

## **Introduction**

This month, we're going to go through a brief overview of the five purposes described in Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Life*. This is an easy to read book that highlights the five main purposes for which we were made. The church highly recommends it to all of our members. (Many of you may remember when we went through the book as a part of our "40 Days of Purpose" campaign.) Each week will refer back to Creation and the Fall, as recorded in Genesis 1-3

If you're a parent, please take time to look over these devotionals in order to pare them down or expand them as is appropriate for your children's age and attention span. Please remember that these devotionals are only a tool for you to use. They should not be what you do, spiritually-speaking, as a family. They should only be a part of a larger picture of family worship.

(For those of you with young children, it might be easier for you to use a Children's Bible, the Message, or the Contemporary English Version when you do your family devotions.)

Week 1: Worship – Our Role within Creation

Week 2: Fellowship – Our Relationship in God's Family

Week 3: Discipleship – Our Likeness to Christ

Week 4: Ministry – Our Service to the Kingdom

Week 5: Evangelism – Our Mission to the World

## **Week 1: Worship – Our Role Within Creation**

**Pull-Out Verses:** "37'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38This is the first and greatest commandment." Matthew 22:37-38

"19Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, 20always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 5:19-20

We were created to live in relationship with God. God is love, and God is Triune (Father, Son, Holy Spirit). He has need of no one and nothing, yet because He is love, God created man and woman, creatures upon whom He may bestow His love. What did God ask in return? Reciprocated love. This was the currency of Eden's economy: love from God to mankind, love from mankind to God, love between man and woman. The Fall, humanity's decision to do things their own way, wrecked all of that. The beautiful harmony of love and perfection was shattered. Worship is one of the greatest avenues by which it is restored.

Worship, in a broad view, is adoring God for who is (Creator, Savior, Father, Friend), what He has done, and all that He will do. It is showing God appreciation, offering Him our undying gratitude, and speaking words of love and affection to the God who made us, saved us, and who is even now preparing to restore us to His perfect presence. God deserves our worship. As a creation of God, we are due to worship Him as Lord Creator. He is above and beyond us. Our lives should be lived in light of such knowledge.

## **Reflection**

### **For the Adults**

- 1) How do you worship God in your own life?
- 2) Is your life lived as worship to God?
- 3) We were created to live in relationship with God. A healthy relationship can only be sustained through loving communication. How is your relationship with God?

### **For the Kids**

- 1) Worshiping God is an important part of being a Christian. How do you worship God?
- 2) God created the world to be a paradise filled with love. What can you do to fill your home with God's love?
- 3) How can we show people outside of our home that we love God by loving people?

### **Challenge**

- 1) Start taking time once a week to worship God as a family. This can be through music, reading Scripture, etc.
- 2) Read *The Purpose-Drive Life* as a family.

## **Week 2: Fellowship – Our Relationship in God's Family**

**Pull-Out Verse:** “42They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer....44All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. 46Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” Acts 2:42, 44-47

God created humanity so that He could share His love with us. We wrecked that by refusing to follow His directions, thinking we could do better on our own. That got us kicked out of the Garden, out of God's perfect presence. Since then, God has done everything possible to restore us to His presence. That's why He sent Jesus to die and be resurrected, to redeem us from our sin and selfishness.

A lot has been said in churches and in books about how Christ came to save us, but I think that's only half the message. When God planted us in the Garden—planted, get it?—He did so in order that a family might grow, a family with Him as the Father. When we come to Jesus to be saved, He doesn't just save *us*, doesn't just begin a relationship with *us*. He welcomes us into 'the Family.' We are adopted by God to become one of His children. That's part of the beauty of the Church: we're family! We belong to God, together. When we fellowship on earth in peace, joy, and love, we're merely preparing for an eternity together with God in Heaven.

### **Reflection**

#### **For the Adults**

- 1) Have you been trying to live life as a Christian Lone Ranger?
- 2) God is our Father, and you're only one of His children. How do you feel about being a part of His Family? How do you deal with your "brothers and sisters" that don't want to "play nice"?

#### **For the Kids**

- 1) Is it hard to be part of a family? What can make it hard? What makes it fun?
- 2) If God is our Father, other Christians are our brothers and sisters. How should knowing this change how we treat each other?

### **Challenge**

- 1) Begin opening your home to others in the church. Make your house an extension of God's House.
- 2) Accept the invitation of others to have dinner at their house. Make time for family time.
- 3) Talk with Pastor Jason about getting plugged into a Life Group.

## **Week 3: Discipleship – Our Likeness to Christ**

**Pull-Out Verses:** “22You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23to be made new in the attitude of your minds;

24and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.” Ephesians 4:22-24

“9Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.” Colossians 3:9-10

God created humanity so that He might have a family to Father, to love. He made us perfectly. We were like Him: good, kind, wise, loving, etc. The Bible put is like this: we were made in the ‘image of God,’ or if you prefer the Latin, *Imago Dei*. We were made to perfectly reflect God’s character. However, when we sinned, we wrecked all of that. Our sinfulness marred and continues to mar the image of God. Like a 1977 penny with an image of Lincoln so faded that he looks like Elmer Fudd, we no longer perfectly reflect God’s image.

