

This Is Us Purpose

If you do not know the purpose of a thing, you'll miss use it. I heard a pastor tell a story about the time and left his athletic cup laying around the house. His granddaughter happens to be home and saw the cup and immediately asked her grandfather what it was. As he was fumbling over his words his four-year-old granddaughter put the cup up to her face and said look grandpa, it's an oxygen mask!

If you don't know what the purpose of a thing is, don't ask the thing, ask the one who created the thing. We cannot know our purpose as individuals or as a church body by constantly asking for and wanting the approval of everyone else. Knowing your purpose is a game changer.

We can get so caught up in wanting the approval and acceptance of others that we lose all sense of what's important and valuable to us. We abandon what we know in hopes that reinventing ourselves will give us a sense of worth based on the opinion of someone else.

As a church body, it works the same way. We have to know what we value and let that drive us as a church, and when that is made clear we can run with it. Not knowing your purpose is a lot like getting into a taxi and telling the driver, I'm not sure I know where I want to go but take me somewhere.

I explained it to the church this way when I first got here, it's like this group of people are standing at a bus stop and are waiting to get on the correct bus each bus has a label that tells where it is going and based on that the people at the bus stop get on the bus or wait for the next bus. The destination and purpose must be made clear. These next few weeks you will hear our values and what drives us as a church. Many of you already know but it never hurts to reinforce why we exist.

The fastest way to forget our purpose is to put more value in what people think about us than what God thinks about us. Today I want you as individuals and us as a church to choose purpose over popularity because we are the sum total of the choices we make.

Turn with me to *Hebrews 11:24,25* ***“By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of pharaohs daughter. He chose to be miss treated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.”*** Moses chose purpose over popularity and comfort.

Sometimes people talk about their purpose and are overwhelmed because they have no idea what it is they should be doing or what they’ve been placed on this earth to do for such a time as this. Some people get overwhelmed by questions like, what have I been put on this earth for? Am I called to cure cancer? Or go on the mission? And on and on and on the big questions go unanswered. But it doesn’t have to be that way. So today we’re going to break purpose into different categories. The first category is the **capital “P” of purpose** and the second category is the **lower case “p” of purpose**.

The capital “P” stands for all the big questions that we just talked about. I want you to forget about that and focus on the lower case “p” for a few minutes. This gets overlooked most of the times because it doesn’t deal with the big picture the big question moments. The lowercase “p” of purpose is the day after day, moment after moment decision to be faithful. For example, let’s say you’re talking to someone and you recognize they need encouragement so you decide to be that encouragement to them in that moment. Or you recognize your kids or spouse needs extra time with you for prayer and quality time and you actually make time for them. Church, faithfulness to the lower case “p” moments opens the door to revelation to the capital “P” moments in our life both as individuals and as a church body. If we are faithful in the small things God will trust us with the bigger things.

So this morning I’m gonna give you **3 thoughts about the power purpose**.

1. Purpose Diminishes Distractions.

- One of the biggest distractions for some of us is comparing. What do they think about me? Am I better than they are? Why am I not where they are? Or why isn’t our church as big as this other

church? Purpose diminishes all of that. Helps us to say no to good things and yes to the right things.

- Let me give you an example: The Old Testament, Nehemiah was heartbroken that the walls of the city were in ruins. So Nehemiah rallies the nation to rebuild the walls and things were going well. One day two enemies showed up and began to say things like, you guys are doing such a poor job that if a Fox were to run across the top of this wall it would fall. They said things like, you'll never make it, you're never going to get it done, you're in over your head and so on and so on. Does that sound familiar? How many do you guys know when you start doing something for God distraction start to show up?
- So now, Nehemiah has these voices of discouragement yelling at him and this is what he says, "I don't have time come down and talk to you I am too busy." In other words, I will not be distracted by your opinions, I am doing what I am created to do and I am doing a great work.
- Maybe you're trying to get out of debt and people are asking you why you're still driving that old beat up car or maybe you are keeping yourself pure and trusting God for the right person to marry her. You can say I do not have time for that I am doing a great work. If you want to do normal, then you do normal because I am doing a great work. Purpose diminishes distractions.

2. Second thoughts on purpose is, Purpose Pushes You Through The Pain.

- It's going to be painful when you push toward your purpose. Don't think you're going to be the exception. A woman can push through the pain of childbirth because she knows that pain is for the purpose of pushing and receiving their long awaited baby. Purpose pushes you through the pain.

3. The third thought on purpose is, Purpose Empowers You and Us As A Church To Please God.

- When the apostle Peter was told he could not preach in the name of Jesus, Peter's reply, "***We must obey God rather than man.***" Let's

try for once to stop people pleasing and determined in our hearts to please God first and watch what happens.

- Living to please people keeps us from pleasing God. It is impossible to please everyone but we can please God.
- Can we individual and as a church please God? The short answer is yes! Whenever we choose to live by faith and not by sight, we please God. When we are obedient to the little “p” moments and faithful in the small things we please God.
- Today is the start of our new series called “This Is Us.” That is the definitive statement. It carries with it the thought of purpose, direction, and the faithfulness to hold to that purpose. Are you with me this morning?!