

On Purpose, 2

Forever For Him

Chapters 4-7; May 25, 2008



MADE TO LAST

Rick begins with a simple yet profound statement: This life is not all there is. And his opening scripture is from Ecclesiastes: “He has planted eternity in the human heart ...” - Ecclesiastes. 3:11 NLT

In the book, “Mere Christianity”, C.S. Lewis picks up on this idea of eternity being *planted* in the human heart:

Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for desires exists. A baby feels hunger: there is food. A duckling wants to swim: there is water. Man feels sexual desire: there is sex. Therefore, if I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world. - C.S. Lewis; *Mere Christianity* (paraphrased)

Earthly pleasures were never meant to permanently satisfy, but only to suggest and awaken our desire for eternal fulfillment.



We have an inborn instinct for immortality. Even though we *know* full well that death is part of life, and that *everyone* ultimately dies, death always seems unnatural, untimely, and unfair. This is because all of humanity has been designed in the image of an *eternal* Creator, and hardwired for everlasting life.

How many of you grow weary with your present body? How many of you would like to have a perfect body? That’s not only universal, it’s also quite “Biblical”:

We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. - 2 Corinthians 5:2 NLT

Life on earth is just a “dress rehearsal”. This body is a “vessel”, a “container”; temporary Tupperware for my spirit. Look how Paul puts it:

Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. - 2 Corinthians 5:1 NIV

We upgrade from an “earthly tent” to an “eternal house”; from the temporary to the permanent, from the makeshift to the refined, from the vulnerable to the invincible.



And everything we do in this “earthly tent” (the way we invest our time, spend our money, develop our talents, and treat other people), will have consequences in that “eternal house”.

Life is the practice before the perfect.

Just as nine months in the womb prepares us for life beyond the womb ... 900 months in the world prepares us for life beyond the world. 900 months doesn't seem like enough when it's put *that* way; but, it is 75 years. And by that calculation, I have about 347 left.

It's not morbid to think about our inescapable date with death. It's actually *unhealthy* to ignore or to live in denial of an experience so significant, so inevitable and so unavoidable. King David said:

Lord, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered – how fleeting my life is. - *Psalms 39:4 NLT*

LIFE METAPHORS

What happens on our “date with death” depends heavily on what we value in life. Our values are shaped by what Rick calls: “life metaphors” (the way we choose to view life).



1. If you see life as party, your primary value will be having fun and finding the next amusement or diversion.



2. If you see life as a battle, your primary value will be survival; and you'll wear your *fatigues* for all to see!



3. If life is a gamble, your primary value will be taking risks and chances in order to hit that one big score.



4. If life is a competition, your primary value will be comparing yourself to others and trying to measure up.

How we define life will determine how our date with destiny goes. Because, the way we look at life will shape our life. It's vital that we have trustworthy, reliable mental metaphors. Chapters five and six examine three Biblical metaphors that greatly influence our “tent-life” and impact our “house-life”.



1. Life is a: Test

Words like *trials*, *temptations*, *refining*, and *testing* occur repeatedly throughout the Bible.

Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Job, Daniel, Samson, Moses, David, Solomon; we see God *continually* testing and stretching His people - their faith, obedience, love, integrity, reliability, and loyalty.



Q: Why is that?

A: Character is both developed and revealed by tests.

Even *Jesus* was tested and tempted. We are *always* being tested. God watches us respond to people, to problems ... to people-problems; to success, failure, illness, regret, frustration ... traffic, news, and weather!

Each one should test his own actions. - *Galatians 6:4 NIV*

When we get that life is a test, our eyes are opened to the reality that *nothing* is insignificant in our lives. The good, the bad, *and* the ugly are necessary and indispensable.

And the great news is that God wants us to pass!

[God] will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. - *1 Corinthians 10:13 NIV*

Every choice is significant. Every moment is an opportunity to deepen our character, demonstrate our love, and depend on God.



2. So, life is a “test”, and life is a: Trust

People who see life as a trust regard their *time*, *talent*, and *treasure* as holy entrustments to be wisely invested.

Money is a funny thing; it's both a *trust* and a *test*. God uses the lack of it to teach us to trust Him, and He uses the abundance of it to test how trustworthy we've become.

So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? - *Luke 16:11 NIV*



There's a direct relationship between how I handle my money and material possessions, and the quality of my spiritual life. The main thing to keep in mind is that: Everything I own is on loan. It was God's property *before* I arrived, and He'll loan it to someone else *after* I die. I just get to enjoy it during my brief stay in the “tent”.

From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked. - *Luke 12:48 NIV*



3. Life is a test, a trust, and a: Temporary Assignment

The Bible describes our life as a *mist*, a *breath*, and a *wisp* of smoke.

For the moment we are *tents*, but soon we'll all be *past-tents*!

You have made my life no longer than the width of my hand. My entire lifetime is just a moment to you; at best, each of us is but a breath. - *Psalm 39:5 NLT*

We were not created to be permanent residents of this world. But we have been given an assignment for our brief stay.

We are therefore Christ's **ambassadors**, as though God were making his appeal through us. - *2 Corinthians 5:20a NIV*



An ambassador is someone who relates to two different lands. And we, as ambassadors, relate to our homeland and our home planet. At death we don't leave home, we *go home*.

Two things to remember as one of Christ's ambassadors:

1. You are expected to use tact and diplomacy, and to love and respect the people of *this world*, as delegates of the *next*.
2. You must never betray your *true King* or your home-land.

This is the test, the trust, and the temporary assignment. The ultimate purpose of this universe is to glorify God. It is the reason for everything that exists ... including us. We can't *add* anything to His glory, but we are commanded to recognize His glory, honor His glory, declare His glory, praise His glory, reflect His glory, and live for His glory.



Here's the thing: We *become* what we glorify. And we will *never* find true and lasting happiness until we find something greater than this world to love and to worship and to serve.

God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.

ON PURPOSE

If we're going to live life "on purpose" we must understand that, first: I was made to last forever. Is your tent-life properly preparing you for your house-life?

Second: The way I *view* my life will *shape* my life. Are you reliable with your tests, and sensible with your trusts, and dependable with your temporary assignment?

Third: It's all about His glory. Are you living this life for His glory?