

Embracing Our Purpose

Message 3 of 3 in the series: "Paramount"

A. We were made by God and for His purposes.

"The Lord has made everything for his own purposes..." Proverbs 16:4 (NLT)

"For everything comes from him and exists by his power and is intended for his glory. All glory to him forever! Amen." Romans 11:36 (NLT)

Life Application: We won't find meaning and purpose in anything else.

"I also tried to find meaning by building huge homes for myself and by planting beautiful vineyards. I made gardens and parks, filling them with all kinds of fruit trees. I built reservoirs to collect the water to irrigate my many flourishing groves... I also owned large herds and flocks, more than any of the kings who had lived in Jerusalem before me. I collected great sums of silver and gold, the treasure of many kings and provinces. I hired wonderful singers, both men and women, and had many beautiful concubines. I had everything a man could desire! ...Anything I wanted, I would take. I denied myself no pleasure. I even found great pleasure in hard work, a reward for all my labors. But as I looked at everything I had worked so hard to accomplish, it was all so meaningless—like chasing the wind. There was nothing really worthwhile anywhere."

Ecclesiastes 2:4-11 (NLT)

"I cry out to God Most High, to God who will fulfill his purpose for me." Psalm 57:2 (NLT)

B. Five Biblical purposes for which God created us:

Purpose #1: We were created to love God and worship Him.

"You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment." Matthew 22:37-38 (NLT)

"You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased." Revelation 4:11 (NLT)

"Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song. Sing his praises in the assembly of the faithful... Praise his name with dancing, accompanied by tambourine and harp. For the Lord delights in his people..."

Psalm 149:1-4a (NLT)

Purpose #2: We were created to love each other as brothers and sisters in God's family.

"God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure." Ephesians 1:5 (NLT)

"So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, 'Abba, Father.' For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering."

Romans 8:15-17 (NLT)

"No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us." 1 John 4:12 (NLT)

Purpose #3: We were created to grow spiritually and become like Christ.

"For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters." Romans 8:29 (NLT)

"And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image." 2 Corinthians 3:18b (NLT)

"And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness." Colossians 2:6-7 (NLT)

Purpose #4: We were created to serve God by serving others.

"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:45 (NLT)

“God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ...” 1 Peter 4:10-11 (NLT)

“He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.” 2 Corinthians 1:4 (NLT)

Purpose #5: We were created to make disciples and tell others about Jesus.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere...” Acts 1:8a (NLT)

“This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God’s wonderful grace.” Colossians 1:6 (NLT)

****Very Important**** Our staff exists to equip people in fulfilling God’s purposes.

“Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.”

Ephesians 4:11-13 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions:

1. Describe a time in your life when you felt like you were in sync with God and His purpose for you.
2. What do the following passages tell us about finding meaning and purpose in life?
 - Psalm 57:2
 - Romans 11:36
 - Ecclesiastes 2:1-11, 12:13
3. Discuss the following 5 Biblical purposes for which God created us:
 - We were created to love God and worship Him. (Matthew 22:37-38, Revelation 4:11, Psalm 149:1-4)
 - We were created to love each other as brothers and sisters in God’s family. (Ephesians 1:5, 1 John 4:12, Romans 8:15-17)
 - We were created to grow spiritually and become like Christ. (Romans 8:29, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Colossians 2:6-7)
 - We were created to serve God by serving others. (Mark 10:45, 1 Peter 4:10-11, 2 Corinthians 1:4)
 - We were created to make disciples and tell others about Jesus. (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8-9, Colossians 1:6)

Which of these purposes comes most naturally to you? Which is most difficult?

4. Read Ephesians 4:11-13. Based on these verses, what is the role of the staff at Centerpoint?
5. Discuss the following quotations:

“What Satan has put into the heads of our remote ancestors is that they could...invent some sort of happiness for themselves outside God, apart from God. And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history...the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy. The reason why it can never succeed is this. God made us: invented us as a man invents an engine. A car is made to run on gasoline, and it would not run properly on anything else. Now God designed the human machine to run on Himself... That is why it is just no good asking God to make us happy in our own way... God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing.” C. S. Lewis

“The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.”

Mark Twain

6. Schedule a time for your connect group to participate in a Next Steps class together.

Resource: The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?, By: Rick Warren, Zondervan / 2012.