

Purpose #2

Formed for God's Family

The Purpose Driven Life - Part 3

January 22, 2023

We're in the 40 of Purpose series on God's purpose for your life.

Last week, we looked at His first purpose, to know and love Him. That's called worship.

DAY 1: My second purpose in life is "fellowship"

Hebrews 2:10 (ESV) For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering.

1. He planned it so you would be born, so you could share in His glory, so you could be part of His family. To share in His glory means several things:
 - a. He will be shaping us to love with the same kind of love He has and is! (John 17)
 - b. He will be shaping our character, values, attitudes, and heart to be more like Jesus (Transformation).

Ephesians 1:5 His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ.

2. The Bible is God's story of building a family for Himself that is going to last forever.
3. Christianity is not a "religion." It is the making of a very large family! When most people think of "church" they think of a building or an organization. Though many churches do have a building and an organization, what makes a church a church is the nature of the relationships that members share with one another. It is a quality of relationship that you will find nowhere else.

1 Peter 2:17 Love your spiritual family.

4. God wants you to learn to love the people in your family. Why?
5. When people hear the word "fellowship" they may think of eating, pot luck dinners, or going to church. Fellowship is loving God's family.

1 Tim. 3:14-15 I'm writing so that you'll know how to live in the family of God. That family is the church.

6. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 2: Level 1: Membership: choosing to belong.

1. There are four levels of fellowship. Today, we'll look at level 1.
2. The most basic level is belonging to a church family. To belong to a church family is more than having your name on a roster. "Belonging" means to be part of a group in such a way that you become connected to others in meaningful ways.

*Ephesians 2:19 You are **members** of God's very own family and you **belong** in God's household with every other Christian.*

The Christian life is not just a matter of believing; it's a matter of belonging.

3. At birth you automatically became a part of the human race, but you choose to belong to the family of God. Membership is a choice to connect with a certain group of other believers in on-going relationships.

4. Some say, "I'm a Christian, but I don't attend or belong to a church." That's like saying, "I belong to the gym, but I rarely go to the gym."

5. The church fellowship is where we learn what it means to grow as a Christian.

Romans 12:5 In Christ we who are many form one Body, and each member belongs to all the others.

6. You belong to every Christian. We're members together. A loner Christian who is not connected with others in a church fellowship is like a hot coal in the BBQ that is separated from the other hot coals. It will quickly grow cold.

7. Baptism is a symbol of the fact that we belong together. Baptism is a public testimony to following Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:13 This is what we proclaimed in word and action when we were baptized. Each of us is now a part of His resurrection Body.

Romans 6:3 That's what baptism into the life of Jesus means. When we are lowered into the water, it is like the burial of Jesus; when we are raised up out of the water, it is like the resurrection of Jesus.

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 3: Level 2: Learning to share. The friendship level

1. You were created in God's image. You were made for relationships. Life is not a solo act.

*Acts 2:44 All the believers met together constantly and **shared** everything with each other.*

2. Friendships don't develop without meeting together. Do you know people that have deep friendships? You think, how lucky. It's not luck; it's a choice.

Deep friendships don't just happen.

3. Friendships develop by taking the initiative and making time for them. Many people are lonely because they are preoccupied with achieving, working, or just expecting others to take the initiative. You have to be willing to invest time. Until this becomes a priority, it's tough to develop deep friends. You make time.

4. Friendships don't develop without sharing. They "shared everything." What do we share?

- We share our **experiences**.

5. Proverbs 27:17 says we learn from one other "as iron sharpens iron." It is wise to learn from the experiences of others. You don't have to make all the mistakes yourself.

- The Bible says we share our **homes**.

1 Peter 4:9 Open up your homes to each other.

6. Why share our homes? You can't fellowship in a crowd. It is impossible to share deeply with many people. We can worship, celebrate, and learn together, but little fellowship takes place *in* a worship service.

