

## Spirit Cafe Schedule for Spring 2009

- April 17 A Purpose Driven Life  
vs. a Personally Driven Life  
*Where do you look for a sense of purpose?*
- April 24 Remembering your purpose in happy moments
- May 1 Finding your purpose in difficult moments
- May 8 Staying on purpose in quiet moments
- May 15 Discovering a new purpose in painful moments

## Welcome to the Spirit Cafe

Session One

Church of the Spirit v.09

## Finding your purpose in life



### **The Purpose Driven Life** **What on earth am I here for?**

written by Rick Warren, copyright 2002,  
Zondervan Publishing, Grand Rapids

for more info on this you can also try  
<http://www.purposedrivenlife.com/en-US/Home/home.htm>

## **A Purpose Driven Life** **vs.** **A Personally Driven Life**

### **Session 1: Where do you look for a sense of purpose**

*"The search for the purpose of life has puzzled people for thousands of years. That's because we typically begin at the wrong starting point--ourselves."*

*-- Pastor Rick Warren*

**Getting Started: (20 min)**

(1) Look at the items in the bag at each table. Do you know for what purpose the items are used? Can you guess? If you already know it's purpose, have you made use of it before?

(2) Pick a card from the decks provided at each table. Read aloud the title on the card and describe the purpose that person has, or should have, to your way of thinking.

**Video Segment 1: MercyMe interview (3 min)**

Bart Millard talks about trying to find his purpose. He stepped out to go in a direction which was unsure, to be a Christian youth leader, to try to make money as a worship leader. And he stuck with it, though some years he only made \$10,000 in salary. Now he is world famous for his songs, including, "I can only imagine."

**Large Group Discussion: Handling Death (10 min)**

What strikes you about singer Bart Millard's journey to find purpose? What is the thing that is most outstanding in his understanding of life?

Early in life purpose is given to you. You are told what you have to do by parents, teachers, babysitters, big brothers and sisters, bus drivers ... just about everyone. Part of the maturation process is when you start discovering or defining your own purpose, as in what clothes you want to wear, what classes or career you want to take up. Only ... it's easy to get stuck in that process and think of yourself as the center of the known universe. Rick Warren begins his book *The Purpose Driven Life* with this passage:

**Personal Notes**

### On your own: Personal Reflection Time

**Point to ponder:** Living on purpose is the path to peace ... and to God.

**Question:** What would my family and friends say is the driving force of my life so far? What do I want to be or accomplish?

**Bible verse:** You, O Lord, give perfect peace to those who keep their purpose firm and put their trust in you. [Isaiah 26:3 TEV]

Everyone's life is driven by something. Dictionaries define the verb drive as "to guide, to control or to direct." Whether you are driving a car, a nail, a golfball, you are guiding, controlling and directing it at that moment. What is the driving force in your life?

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Many people are driven by guilt, the pursuit of sexual relations, resentment and anger, fear, materialism, or the expectations of others. God wants you to have a purpose driven life, one that is guided, controlled and directed by God's will for you. And since he wants only the best, that's not a bad thing. However, we are all a product of our past, but we do not have to be a prisoner of it. God's purposes are not limited by what you have done or where you have been. God can turn a murderer like Moses into a leader, a coward like Gideon into a hero and an adulterer like David into a man with a great heart for God. How much of the past holds you back from becoming what God wants you to be in the present?

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*It's not about you. The purpose of your life is far greater than your own personal fulfillment, your peace of mind, or even your happiness. You were born by God's purpose and for his purpose.*

*The search for the purpose of life has puzzled people for thousands of years. That's because we typically begin at the wrong starting point: ourselves. We ask self-centered questions like What do I want to be? What should I do with my life? What are my goals, my ambitions, my dreams for my future? But focusing on ourselves will never reveal our life's purpose. The Bible says, "It is God who directs the lives of his creatures; everyone's life is in his power."*

*Many people try to use God for their own self-actualization, but that is a reversal of nature and doomed to failure. You were made for God, not vice versa, and life is about letting God use you for his purposes, not your using him for your own purpose. The Bible says, "Obsession with self in these matters is a dead end; attention to God leads us out into the open, into a spacious free life."*

So the first question is not what is the purpose of my life, but rather, who determines my purpose. Is it me, or is it God?

If you do not believe in God, this question will make no sense. It's you.

If you believe there may be a God but you do not trust God, this question will make you nervous, thinking that you have to give up control to someone you either don't know or don't trust.

If you trust God, this question is a reminder that letting God determine your purpose is the best move. It's a reminder we need because we forget ...

## Video Segment 2: Rick Warren (12 min)

Session 1 4:24-11:54

Warren introduces the idea of purpose and points out the problems of living without a sense of purpose. He's not the only one to do this. A whole school of therapy was designed by Jewish Holocaust survivor Victor Frankl that focuses on helping people find a sense of purpose in life. Warren explains:

Without purpose a person is filled with tiredness  
Without purpose you can not be fulfilled  
Without purpose life seems uncontrollable

*Please note that for Warren the Bible provides guidelines and answers, so he refers to it often. You'll notice though that he does this not so much to prove his points but to illustrate them.*

Warren ends by saying he believes God has an overall purpose for everything and everyone, and that this purpose brings with it many benefits to your life. What do you think? Can we know a purpose? (On a scale of one to ten) do you know your purpose?

Warren then quotes part of the Bible which says:

*It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, had designs on us for glorious living, part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone.*

[Ephesians 1:11-12 The Message]

Tonight we're starting a process of looking at purpose ... and in the 5 weeks to come we'll focus specifically each week on one way to live more fully (so that in happy moments we praise God, in difficult moment we seek him, in quiet moments we worship him, in painful moments trust God, and in every moment we can thank God).

## Bible study: Benefits of Purpose (15 min)

Philippians 3:8-14 (The Message)

[8] Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may have Christ [9] and become one with him ... [10] As a result, I can really know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead ... so that, somehow, I can experience the resurrection too ... [12] I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection! But I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ Jesus saved me for and wants me to be. [13] No, dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, [14] I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven.

(1) What jumps out at you in this part of the Bible? What do you like or dislike in it?

(2) Paul talks about knowing Christ Jesus personally (not just knowing about Jesus) and so, experiencing his resurrection power. What's that all about? Have you ever experienced that for yourself? Or is this something you only experience later, after you have died?

(3) Warren shows how this part of the Bible lays out the benefits of knowing your purpose in life. Find and comment on the parts of the lesson that match up with these benefits/hopes:

- ▶ Purpose gives you focus
- ▶ Purpose motivates you
- ▶ Purpose simplifies your life
- ▶ Purpose leads to eternity