

Therefore

Sophomore year of high school: geometry class. I remember mathematical proofs we needed to learn that used deductive reasoning. A number of formula statements gave you the background information to solve the proof. The next step was to write the word “therefore” or a therefore sign (\therefore). What follows next is your conclusion – your answer, based on the facts previously stated.

Therefore occurs often in the Bible, immediately following a series of truth statements. When you see the word “therefore” in the Bible you know that a concise conclusion is to follow. It is time to pay attention because immediately following the word “therefore” God is going to give you a clear direction of what He wants you to do. The Bible gives us both the history of life during biblical times and God’s direction for our life. As you know, the Bible was not written *about* us but is written *for* us. The Bible may be highlighting a situation people of biblical times are going through but then the word “therefore” tells us the conclusion for us today.

The Bible has many stories about life experiences, some good and some bad, that brought the faithful into a stronger relationship with God. Life experiences helped prepare biblical characters for what God had planned for the future.

The same is true for you. What situations has God brought you through when all seemed lost? What God-given skills and resources do you have to help others in need? What life experiences are really building blocks to new opportunities to serve Him? The sum of these experiences also leads you to the “therefore” in your life journey. The combination of life experiences and God’s Word prepares you to chart your next step in your life journey.

Think about what experiences you have encountered. Perhaps even jot them down on a piece of paper and then write the word “therefore.” What decisions will you make as a result of what God has done for you? Just like the math formula, your next steps are based on your conclusions about God’s preparation of you.

One writer put it this way: what are you *there for*? What is your purpose in life? Knowing all the facts, what conclusion can you make about God’s plan for your life? That is the skinny. The sum of your life, coinciding with the truth you have learned from the Bible, leads up to the word “therefore.” Now you write the concluding statement.

Scripture Verses: These scripture verses use the word therefore as a call to action. Because of what God has done for you and his truths, He is calling you to take action:

- *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).*
- *Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live (Romans 8:12-13).*
- *Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin (1 Peter 4:1).*
- *Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others (Philippians 2:1-5).*
- *Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand (Ephesians 6:13).*

Your Own Prayer: The words you write after the word “therefore” is both your purpose and a call to action. In your own personal prayer now, consider what you are “there for.” Amen.