



Made for a Mission

Chapter 40

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 40: Living with a Purpose

Rick Warren said, “Living on purpose is the only way to *really* live. Everything else is just existing.” God’s five purposes for us answer the three basic questions all people have about themselves: Who am I? (identity); Do I matter? (importance); What is my place in life? (impact).

In the Upper Room the night before Jesus would be taken off to be crucified, He concluded His teaching to His disciples by saying, “*If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them*” (John 13:17)...

What is the best way for us to apply what we have learned from this study on the Purpose Driven life?

It is necessary to boil it down to a custom, or personal, Life Purpose Statement. Essentially this affirms in our own words our commitment to God’s five purposes for our lives.

A lot of self-improvement teachers advocate setting goals for your life... Why isn’t a Life Purpose Statement a list of goals?

Goals are temporary, purposes are eternal...

Psalm 33:11 - The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations.

What do the following verses have to say about why we should make a Life Purpose Statement?

Proverbs 4:26 - Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established.

Writing down our Life Purpose Statement will help us to think about the path of our life.

Proverbs 17:24 - Wisdom is in the sight of him who has understanding, but the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.

Writing down our Life Purpose Statement will help us to focus on what we will do with our life, time, money, and resources... it also implies what we will not do with it.

Philippians 1:10 - that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ,

Writing down our Life Purpose Statement will help us to clarify our values and define what success is for each of us.

A Life Purpose Statement will also transcend any role we play in life. We have different roles during different stages of life but our purposes will never change. Our Life Purpose Statement should also express our SHAPE in the unique way God has made us.

The first question our Life Purpose Statement should answer is: What will be the *center* of my life? Which of the five purposes does that question address?

This is the purpose of *worship*. People can put many things in life ahead of God: a career, money, a relationship, property... we need to resolve that nothing will have precedence over our Creator and Savior. As Paul prayed, “*that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith*” (Ephesians 3:17).

How do we know when God is at the center of your life?

When God is at the center of your life, you will worship Him, if He is not at the center, you’ll worry. Worry is an indicator that God has taken second place to something in your life. When you put God back in the center, you will have peace again...

Philippians 4:7 - and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

The next question our Life Purpose Statement should answer is: What will be the *character* of my life? Which of the five purposes does that question address?

This is the purpose of *discipleship*. God is significantly more interested in our character than what we do for a living. We will take our character into eternity, not our career.

What is a good way to determine what character qualities you need to focus on to be like Christ?

Identify the character traits that you need help on from the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) or the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12). I recall that when I was in high school preparing for a physical training test for the Air Force Academy. My worst portion of the test was sit-up so this is what I concentrated on in my training. When it came to the test, sit-ups were the only part I maxed-out on because my training paid off. This same principle applies to spiritual growth...

2 Peter 1:5-7 - But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

The next question our Life Purpose Statement should answer is: What will be the *contribution* of my life?

Which of the five purposes does that question address?

This is the purpose of *service*. What ministry did God equip you to do in the Body of Christ? This will describe how you can make a positive difference in the lives of others and address a specific group in the church that you will minister to...

2 Corinthians 9:12 - For the administration of this service not only supplies the needs of the saints, but also is abounding through many thanksgivings to God,

Are there people that God does not intend for us to minister to?

Jesus Himself did not meet the needs of everyone on earth...

Matthew 15:24 - But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

We too have to choose which group we can best minister to, and generally this also happens to be the group we most want to help as well since God gives us even our godly desires.

John 15:16 - You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

For example, I have served in ministries serving adults, youth and children. I have a sense that my service to adults bears more fruit that it does with children (even though children represent a field that is whiter unto harvest). I expect I will continue to be involved in children's programs to some extent because in doing so I can be an encourager to the adults involved in this ministry.

The next question our Life Purpose Statement should answer is: What will be the *communication* of my life?

Which of the five purposes does that question address?

This is the purpose of *mission* to unbelievers. Our mission statement part of our Life Purpose Statement should affirm our commitment to share the Good News of Jesus with others. This statement should also list the life lessons and godly passions you feel God has given you to share with the world in your testimony. God may also give you a special burden to reach a certain group of people.

How does our awareness that we need to be effective communicators of the Good News affect the way we live?