Discipleship is part of what we do to renew that image. Discipleship is hard to describe because it is so vast and expansive, but let’s try and narrow it down as making a focused effort to follow Jesus in every area of life in the daily grind. It’s a process of being reshaped. Jesus learned under Joseph the art and skill of carpentry. To think of discipleship visually, imagine Christ, the Carpenter, sanding, planning, and shaping a rough-hewn plank. You and I are that rough-hewn plank. We need to be cleaned up, refined, so that we can be returned to our former place as an image-bearer of God.

## **Reflection**

### **For the Adults**

- 1) Do you feel like you properly reflect God’s glory? Are you a ‘faded penny’?
- 2) In what areas does the Carpenter need to come and refine your life?
- 3) How can you step back and allow God to work in your life to make you more like Christ?

### **For the Kids**

- 1) Do people ever tell you that you look like your Mom and/or Dad? How cool would it be for people to tell you that you are like your Heavenly Father?
- 2) What was Jesus like? How would you describe Him and how can you be more like Him?

## **Challenge**

- 1) Sign-up for the Cornerstone Connections class with Pastor Jason.
- 2) Start attending Sunday School, a good start for anyone interested in discipleship.
- 3) Read *Just Like Jesus* by Max Lucado.
- 4) Find a mature Christian from whom you can learn.

## **Week 4: Ministry – Our Service to the Kingdom**

**Pull-Out Verses:** “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Ephesians 2:10

“27Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 28And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.” 1Corinthians 12:27-28.

When God created Adam, He placed him in the Garden of Eden, paradise. Eden was perfect, yet Adam was still tasked with maintaining it. How tough do you think it was to maintain a perfect garden? It sounds hard, but realize, there were no weeds, no thistles or thorns to deal with. Droughts did not sweep the land nor did swarms of locust ravage the plants. Everything was perfect, in balance and

harmony. So, Adam had a job, a job he was created to do. Yet, it wasn't a laborious job, meaning that it wasn't a job he had struggled with or dreaded doing. His job was a joy.

We have all been given gifts, and we are all given a job to do. Our job has been prepared for us so that it will be a joy for us to do. The problem is that so many of us haven't found that job. One of our greatest desires at Cornerstone is to see everyone have an area of ministry, or service to God's Kingdom. However, one of the greatest tragedies in the Kingdom is watching someone struggle with a job they weren't made for. Looking for a place of ministry requires honestly evaluating your strengths and weaknesses so that you can be matched with a job that will be a joy rather than drudgery.

## **Reflection**

### **For the Adults**

- 1) Am I serving in God's Kingdom? Am I over-serving, stretching myself too thin, or under-serving, holding back my best from God?
- 2) What are my gifts? In what area was I made to serve?

### **For the Kids**

- 1) What are you good at? How can you use that skill for God right now?
- 2) As you get older, what are some areas that you'd like to serve in? How can you begin preparing now?

## **Challenge**

- 1) Speak with Pastor Jason about how you can be plugged into a ministry or about re-evaluating your current ministry position(s).
- 2) There are several places where whole families can serve in the church (passing out bottled water at T-ball games, etc). Check with the church office to see where you can help.

## **Week 5: Evangelism – Our Mission to the World**

**Pull-Out Verses:** "11Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. 12Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us." 1Peter 2:11-12

"15But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." 1Peter 3:15-16

"15He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. 16Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." Mark 16:15-16

God created humanity so that He could love us. He created us so that He would have a family to Father and bless. We ran away. Like ungrateful children, we have spurned His love and demanded to go our own way. Yet, like a true, loving Father, He has done all that He can, spared no expense, and literally thrown Himself to the hazard so that He might save some of us. This is what we call 'The Gospel,' or 'Good News.'

And it is good news! Our mistakes—and there have been oh-so many—do not have to determine our destiny. The past can't be fixed, but it can be forgiven. We were made to be in relationship with God. Being exiled from His perfect presence because of our sin is the greatest tragedy in human history, but it can be reversed! We can be restored to God's presence through the sinless life, sacrificial death, and miraculous resurrection of Jesus Christ. It's almost too good to be true, and yet it is. The most remarkable bit of information a person could ever hear, and we Christians have a corner on the market. And that's a shame.

Our world is in decay. All around us, the façade of consequence-free sin is falling apart. Paul said this of sinners in his day-and-age: "So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as [sinners] do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more." (Ephesians 4:17-19) Does sound that like our culture to you? It does to me.

It's up to us as Christians to spread the light of Christ and the Good News of His salvation through our words of love and respect and our actions of grace and mercy. God is planning the biggest family reunion in all of history. We're in charge sending out the invitations.

### **Reflection**

#### **For the Adults**

- 1) Are you doing what you can to live a life that causes people to question the 'hope that you have'? What is that 'hope'? Isn't it a restored relationship with God in Heaven? Are you living in light of eternity?
- 2) Do your actions testify to the Good News of God's salvation?
- 3) How vocal are you about the new life you've been given through Jesus Christ? Who would you most like to share Christ with? When will you do that?

#### **For the Kids**

- 1) Do you talk with your friends about cool movies, music or video games? Why not talk with them about Jesus, the coolest, most important person you could ever meet?
- 2) We talked before about becoming like Jesus. How would it be easier to talk about Jesus if we already acted like Him?

### **Challenge**

- 1) Make a list of people that each person in the family is going to pray for and talk to about Jesus.
- 2) Pray that God would give you opportunities to answer questions and to testify to the Good News of God.