



Made for a Mission

Chapters 38 & 39

Notes: This Bible Study is intended to be a companion to “The Purpose Driven Life” by Rick Warren. The Scripture references in this Bible study are taken from the New King James Version.

Chapter 38: Becoming a World-Class Christian

What is the difference between a worldly Christian and a world-class Christian?

- Worldly Christians look to God for personal fulfillment. Their prayers focus on their own needs rather than the needs of others. They want to use God for their own purposes rather than be used by God for His purposes.
- World-class Christians know they were saved to serve and made for a mission. They are eager to receive a personal assignment and excited by being used by God.

How do we know that God’s global mission will be accomplished?

God’s Word says God will be done...

Revelation 7:9 - After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

Is it harder or easier to be a world-class Christian than it used to be?

It is easier for the common Christian to travel the world than it used to be. And Christians don’t even have to leave their home to conduct “e-vangelistic” activities on the Internet.

To become a world-class Christian, how can we shift from self-centered thinking to other-centered thinking?

It is an act of the will to stop thinking selfishly and start thinking like mature Christians...

1 Corinthians 14:20 - Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.

Children are only interested in themselves, the mature obey God and look out for the interests of others...

Philippians 2:4 - Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Is shifting our thinking off ourselves and on to others an easy or hard thing to do?

Shifting our thinking to the needs of others is hard to do in our own power but is we are sensitive to the Holy Spirit, He enables us to do it...

1 Corinthians 2:12 - Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.

When we are discussing spiritual matters with an unsaved person, to what should we be sensitive to?

We should listen to what the other person has to say and be alert to the Holy Spirit helping us understand what is keeping the other person from knowing the Lord. This was the mind-set of Paul when he has such opportunities:

1 Corinthians 10:33 - just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

Why is it that world-class Christians think globally?

God thinks globally, He is interested in the salvation of the whole world...

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

From the beginning God wanted family members from every nation He created...

Acts 17:26-27 - And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

What is the best way to start thinking globally?

Start praying for specific countries...

Psalms 2:8 - Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.

What specific things do the following verses say we should pray for?

Colossians 4:3 - meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, We should pray for opportunities to witness.

Ephesians 6:19 - and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,
We should pray for the courage to speak up when God gives us an opportunity to witness.

John 17:20 - I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word
We should pray that those to whom we have an opportunity to tell about Jesus would believe in Him.

II Thessalonians 3:1 - Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you,
We should pray for missionaries, that the good news of Jesus that they are sharing would spread quickly.

Matthew 9:38 - "Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."
We should pray for more workers to share the good news about Jesus.

How does our praying for missionaries make us a partner with them?

God loves to answer selfless prayer that is asked according to His will on behalf of His children.

Is the world becoming more receptive to the gospel or less receptive?

In one sense, they are less receptive because post-modern thinking (that is the world view that: "there is no absolute truth") has led to people tuning out regarding spiritual matters. On the other hand, change or conflicts give people a hunger the solid rock of truth about Jesus and the rate of change is increasing today. More people are putting their trust in the Lord than at any other time in history.

What does Acts 1:8 have to say about what we should do to think globally about missions?

Acts 1:8 - "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Each Christian should be doing something personally to spread the gospel in each of the four groups represented in this verse. Our Jerusalem is the Brazos Bend community, Judea is Texas, Samaria is Oklahoma, Louisiana, or New Mexico, the end of the earth is Ohio, France and China just to name a few (I put Ohio in there just for my wife's benefit, she never gave much thought about that stat until she met me but since then continues to be amazed by how much about Ohio there is in the news).

How can we make an impact on the ends of the earth?

Certainly we can impact the world by witnessing to people who come here from far-flung places, the Internet is another way but according to Rick Warren, there is no substitute for going... he encourages us to go on a short term mission trip and says it could change our lives. Certainly this is what the Lord tells us to do, He says we should go...

Matthew 28:19-20 - "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

2 Corinthians 4:18 give us a good perspective to have that will help us be more effective as witnesses for Jesus, what is it?

2 Corinthians 4:18 - while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

To make the most of our time on earth, we should have an eternal perspective. As Rick Warren said, "this will help you keep from majoring on minor issues and help you distinguish between what's urgent and what's ultimate."

Jesus made this even more clear:

Luke 9:62 - Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Hebrews 12:1 offers some advice that can help use be better at maintaining an eternal perspective, what is it?

Hebrews 12:1 - Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, **let us lay aside every weight**, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

We need to get rid of things that tie us down to the world and that do not enhance our ability to be a witness.

Why is being a witness so valuable?

Because when someone comes to the Lord as a result, you have contributed to making an eternal impact. Jesus called this laying up treasure in heaven...

Matthew 6:20-21 - "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

What is the tactic that Jesus advocated in Luke 16:9 for laying up treasure in heaven?

Luke 16:9 - And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home.

