dependent on the 'world' for anything. They didn't use motor cars, preferring a horse and carriage, or a black box-like buggy which

looked rather like a cab that a family could sit inside. They wore sombre, plain, simple clothing which was in no way fancy or frilly even when new. The ladies wore dark bonnets or caps and the men wore black hats or straw boaters. They didn't use electricity, telephones, or other modern conveniences unless they could generate the power themselves. It was a strange experience indeed.

I was sitting on a plane a couple of years ago waiting for all the passengers to take their seats before take off, when I noticed a family board. The father wore a long black coat and had ringlets hanging down from the sides of his hat. The little boys were dressed very similar, and they also had ringlets. The females in the group all wore

dark, modest clothing, and I immediately knew they were Jewish. I looked around the aeroplane and saw many different cultures and nationalities - Muslims, Africans, Chinese - but this family stood out like 'sore thumbs'. They were very 'different'.

I considered myself. I was a Christian, someone who was supposed to be a *'stranger and pilgrim', 'in this world but not of it'* and *'just passing through.'* God said he wanted to raise up a people who were holy, peculiar, separate, *'to show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light'*, and yet I knew that this Jewish family stood out above the crowd far more than I did. They were different from the majority whereas I blended in.

I remembered hearing a story of an extremely Godly man who once journeyed on a train. There were other passengers in the same carriage as him travelling at the same time, but they were not acquainted with this man. He sat there in silence reading his Bible and one by one the conviction of God came upon his fellow passengers, until they were all weeping and crying out for God to save them. I have never forgotten this story and wondered what sort of man this could be who could carry such a presence of God with him that even without words his very life could shout out the message of the Kingdom of God.

I once worked in an Advertising Agency before the Lord called me to leave my secular employment and go full time for him. Whilst working there God moved in my church mightily and my Pastor was compelled to preach the Sermon on the

Mount from Matthew 5, 6 & 7 to his congregation. It took him 5 years to get through it, taking it very slowly one verse at a time every Sunday Morning, but it radically changed some of the members. I was one of those who was changed. We were only part way into the Sermon on the Mount when God's call came, but already people who worked with me were being affected as I came under conviction. This place was busy, busy, busy for those who had responsible jobs and had to come up with advertising slogans and ideas. I, on the other hand, was a secretary and just handled the typing work that was passed on to me by my bosses. I didn't have to think up new ideas, I just had to type what was put in front of me. When I ran out of work I would go round the other departments asking if they wanted me to do anything for them, but often I would be left twiddling my thumbs. During these times I would type up things for my Pastor, or type out prophecies and 'words' given to me which I had written in a book, and at other times would get out my knitting. People used to look at me as though I should be hiding, but to my mind it seemed stupid to do that. Surely it was better to let my employers know I had nothing to do so they could give me more work. But I certainly couldn't sit there idle - it just wasn't in my nature to pretend.

### Goodbye to the quiet life

I loved my work at this Agency, I enjoyed being around all these eccentric people and was amazed that God allowed me to be such a witness amongst those who were crude, loud mouthed, and in need of help. God even made it possible for me to have a Bible Study during the lunch hours with some of the members of staff who were seeking him. And many *asked* if they could come to church with me! When I left work to go into full time ministry, friends in the Art Department made a card for me which read ... "Goodbye to the quiet life" ... And inside the card they had drawn cartoon characters of certain members of staff depicting their actions and attitudes to a day's work. They would be shouting, swearing, getting frustrated, angry at what they were expected to do in too short a time, kicking machines that had broken down, paper flying all over the place ... and in the middle of the collage was a picture of me knitting away saying politely, "Knit one, pearl one, knit one, dropped one, (excuse me), change needles, knit one ... Thank you Lord for a peaceful day!" They all signed their names on the card and one of the comments said, "You're too nice for this game!" He was right - I didn't fit in. God allowed me to be a witness, I wasn't like them.

To be holy means that we have a different mindset and focus than everyone else around us. This in itself causes problems because the world cannot understand what makes us tick. We will only attract those who are seeking the same God we

serve, others will find us hard to tolerate and get along with. It can be a very lonely walk because the way of discipleship and holiness is through a very straight gate and along a very narrow way. Even Jesus said that there are few that find it. Other nominal Christians around will not enjoy our company because they will feel condemned and convicted whenever we talk about the hope within us. It will just be too much for them to take on board.

I find it amazing that Jesus Christ, the very Son of the Living God, who came to earth and did such amazing acts of love that he would touch and heal lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils from tormented souls, feed thousands of people at a time, calm the storm, preach compassion and even demonstrate his love and compassion to his enemies, should be ostracised and hated by the very people he came to rescue. He was absolutely sinless and gave up his life willingly on the cross to take away the sin of the whole world, yet those who couldn't accept or stomach him made a mockery of everything he did. How lonely can you get if everything you do with the a pure heart and right motive can be twisted and made to look ugly and selfish. Jesus must have been the most hurt person to have ever walked this earth. Yet he never indulged in self-pity. He understood the purpose of God and knew that there would be a cost connected with fulfilling that purpose. He willingly paid the price and took the shame. He was certainly different. He showed us another way. His light shone well and truly and *'showed forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light'*.

Jesus departed from this earth promising to send us the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, who would no longer work with us but would be in us and guide us into all truth. We are not on our own. The good news is *'God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty'* (1 Cor 1:27) With the help of Almighty God we can bless the heart of God by being the people he desires.

# EVENTS DIARY

## Maurice Barratt's Regular Teaching:

**Mon:** 114 Daisy Bank Road, Victoria Park, Manchester 7.30 pm.

**Tue:** 5 Crestway, Tarleton, Preston, 7.30 pm.

**Wed:** 19 Wyatt St. Goldenhill, Stoke on Trent. 5.00 pm.

**Wed** 81 Chell Green Ave, Stoke on Trent, 7.30 pm

**Thu:** 74 Hulme Road, Leigh, 7.30 pm.

## Other Events:

<b>Sat 18th Nov</b>	Joint Housegroup Fellowship, Culcheth.	( Barratt Ministries	0161 224 2620
<b>Sat 25th Nov</b>	<b>M &amp; J :</b> Teaching at Uttoxeter Ch. Fellowship All day convention, with Arthur Burt and others, 10.30	( Geoff Bracey	0188 956 6031
<b>2nd/3rd Dec</b>	<b>M &amp; J :</b> Teaching at Kennoway, Fife.	( Tom Hunter	0133 325 2640
<b>Sat 16th Dec</b>	Joint Housegroup Fellowship, Culcheth.	( Barratt Ministries	0161 224 2620

## news ... news ... news ... news ... news ... news ...



L to R: Ralph Rutledge, Gail Bellamy, Gwen Shaw, Maurice and Evelyn Rutledge

After visiting the church of Ralph Rutledge in May, Ralph, at the last minute, squeezed Maurice into an already full programme and booked him to preach at a Camp Meeting arranged for September. Maurice had the privilege of sharing the platform with Gwen Shaw and Gail Bellamy and experienced God's anointing in an unusual way which had a very marked effect upon him. He came back from his preaching engagement a changed man with a new impetus to prepare the Bride of Christ. Time is short, Jesus will return soon.

A word of thanks to everyone who prayed for Maurice during his recent trip to Canada, God truly answered our prayers.

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