



## “Grace for a Purpose Driven Life” – Week 1

(Notes from Mark Dutton and Rick Warren “*Purpose Driven Life*”)

### Introduction:

#### 1. \* Series: *Grace for a Purpose Driven Life*

- The plan is to spend each lesson covering two chapters of the book

Note: About the book, *A Purpose Driven Life* – designed for 40 days, one chapter a day, but as we said, we’ll do two chapters per week

- The book is not perfect and it has *strengths* and *weakness* (like any book except the Bible) – the overall point of the book is important enough that we can wade through any teaching/comments with which we would disagree, and still learn some valuable lessons

[read *World Magazine’s* book review – it makes the same point]

#### 2. This study ties into our overall theme: *Enjoying God’s Grace!*

**Input:** When I say the word ‘grace,’ what verses in the Bible and/or songs come to your mind that gets you to thinking about the grace of God?

[Examples]

- Psalm 84:11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD gives **grace** and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.
- John 1:14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of **grace** and truth.
- John 1:17 For the Law was given through Moses; **grace** and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.
- Romans 3:24 being justified as a gift by His **grace** through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;
- Romans 6:1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that **grace** may increase?
- 1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the **grace** of God I am what I am, and His **grace** toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the **grace** of God with me.

- 2 Corinthians 12:9 And He has said to me, "My **grace** is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.
  - Ephesians 2:8 For by **grace** you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is the gift of God*;
- > Songs: Amazing Grace, Marvelous Grace, Wonderful Grace of Jesus, etc.
3. There's probably no doubt in anyone's mind that it takes God's grace to live a life pleasing to Him
- ✓ *Grace* = God's unmerited favor – it is God giving to us what we DON'T deserve (e.g. salvation)
  - ✓ *Mercy* = God withholding what we DO deserve (e.g. eternal judgment)
4. The idea of a purpose driven life is NOT a new concept
- The following questions have been asked for centuries:
    - ⇒ *Where did I come from?*
    - ⇒ *Why am I here?*
    - ⇒ *Where am I going?*
5. God answers that question very clearly in Romans 11:36
- Romans 11:36 **For from Him** (where did I come from?) **and through Him** (why am I here?) **and to Him** (where am I going?) **are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.**
6. Before we begin our study, let's think about the following questions:
- Input:** What are the *consequences* of not taking time to understand the purpose of life?
- ⇒ Life can be weary or tiresome (waste of energy)
  - ⇒ Life can seem like it's drifting without any real measurable growth
  - ⇒ Life can seem out of control (you're not able to change a given situation)
- Input:** What are the *benefits* of knowing your purpose and living a purpose-driven life?
- ⇒ Life has more focus (not scattered or distracted)
  - ⇒ Life is less complex (more simple – you can't do everything)
  - ⇒ You have a motivation for doing what you are doing (there is a 'driving force' behind your actions)
  - ⇒ You'll give a good account at the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10)

\* I'd like to divide our study into two parts

### 1. It All Starts With God

### 2. You Are No Accident

### 1. It All Starts With God

- You've heard others say "*pre-suppositionalist*"? – i.e. we believe there is a God and He has spoken to us through His Word, the Bible
- Because of that, all our life starts with God (our Creator)— it's about what HE wants for us – HIS purpose for us

Quote: [all quotes unless otherwise stated are taken from A Purpose Driven Life]

"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?" – p. 17

### A. Life isn't about you – it's about God and you fulfilling HIS purpose!

- Jesus made that very clear to the disciples by His teaching:

- Luke 9:23 And He was saying to *them* all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.  
*deny* = to have a total disregard for one's own interest!

**Input:** What evidence do we see in the Scriptures that Jesus lived a purpose driven life (not even according to His own desires, but the Father's)?

- Matthew 20:28 **Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.** [purpose was to DIE for our sin]
- John 8:29 **"And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."** [didn't please Himself, but His Father]
- Matthew 26:39 **And He went a little beyond *them*, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will."**

- The Westminster Confession answers the question about us:

- ✓ 1. What is the chief end of man? Answer: Man's chief end is to glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31; Rom. 11:36) and to enjoy him forever (Psalms 73:25-28).
- Psalm 73:25 **Whom have I in heaven *but You*? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. 26 My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. 27 For, behold, those who are far from You will perish; You have destroyed all those who are unfaithful to You. 28 But as for me, the nearness of God is my good; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, That I may tell of all Your works.**

**Point:** "You cannot arrive at your life's purpose by starting with a focus on yourself. You must begin with God, your Creator. You exist only because God wills that you exist. You were made *by* God and *for* God - and until you understand that, life will never make sense. It is only in God that we discover our origin, our identity, our meaning, our purpose, our significance, and our destiny. Every other path leads to a dead end." – p. 18