Our lives must support and validate the message we communicate. Before unbelievers accept the Bible as credible, they must first conclude that we are credible...

Philippians 1:27 - Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ

The fifth question our Life Purpose Statement should answer is: What will be the *community* of my life?

Which of the five purposes does that question address?

This is the purpose of *fellowship*. This is how you will demonstrate to the world your connection to the family of God...

John 13:35 - "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

The world knows that we want to be with the ones we love, our active involvement in a body of believers proves that we are God's children...

1 John 3:14 - We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.

How is the extent of our spiritual growth demonstrated by our attitude toward the Body of Christ?

Ephesians 5:25 - Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her

If you truly love the brethren, you will make sacrifices for them as Christ Himself did. So an expression of our love for God's church should be included in our Life Purpose Statement.

Does any body want to share their Life Purpose Statements?

Mine is a work in progress, the initial draft reads as follows:

Worship: I will intend to do what Jesus would have me do in all my decisions.

Discipleship: I will strive to love others as Christ loved me and exhibit self control in all that I do.

Service: I will strive to teach God's Word to adults at every opportunity.

Mission: I will seek out occasions to give my testimony to adults and be ready to share the blessed hope that is in me at every opportunity.

Fellowship: I will always serve in a congregation of Christians near where I live.

What do you feel might be part of your Life's Message that God has given you to share with the world?

God use Bible prophecy and world events to open my eyes to Him. Also, one of my great spiritual growth spurts was in reconciling the creation account in Genesis with scientific evidence. I think my most powerful message to the world is that, "*all things [will not] continue as they were from the beginning of creation*" (2 Peter 3:4).

Rick Warren also recommends having a shorter version that is more memorable and inspires you...

Proverbs 22:18 - For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; let them all be fixed upon your lips,

Does anyone have a short version they would like to share?

I considered the following short version:

My life's purpose is to magnify God's glory, be an active member of God's family, model God's love, minister His truth, and be a messenger of God's Word.

But the one I like best is even shorter:

My life's purpose is to keep an eternal perspective and prepare for eternity.

Will applying God's purposes to our life help us to know God's will for us in such things as who we should marry, or what job we should have?

Not necessarily, these issues are really secondary to fulfilling God's purposes for you. There are likely to be many choices as to who you should marry or what job you should have that still enable you to fulfill God's purposes for your life.

Proverbs 19:21 - There are many plans in a man's heart, nevertheless the LORD'S counsel-- that will stand.

Do you think it would be a good idea to develop your Life Purpose Statement to reflect what you want other people to say about you at your funeral?

This is not the best plan, it would be far better to write it with what you want God to say about you...

1Thessalonians 2:4 - But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.

Rick Warren says that a good eulogy for a life well-lived would be what Acts 13:36 says about David, "*David served God's purpose in his generation.*" This is why God thought of David as "*a man after My own heart*" (Acts 13:22).

Can past or future generations of people serve God's purpose in the day in which we live?

No, God created and equipped each of us to serve in the time in which we have been placed, just as God raised-up Esther, "*for a time such as this*" (Esther 4:14).

What kind of people is God looking for today to fulfill His purposes?

God is looking for those who will be loyal to Him and willing to do what it takes to see God's purposes fulfilled.

2 Chronicles 16:9 - "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.

What should our attitude be about setting aside our agenda to see God's purposes fulfilled in our life?

We should not regard God's promises for a life well-lived as being just theoretical, they are very real and we should conduct ourselves accordingly...

1 Corinthians 9:26 - Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. We should conduct our lives as Paul did who wasn't afraid to die if necessary...

Philippians 1:21 - For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

And realize that what we endure for the sake of God's purposes in this world that it will not last long in the context of eternity (this day shall pass)...

2 Corinthians 4:17 - For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

Remember that one day we will be standing before God and will join together with all others who have believed God in saying:

Revelation 4:11 - "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."

We will praise God for His plan for us and live His purposes forever!

Does anyone have any stories to tell about how reading the Purpose Driven Life has redirected your life purpose?

It has revived my desire to participate in missions and reinforced my desire to do more evangelistic activities. It has also convicted me that I need to be better at loving others. And it has reinforced that I need to focus on teaching the Bible at every reasonable opportunity that comes up.