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RICK WARREN'S  
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## Purpose Driven Life: What On Earth Am I Here For?

by Rick Warren



The most fundamental question you can ask yourself is: "Why am I here?" God makes everything with a purpose. Every plant has a purpose, every animal has a purpose, and if you are alive that means that God has a purpose for your life.

"...for everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible, everything got started in Him and finds its purpose in Him." Colossians 1:16 Message

The Bible teaches that God had five purposes in making you. These five purposes are explained by Jesus in the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. They're demonstrated by the early church in Acts, Chapter 2. They're explained by Paul in Ephesians, Chapter 4, and they're prayed about by Jesus in John, Chapter 17.

### Number 1: Planned for God's Pleasure

The first reason that you were made, the first purpose of your life is this: you were planned for God's pleasure. God made you to enjoy you.

For instance, Revelation 4:11 says: "You, God, created everything, and it is for your pleasure that they exist and were created."

Do you enjoy watching your kids? Do you know that God enjoys watching YOU be YOU? He looks down and goes "That's my girl or that's my boy!"

Now, if you don't get anything else I say- I want you to get this. You were created as an object of God's love. The Bible says "God IS love." It doesn't say, "He has love," it says "He IS love."

I think the two words that best describe the Christian life are "love affair." God wants you to know Him and love Him. Everything else is secondary to that. He wants you to know Him, and He wants you to love him.

Now that means THE most important thing in your life is first knowing God and loving God. And the second most important thing in your life is learning to do the things that show how you love Him.

Matthew 22 (The Great Commandment) says: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment."

The Bible tells us in Timothy that some people miss the most important thing in life - they don't know God. There is a word for expressing love to God: WORSHIP. Worship is expressing your love to God. And worship is living a life pleasing to God.

You know there is a big myth today in most of Christianity. Today the word worship in most people's mind is a synonym for music. We say things like, "Well, I liked the message, but I really liked the worship." As if the message wasn't worship.

Worship is more than music. Worship is everything you do that brings pleasure to God. Your whole

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life is to be a life of worship.

And so the first purpose - the very first purpose of your life - is to worship God.

### **Number 2: Formed for God's Family**

Just as worship brings God pleasure because he wants us to love Him, fellowship with other believers brings God pleasure because we're formed for God's family.

Look at Ephesians 1:5 - "This unchanging plan, His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into His own family."

You know why God made you? Because he wanted a family, and that family is going to outlast your physical family because it extends into eternity.

One of the most misunderstood ideas about the Christian life is that it's just a matter of believing. But God says, "No, you're not just 'believers;' you're 'belongers.'" You belong in the family of God.

Did you know that fifty-eight times in the New Testament the word "one another" is used? Love one another, care for one another, pray for one another, exhort one another, encourage one another, greet one another, and on and on and on. God wants you to care for other people. That's called fellowship. Enjoying God's family is called fellowship, and that's the second purpose for your life.

### **Number 3: Created to be like Christ**

You were planned for God's pleasure: That's called worship. And you were formed for a family, that's called fellowship. Here's the third reason God made you: you were created to be like Christ, that's called discipleship. God made you to transform you into a likeness of his son, Jesus Christ.

The Bible says in Romans 8:29, "From the very beginning, that those who came to him, and all along He knows who would, should become like His son, so that His son would be the first of many brothers." Now this is not God's new plan B. It's been God's plan from the very beginning of time.

God is far more interested in what you are than in what you do. He's far more interested in your being than in your doing. A lot of people ask, "What is God's will for my life in my job or my career?" Do you know what - you could probably have 2 dozen different careers and God would say that's fine. God is more interested in your character, and I'll tell you why - you're not taking your career into eternity, but you are taking your character.

So God's goal here on earth is more about what you become than what you do because it's what you become that you take into heaven.

One of the biggest questions we ask ourselves over and over is, "Why is this happening to me? Why did this happen? Why do I have this problem in my life?" The answer is always the same, if you're a believer. To make you like Jesus.

If God is going to make you like Jesus Christ, then He's going to take you through everything Jesus went through.

Was there anytime when Jesus was lonely? Yes.

Was there anytime when Jesus was tempted? Yes.

Was there anytime when Jesus was unpopular? Yes.

Misunderstood? Yes.

Criticized? Yes.

Went without basic needs? Yes.

Was there ever a time in Jesus' life when things did not make his life comfortable? Absolutely.

Why do you think God would spare you those things?

The Bible says Jesus learned obedience through suffering. The Bible says in Hebrews, that Jesus was made perfect – mature - through suffering.

What makes you think you'd be any different?

What makes you think God would spare you from something He did not spare His own Son from?

If He's going to make you like Christ, He's going to take you through everything Jesus went through. God produces the fruit of the Spirit in your life by putting you in the exact opposite situation.

If God wants to teach you real love, does He put you around a bunch of lovely people just like you? No, if God wants to teach you real love, He's going to put you around some unlovely people. It's easy to love people like you. You like yourself.

How does God teach you peace? You're sitting at home when everything's perfect and the kids are quiet, and you're making a lot of money? No. He puts you in a traffic jam. Peace is learned in chaos, in a crisis.

How about patience? God puts you in lines. Ever been to the Department of Motor Vehicles? That's the number one way God makes you more patient.

There is no problem you can't grow from if you'll learn the right response. You become like Jesus. This is God's third purpose for your life. Becoming like Christ is called discipleship.

