

What Have We Learned?

The Purpose Driven Life - Part 7

40 Days of Purpose, February 19, 2023

It's hard to believe we're at the end of 40 days.

Deuteronomy 32:7 Remember the days of old; consider the generations long past. Ask your father and he will tell you, your elders, and they will explain to you.

Remember the lessons you learn, otherwise, you have to learn them over and over. Some things we only learn through experience. What an experience the last 40 days have been in our readings and services, in our groups, and sharing. What did we learn about God? Life? Growing? Our community?

DAY 1: What have we learned about God?

1. It's all about God, not me.

Hebrews 2:10 In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. ¹¹ Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family.

2. 40 Days of Purpose began with this statement. It's all about God, not me.

3. There is a meta story to life that supersedes all of our smaller stories. The ultimate glory of God, who He is, and what He is about is the primary driver of life. Miss this, and you will badly misunderstand your life, especially when hardship and suffering occur.

4. Life is about far more than your happiness and fulfillment. Life is far more than your success, dreams or ambitions. You were made by God and for God. Until you understand that, life doesn't make sense.

5. You were made for God, and you were made to live with God forever. You exist for God, not vice versa. Now, when you understand that, doesn't that change your priorities and perspective and a lot of other things?

Man is not God but has God's end to serve,
A master to obey, a course to take,
Some things to cast off, some things to become.
Grant this, then man must pass from old to new,
From vain to real, from mistake to fact,
From what once seemed good, to what now proves best. - Robert Browning

6. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 2: What did we learn about life?

1. Life is preparation for eternity.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

a. Tucked into this verse are several clues as to the mystery of life. Jot down three of them.

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b. Every one of us knows this intuitively. The purpose driven life helps to prepare us for that eternity to which we look forward.

c. There's more to life than the here and now. Understanding God wants you for eternity with Him should drive home your significance. No job can give you more significance. No relationship in this world that can give you more significance.

2. We're put on earth for five purposes.

No. 1, I was planned for God's pleasure. The Bible's word for that is "worship."

No. 2, I was formed for God's family. The Bible's word for that is "fellowship."

No. 3, I was created to become like Christ. The Bible's word for that is "discipleship."

No. 4, I was shaped to serve God. The Bible's word for that is "ministry."

No. 5, I was made for a mission. The Bible's word for that is "mission."

a. Which one of the five purposes strikes you the most? The one you will likely add to your memory?

b. What change(s) in your life are you likely to make due to this purpose?

c. One man wrote:

(1). *Knowing* I have a purpose is better than not knowing *if* I purpose or not.

(2) *Knowing* what my 5 purposes are is far better than just knowing I have a purpose.

(3) *Doing* my 5 purposes is better than just knowing my 5 purposes.

d. What strikes you most from today's devotional?

DAY 3: What have we learned about growing?

1. We grow through making commitments.

James 1:22 Be doers of the word, and not just hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

- a. You're not going to grow that much just coming church. You have to act on what you learn.

- b. You can go to church the rest of your life; if you don't do anything about it, it does you little good.

James 2:17 Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action is dead.

- c. We grow not by sitting and listening. We grow by making commitments and pursuing them. The people who grow the most in 40 Days of Purpose are those who act.

- d. That action may be joining a small group, getting involved in a ministry, taking the initiative to share with my lost friends.

- e. Is there a “next step” of commitment for you to take?

2. We also grow through fellowship.

Proverbs 27:17 As iron sharpens iron, so people can improve each other.

- a. We're never going to stop talking about small groups in this church, because your growth is slow without other people. You cannot grow on your own. Some of you made a real step to get involved in a group. And those of you who are new or didn't get in a group, there's room for you in a group.

Philippians 4:9 Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard, and the God of peace will be with you.

- b. The “secret sauce” in a church is the “invisible curriculum.” It is the large number of specific examples of people that each reflect some facet of the glory of Christ in their lives and through their lives.

Hebrews 10:25 We should not stop gathering together with other believers. Instead, we must continue to encourage each other even more.

- c. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 4: What did we learn about our community?

1. People are hungry for spiritual truth.

John 4:35 "Look around you! Vast fields of human souls are ripening all around us and they are ready now for reaping."

- a. Maturity is never an end in itself.

- b. Maturity is always for ministry and mission.

- c. God will use you if you're available. He uses you when you invite a friend to church or a small group.

2. Live what you know.

John 13:17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

- a. Put what you know into practice. All the knowledge in the world is worthless unless we practice it.

The blessing doesn't come in knowing the purposes of life.
The blessing comes in doing the purposes of life.

Ephesians 5:15-16 Live life with a due sense of responsibility, not as those who do not know the meaning of life but as those who do.

- b. He says live responsibly. I was planned for God's pleasure, so I worship God. I was formed for God's family, so I fellowship with believers. I was created to be like Christ. I was shaped to serve God. I was made for mission. I will build my life on these things. I can't go back.

- c. More than ever before, you know what life is all about. You can't go back to the old way of living for things or pleasure, living for fun, prestige, or success. Why? You know the meaning of life, now.

Philippians 3:16 Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

- d. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 5: Pass it On.

1. A paradoxical truth about growth: You only keep what you give away. It's hard to retain what you have learned unless you pass them on.

Mark 8:34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? ³⁷ Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? ³⁸ If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

2. What strikes you from these verses from Jesus?

3. God doesn't want you to be a reservoir. He wants you to be a river. Water flows to you and then through you.

4. There's almost nothing that God won't do for the person that says, "God, use me to bless other people."

5. And if you pass it on to others, you share a truth, you write it in a letter, you send an e-mail, you give them a book, you bring them to church, whatever you do, you'll keep growing.

Romans 1:8 I thank my God through Jesus Christ for every one of you because the news of your faith is spreading throughout the whole world.

6. Every day we make choices. Look for opportunities to engage in God's purposes:

a. I was planned for God's pleasure. How can I please God today?

b. I was formed for God's family. How can I be a blessing, today?

c. I was created to become like Christ. I will use this day to make choices to grow my character.

d. I was shaped to serve God. How can I serve God or someone else, today?

e. I was made for a mission. Is there something of my testimony I can share with someone, today?

What strikes you from today's devotional?