We should spend money on being witnesses. Money spent on increasing your opportunities to witness or that enhances

your ability to witness is an investment that has eternal value:

1 Timothy 6:18-19 - ...willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Is the cliché about money true that you can't take it with you when you die?

Yes it's true, but you can invest it in people that you can take with you, this is even more valuable...

What should we be doing instead of thinking of excuses not to take a mission trip?

Instead, we should be thinking of creative ways that we can contribute in what we are able to do.

Why should our limitation not be seen as a hindrance in fulfilling our mission?

We are not alone in our mission, the Lord will help us in ways we are not even aware of...

Jeremiah 1:7-8 - But the LORD said to me: "Do not say, 'I am a youth,' for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver you," says the LORD.

Who does the Lord want to engage in missions activities, just those called to be full-time missionaries?

No, all Christians are commanded to go...

Mark 8:35 - For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.

What can you do personally to get involved in missions?

Giving and praying are certainly good starts, but I believe the Lord wants His children to experience missions first hand. I invite you to Join Teresa and I on a mission trip we are planning to Michigan (it's not Ohio but its close and there are people there who need to know the Lord).

Chapter 39: Balancing Your Life

How does the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-39) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) reflect the five purposes God has for each of us?

love the Lord your God with all your heart

We were planned for God's pleasure that we fulfill through worship.

love your neighbor as yourself

We were shaped for serving that we do through ministry.

Go therefore and make disciples

We were made for a mission that accomplish through evangelism.

baptizing them

We were formed for God's family that we are identified with through fellowship.

teaching them to observe all things

We were created to be like Christ which involves spiritual growth through discipleship.

What is the problem if we emphasize one or more of these purposes to the exclusion of the rest?

This means that we are neglecting part of the purpose of God for our lives. Thus we are acting outside of God's will. God wants us to balance all five of these purposes.

How can we balance the five purposes God has for us?

We can help to keep our 5 purposes in balance by: participating in a small group for accountability, regularly evaluating our spiritual health, recording our progress in a personal journal, and by passing on what we learn to others.

How does participating in a small group help us to internalize spiritual truths?

The perspectives of others give us insights we would not have on our own. And talking through our own understanding with others reinforces what we learn...

Proverbs 27:17 - As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

Participating in a small group encourages us to do put into practice what we learn...

1 Thessalonians 5:11 - Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

What is necessary for us to do periodically to help us keep the five purposes in our life in balance?

We need to evaluate ourselves to see if we need to make some changes...

1 Corinthians 11:31 - For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

Self examination is necessary to maintain our faith and to keep growing spiritually...

2 Corinthians 13:5 - Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?-- unless indeed you are disqualified.

What should we do if our self-examination reveals a problem that needs to be addressed in our life?

We need to turn to the Lord for help...

Lamentations 3:40 - Let us search out and examine our ways, and turn back to the LORD;

Saddleback Church has developed a simple personal evaluation tool that is useful to help people stay on-purpose for God. You can get a copy from:

www.purposedrivenlife.com

What is a good practice to retain the spiritual truths we learn?

Rick Warren recommends keeping a journal as a record of the life lessons we've learned that we don't want to forget...

Hebrews 2:1 - Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.

Writing helps to clarify the essence of our understanding and can be used for reference at other times of our life to refresh what we learned. I think it can also be used to edify others as part of a Bible study, personal blog, or other means. When you think about it, this is what Scripture is...

Psalm 102:18 - This will be written for the generation to come, that a people yet to be created may praise the LORD.

What kinds of things would be useful to record in a personal journal?

Not only pleasant things but also doubts, fears, and struggles with God. Some of our best lessons come out of pain...

Psalm 56:8 - You number my wanderings; put my tears into Your bottle; are they not in Your book?

How does passing on what you have learned to others help you to keep growing?

God gives us insights for a purpose. If we pass on what we learn, God is going to use us in this capacity even more and so He will give us more insights....

Proverbs 11:25 - The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself.

God uses us to help each other grow and if we are not participating in that process, we are not fulfilling our purpose...

2 Timothy 2:2 - And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

What does God think of those who only want to adsorb spiritual insights and not pass them on to others?

This is sin that will have eternal consequences in the loss of reward...

James 4:17 - Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

Knowledge increases responsibility. However we need to have the right attitude about this as well, passing on what we know about the Lord should not be considered an obligation so much as a great privilege...

1 Timothy 4:6 - If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.

What should be our motivation to share the Truth with people?

We should have the same mind as God and share the Truth with people to see the growth of His kingdom.

Consider:

John 17:4 - I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.

When Jesus prayed these words, He had not yet died for our sins, so what "work" had He completed?

This was something other than the atonement, the answer is in the next 17 verses of His prayer... it was basically a report to the Father on what He had been doing the previous three years: (1) He helped the disciples to know and love God (worship), (2) taught them to love each other (fellowship), (3) gave them the Word so that they could grow (discipleship), (4) showed them how to serve (ministry), and sent them out to tell others (mission). Today God calls us to do the same as Jesus.