#### **Number 4: Shaped for Service**

The fourth purpose God created you for is this: you were shaped for service. God made you to serve Him. Now you're planned for God's pleasure, that's worship. You're formed for a family: That's fellowship. You're created to be like Christ: That's discipleship. And now you're shaped for service: That's called ministry.

In Ephesians 2:10, the Bible says, "God has made us what we are. In Christ Jesus, God made us to do good works, which God planned in advance for us to live our lives doing."

Every Christian is created to serve - called to ministry, created for ministry, saved for ministry, gifted for ministry. The Bible makes it very clear that every Christian is a minister. Not every Christian is a pastor, but every Christian is a minister because to be Christ-like is to be a minister. You can't be like Jesus Christ without serving others.

What is ministry? Ministry is any time your use the abilities God has given you to help someone else in Jesus' name. The Bible teaches that God uniquely wired you in a certain way for a purpose.

When you get to heaven, God is going to ask you two questions, "What have you done with my Son Jesus Christ?" And the second question will be, "What did you do with what I gave you?"

We are stewards of everything God gave us, and you were shaped for service. God gave you your abilities for service. God gave you your abilities - not for your benefit - but to bless other people.

### **Number 5: Made for a Mission**

So why did God make you? The Bible says you were planned for God's pleasure, and you bring God pleasure when you worship him.

The Bible says you were formed for a family - and that family on earth is called the church - and that's fellowship and that brings him pleasure.

The Bible says that you were created to be like Christ, to grow up in Him, to mature, and that's called discipleship.

The Bible says that you were shaped for service - God wired you in a unique way to make a contribution. You weren't put on this earth just to take up space and breath and die. You were put on this earth to make a contribution. And that's called your ministry.

The fifth reason you were put on this earth is that you were made for a mission.

Jesus said, in John 17:18, "[Father,] in the same way you gave me a mission in the world, I give them a mission in the world." Every believer needs a ministry in the church and a mission in the world. You need both. You need a ministry to believers, and you need a mission to unbelievers.

If you want God's blessing on your life, if you want God's hand of blessing on your life, you must care about the things that God cares about most! And that is bringing lost children back to Jesus. That is what God cares about more than anything else.

Paul was extremely passionate about this particular purpose. He says in Acts 20:24, "The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work that the Lord Jesus Christ gave me." And what is that work? To tell people the good news about God's grace. Now fulfilling my mission in the world - there's a word for that in the Bible - it's called "evangelism." That is the fifth purpose God has for your life.

My dad was a man on a mission. He was a pastor for 50 years, but died a few years ago of cancer. The last week of his life he was delusional, and my wife and I were sitting beside him. He was very frail, and he'd lost all this weight from cancer. One night he became agitated and tried to get out of bed.

Kay said, "Jimmy, you can't get out of bed, lay back down, you're very weak. You're dying." But he tried to get back out of bed, and my wife said again, "No. Please lay back down in the bed." She forced him back down in the bed, and she said, "What is it you need?"

He said, "Gotta save one more for Jesus. Gotta save one more for Jesus. Gotta save one more for Jesus." And he began to say this over and over, and in the next hour, he must have repeated this line maybe 100 times. "Gotta save one more for Jesus."

As I sat there by his bedside, I put my head down - praying - tears were coming down my cheeks. My dad reached up and put his hand on my head - like a blessing - and he said, "Save one more for Jesus. Save one more for Jesus." I intend for that to be the theme of the rest of my life. And I invite you to make it the theme of your life.

**You were made for a mission.**

Now, I have shared from God's Word what it means to live a life of purpose, a purpose-driven life.

What are you going to do about it?

The Bible says, "David served God's purpose in his own generation." I can't think of a better epitaph. That's what I want for my life - that when I die people will say, "He served God's purpose in his generation."

And that's what I want people to say about you, that you served God's purpose in your generation.

The problem is that we get distracted from our purposes by other people, plans, programs, pressures, and problems.

Before I pray for you, I'd like to lead you in a prayer, and I would encourage you to read this prayer aloud:

"Father, more than anything else I want to fulfill the purposes you made me for. I want you to use me anytime, anywhere, any place. I want my life to bring you pleasure. I want my heart to grow in worship. I want to learn to love you. I want to be used to build the fellowship between believers."

"Thank you for the privilege for being a part of your family. It's my heart's desire to become like Jesus. I will do whatever it takes to cause that to happen. Help me to discover my shape for ministry and to use the talents you've given to me to use for others. Help me to have a servant's heart. Father, I want to fulfill my mission on earth. Give me a burden for people who don't know you. I want to serve your purpose in my generation. And I want to be a part of what you're doing in the world. From this day forward, I want to build my life around your purposes. Help me Jesus."

And now, my friend, let me pray for you:

Dear God, I want to thank you for those who've prayed this prayer. I know that if they mean it, it will start a revival that all the forces of hell can not stop. Lord, I pray that our prayers will not just be words, but that they will be backed up by our actions. Help us to remember how much you care for this world and to help us reach one more for Jesus. In your name we pray, Amen.

Until next week,

*Rick*



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Article by Rick Warren

**Rick Warren** is the founding pastor of [Saddleback Church](#) in Lake Forest, Calif., one of America's largest and best-known churches. In addition, Rick is author of the New York Times best seller [The Purpose Driven Life](#) and [The Purpose Driven Church](#), which was named one of the 100 Christian books that changed the 20th century. He is also founder of [Pastors.com](#), a global Internet community for ministers.



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