**Q: *How, then, do you discover the purpose for which you were created?***

### B. You only have two options

#### 1. Make up your own purpose for your life

**Input:** Examples of purpose for which people live that are not consistent with God's purpose?

**Input:** What is going to be the result of pursuing those purposes?

Note: A point can be made here about the deception in the garden (Gen. 3) and how that was a departure for God's purpose for

- Solomon made the point of the potential 'vanity' (emptiness) of life:

- Ecclesiastes 1:1 **The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem. 2 "Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher, "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity." 3 What advantage does man have in all his work which he does under the sun? 4 A generation goes and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever. 5 Also, the sun rises and the sun sets; and hastening to its place it rises there again.**

- But later, the author concluded that life was 'vanity' (empty) without God:

- Ecclesiastes 12:1 **Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come and the years draw near when you will say, "I have no delight in them"**

- His conclusion was that life needed to be lived in reference to God

## 2. Discover God's purpose for your life

- Ecclesiastes 12:13 **The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to every person*. 14 For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.**

- We could ask the question, "Why did God create us in the first place?"

- Isaiah 43:7 **Everyone who is called by My name, And whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made."**

- Quote:

"God is not just the starting point of your life; he is the source of it. To discover your purpose in life you must turn to God's Word, not the world's wisdom. You must build your life on eternal truths, not pop psychology, success-motivation, or inspirational stories." – p. 20

- Turn to the Word of God and let it be what guides you

- Psalm 119:105 **Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.**

## 2. You Are No Accident

- Isaiah 44:2 **Thus says the LORD who made you and formed you from the womb . . .**
- Jeremiah 1:4 **Now the word of the LORD came to me saying, 5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."**

Point: You exist because God wanted you to exist!

- He gave you the parents He gave you – the cultural setting – country – economic background, etc. ALL for the purpose for which He designed you!

## Conclusion:

1. All this 'starts with God' and understanding He is our Creator – and He designed us for a purpose.

2. A personal relationship with Jesus Christ is necessary to live this life of purpose:

> Jesus said:

- John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."

> He will give you the grace you need to live a purpose driven life that will bring glory to God!

3. Let's close by thinking about a series of questions:

- Up to this point, what image or metaphor has best described your life? -- A race, a circus, or something else?
- If everyone understood that life on earth is really *preparation for eternity*, how would we act differently?
- What have you been attached to that could keep you from living for God's purposes?

## Study Guide

### “Grace for a Purpose Driven Life” – Week 1

#### Introduction:

1. Theme: *Enjoying God’s Grace!*

**Input:** When I say the word ‘grace,’ what verses in the Bible and/or songs come to your mind that gets you to thinking about the grace of God?

2. There’s probably no doubt in anyone’s mind that it takes God’s grace to live a life pleasing to Him.

✓ *Grace* = God’s \_\_\_\_\_ – it is God giving to us what we DON’T deserve (e.g. salvation)

✓ *Mercy* = God \_\_\_\_\_ what we DO deserve (e.g. eternal judgment)

3. The idea of a purpose driven life is NOT a new concept.

4. God answers the question very clearly in Romans 11:36.

**Input:** What are the *consequences* of not taking time to understand the purpose of life?

**Input:** What are the *benefits* of knowing your purpose and living a purpose-driven life?

#### 1. It All Starts With God

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**A. Life isn’t about \_\_\_\_\_ – it’s about God and \_\_\_\_\_ fulfilling HIS purpose!**

*deny* = to have a total disregard for one’s own interest!

**Input:** What evidence do we see in the Scriptures that Jesus lived a purpose driven life (not even according to His own desires, but the Father’s)?

✓ **What is the chief end of man?** Answer: *Man’s chief end is to glorify God* (1 Cor. 10:31; Rom. 11:36) *and to enjoy him forever* (Psalms 73:25-28).

Point: “You cannot arrive at your life’s purpose by starting with a focus on yourself. You must begin with God, your Creator. You exist only because God wills that you exist. You were made *by* God and *for* God - and until you understand that, life will never make sense. It is only in God that we discover our origin, our identity, our meaning, our purpose, our significance, and our destiny. Every other path leads to a dead end.” – p. 18

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Q: *Why did God create us in the first place?*

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- John 1:14
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- 1 Corinthians 15:10
- 2 Corinthians 12:9
- Ephesians 2:8

**2. There’s probably no doubt in anyone’s mind that it takes God’s grace to live a life pleasing to Him**

- ✓ **Grace = God’s unmerited favor – it is God giving to us what we DON’T deserve (e.g. salvation)**



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**Quote – p. 17**

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- Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

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