7. Fellowship occurs in a small group, where you get to know people.

- We share our **problems**.

8. No one's meant to face problems alone.

Galatians 6:2 Bear each other's troubles and problems.

9. When you share a joy, it is doubled; when you share a problem, it is cut in half.

Romans 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

10. Sometimes in a small group you die of laughter and sometimes you all shed a tear. A small group is not a place to fix everybody's problem. In fact, trying to fix a problem makes it worse! What folks need is a listening ear and a caring heart. It helps so much to hear others say, "I've been there," "I understand," "that's tough."

Hebrews 10:25 Let us not give up the habit of meeting together. Instead, let us encourage one another.

11. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 4: Level 3: Partnership. Doing my part.

1. You have a contribution to make. God didn't bring you to PCI to sit and soak in a spiritual spa. He wants you to make a difference. The bible has 58 "one another" commands. Pray with one another. Accept one another. Love one another. Serve one another.

1 Corinthians 3:9 We are partners working together for God.

2. The word "fellowship" is often translated "partnership."

3. Have you ever wanted to be part of a great team? You are part of the greatest team there ever was in the church. What we do is going to last forever. We're part of the greatest enterprise that's ever existed. To be a part you've got to find your niche.

Ephesians 4:16 The whole body is fitted together perfectly as each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole Body is healthy and growing and full of love.

4. "Each part," that's you. We get more done together than we could do ourselves.

5. Sometimes, doing your part is tough. It requires a certain attitude.

6. Mother Teresa was asked, "How do you handle death and disease in Calcutta? She said, "Every person I bathe, every person I bandage, I imagine seeing the face of Jesus and I do it for Him."

Matthew 25:40 Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are the members of my family, you did it to Me.

7. If you want to experience a deeper level of fellowship, meet a practical need in your group this week as if you were doing it for Christ. Watch what it does for your relationships with one another.

8. In a church, each member helps pull the wagon.

9. When you think about helping to pull the wagon at church what comes to your mind?

10. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 5: Level 4: Kinship: Loving Believers like Family/ Sacrificing For Each Other

1. When I say "kinship" or "kinfolk," some of you think of this: the Beverly Hillbillies theme. That's not "kinship." Kinship means your *closest* relationships. When someone is hurt they notify the next-of-kin, not Aunt Ethyl.

Romans 12:10 Be devoted to each other like a loving family.

2. "Fellowship," the Greek word "koinonia" means being as committed to each other as we are to Christ.

1 John 3:16 We know what real love is because Christ gave up His life for us. And we ought to give up our lives for our Christian brothers and sisters.

3. This is the deepest level of fellowship, sacrificing for each other like Jesus Christ loved and sacrificed for you.

4. In America we know little about what the bible calls "the fellowship of suffering". Millions of Christians die in communist or Muslim countries, simply for being Christians. How do you get to this deepest level in America? You do it by standing with other believers when they are in crisis. When everybody walks out, you walk in.

5. Some say that's the reason I don't want to be in a small group. "I want safe emotional distance." The irony is that when life is rough what we need is emotional closeness! Everyone has problems; and the safest emotional distance is when you're bound with other believers who are loving and committed to you. Life is too short to do alone.

6. This is what life is all about, loving God and learning to love each other. If you miss this, you have missed the central purpose of your life. Life is not about accomplishments. Life is about relationships.

John 13:35 Your strong love for each other will prove to the world that you are my disciples.

7. The Roman Empire threw Christians to the lions in the coliseum. They crucified, boiled and burned them. A secular historian wrote this about Christians, "Behold, how they love each other." We want PCI to be known not for our sermons, not our singing, not our building, but our love. We want people to say, "that's the place where they love each other." People are not looking for religion; they're looking for a family. They aren't looking for doctrine; they are looking for love.

8. Most people have little idea about love. They know sexual or romantic love but don't know sacrificial love. The family of God is where you learn to love real people, not ideal people.

1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

You are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?