

On Purpose, 1

It's Not About Me

Chapters 1-3; May 18, 2008

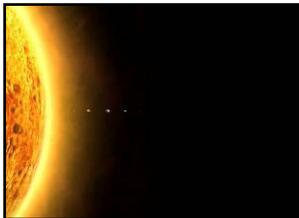
PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE

I forgot how much I love this book!¹ And it has one of the best opening lines: It's not about you! We were created *by* His purpose and *for* His purpose:

For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created **by him** and **for him**. - *Colossians 1:16 NIV*



The search for a sense of meaning and purpose continues to puzzle many people, because typically they begin at the wrong starting point: themselves. Focusing on myself will not reveal my purpose. If I'm a *created* being, then it only stands to reason that I must understand my *Creator's* purpose for making me. Being *successful* and being *fulfilled* are two very different things. Fulfillment comes from satisfying my created purpose.



Just as astronomy made no sense until it was discovered that the planets revolve around the sun, life can make no sense until it is discovered that everything revolves around Him. He must be at the center of my life. It's only in Christ that we or anyone can hope to discover their true origin, their identity, their meaning, their significance, and their destiny.

The search for meaning and purpose is hopeless for those who reject a Creator. Without a Creator, there's *no* purpose to find. A self-centered life offers confusion not fulfillment.



Therefore, the key to life is letting the Lord use me for His purpose, not me using Him for my own.

I was made for God ... *He* wasn't made for *me*.

NOT AN ACCIDENT

How many of you are the result of an unplanned pregnancy? I'm sure many of you were treated as a "happy accident" and a "wonderful surprise"; but some no doubt, have been left with an impression of being illegitimate ... a mistake.

¹ "The Purpose Driven Life" by Rick Warren, 2002



That's a big burden for someone to carry around. Your parents may not have planned you, but God did. He wasn't surprised and He wasn't caught off guard! Before you were ever conceived by your parents, you were conceived in the mind and imagination of your Heavenly Father.

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made ... your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. - *Psalms 139:13-16 NIV condensed*

God had a plan for me before there was a "me"! He *knew* you! It doesn't matter what your mother and father intended, or how badly you foiled their plans ... there is no such thing as illegitimate *children*, only illegitimate *parents*.



God creates nothing without a reason. Do you know His chief reason for creating *you*? To express His love. He didn't *need* to make you. He wasn't *lonely*.

He *desired* to make YOU in order to express His love to YOU!

God is love. - *1 John 4:8 NIV*

Notice it doesn't say that He *has* love; it says God "*is*" love! He *is* love, and He chose to express Himself to you!

Long ago, even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes. His unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave him great pleasure. - *Ephesians 1:4-5 NLT*

There is a God who took great joy in creating you; you have a purpose; you're not a mistake, a mishap, or illegitimate.

DRIVING FORCES



To live "on purpose", we must be grounded in this love. If I'm not grounded in God's love - if that's not the driving force of my life - another force *will* drive and direct my life. It might be: lust or greed or jealousy or pressure or deadlines or painful memories, or a chip on my shoulder, or on and on and on.

If God's love doesn't drive me, something else will.

What is the driving force in your life? Rick offers five common driving forces:



1. The first is: **guilt**

Many people spend their entire lives running from regrets and trying to hide their shame. Guilt-driven people are manipulated by memories. They allow their past to control their present and future.

Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! - *Psalm 32:1-2 NLT*

We are products of our past, but we don't have to be prisoners of our past. God specializes in clearing our conscience.

2. If not love, we might be driven by guilt, or: **anger**

How many of you tend to internalize your anger, and clam up? How many of you tend to externalize your anger, and blow up? How many of you tend to clam up for a while and *then* blow up?! That's me. I'm the clam up, clam up ... BLOW UP! It *resets* itself.



Have you ever said, "I'll *never* forgive that person!"? That's like drinking poison so that your enemy will die!

Resentment kills a fool ... - *Job 5:2 NIV*

It doesn't mean if you're smart resentment won't kill you; it means if you *choose* to resent, you *are* a fool, because resentment is *always* detrimental to the one resenting!



3. So, we can be driven by guilt, or anger, or: **fear**

Many people are hindered by traumatic experiences, unrealistic expectations, or from growing up in an overly controlling home. Fear is a self-imposed prison. It'll keep *me* from becoming the real "me" and it'll keep *you* from becoming the real "you".

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. - *1 John 4:18 NIV*

Focusing on the fact that the very reason God created me was to express His love to me, steadily forces out this driving force of fear, as surely as light drives out darkness.

4. We can be driven by guilt, anger, fear, or: **materialism**

When the desire to acquire becomes the central goal of our life, we are living under the misconception that having more will make us more satisfied, more important, more content and more secure.

Jesus makes it very clear and simple:



Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. – *Luke 12:23 NIV*

It's a destructive mistake to confuse self-worth with net worth, because deep down everyone knows that: Our value is not determined by our valuables. True security is only found in that which can't be taken away.

5. We must not be driven by guilt, anger, fear, materialism, or finally: **approval**



Approval-driven people are controlled by the opinions of others; their lives have the quality of performing seals. Approval-driven people feel they must *earn* their love. If we are not proactive about living in, and living out God's love, we will fall prey to seeking someone else's approval; because we are designed to need approval.

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. – *Matthew 6:24 NIV*

Isn't it interesting that when we live to meet another's expectations, we always end up resenting them for it! There is only One whose approval can fill the void.

And if we're not living for and looking for *His* approval, we *will* seek it from other much lessor, and disappointing sources.

We were created to *be* loved, to *know* we're loved, and to be driven *by* His love.

ON PURPOSE

First: **It's not about you** (it has to begin with God).

Q: Is He the center of your "universe"?

Q: Does your life revolve around Him?

Second: **You are not a mistake**

Q: Do you deeply believe that you've come to exist by His design?

Third: **Your life is driven by something**

Q: What would your family and friends say is the chief driving force in *your* life?