

Purpose Driven Life, II

It's All About Him (Chpt 4-7)

February 8, 2004

MADE TO LAST FOREVER

- Our reading assignment this week was chapters 4-7.

Q: How many of you grow weary with your present body?

Q: How many of you would like to have a perfect body?

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

This body is a temporary residence for my spirit.

- Life on earth is just a dress rehearsal

The Bible calls this body a "tent" - our future body a "house".

Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven ... - 2 Corinthians 5:1 NIV

The most detrimental aspect of this "tent-life" is short-term thinking. Sometimes we forget that there are going to be eternal consequences for what we do and what we don't do in this life:

- How we invest our time
- How we spend our money
- How we develop our talents
- How we treat other people

We must always keep in mind that death is not termination it's transition ... into an inconceivable time-without-end relationship with our Creator.

No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him ... - 1 Corinthians 2:9 NIV

Our "tent" brains just can't handle the spectacle of heaven.

It'd be like describing the Internet to an ant ... like my Aunt Betty! I mean, it is just impossible!

SEEING LIFE FROM GOD'S VIEW

The way we invest time, spend money, develop talents, and treat others is heavily influenced by our perspective on life. We all tend to have what Rick calls "life-metaphors"; views of life that consciously or unconsciously shape our perspective.

- For some, life is like a Circus
- For others life is a well orchestrated symphony
- For some, life is like a minefield
- For others life is a never-ending roller coaster
- And for one guy, life is like a box of chocolates!

Our life-metaphors reveal how we've come to think that life works (either for or against us) and what we expect from it.

1. If you think of life as one big party, your primary value will be on having fun. Some people live for the weekend.
2. If you view life as a constant battle, your objective will be to survive. And you'll wear your "fatigues" for all to see!
3. If you see life as a crap shoot then you'll be preoccupied with risk and taking chances and hitting that one big score.
4. If to you, life is a competition, you'll constantly compare yourself to others. Your goal will be to measure up or win.

Q: Which life-metaphors do you default to? Write yours down and share them at your small groups.

The Bible offers many metaphors: we are separate parts of one body; sheep in need of a shepherd; a branch; a bride; a temple.

Warren offers three Biblical metaphors that not only shape our tent-life, but greatly affect our eternal house-life.

1. Life is a test

Paul used this metaphor (not unlike "The Three Little Pigs").

If any man builds on this foundation [of Christ] using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames. - 1 Corinthians 3:12-14 NIV

People who understand that life is a test realize that nothing is insignificant in our temporary “tent” life.

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

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

- And, Every decision we make has eternal implications

Sometimes our refining moments pop up when we least expect them.

Two college guys partied all night before a big exam and skipped class the next day. After they’d rested, they approached their professor and told him that they’d visited a sick friend, gotten a flat tire, had no spare, and had to hitch hike back to campus. The kind professor told them that they could make up the test. Then he put them in separate rooms and said, “The test will consist of only one question ... which tire?”

We may come here ready to offer God our “gold & silver” worship, but fail to prepare for the “hay & straw” moment on the way home which results in a heated argument and harsh words.

2. Life is a trust

People who see life as a trust regard their time, talents, and resources as entrustments to be prudently invested.

The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. “Master,” he said, “you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.” His master replied, “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!” - Matthew 25:20-21 NIV

And Jesus used this parable to describe how He’ll respond to those who have invested their lives wisely:

- He will commend them: “Well done, good and faithful servant!”
- He will promote them: “You have been faithful with a few things ...”
- He will rejoice with them: “Come and share your master’s happiness!”

There couldn’t possibly be a better return on an investment. But the more God gives us, the more responsible He expects us to be.

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

LIFE IS A TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT

3. Life is a temporary assignment

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

Lord, remind me how brief my time on earth will be. Remind me that my days are numbered, and that my life is fleeing away. My life is no longer than the width of my hand. – Psalm 39:4-5 NLT

But our time on earth is not the complete story. At death we don't leave home ... we go home. We're just tents ... but in Heaven we'll be past-tents! And we're given a temporary assignment as the Lord's diplomats.

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

And as His representatives we are expected to relate to this world and care about this world and to use tact and diplomacy when dealing with this world.

- But we must never betray our King or our home-land.

THE REASON FOR EVERYTHING

Our ultimate goal should be to bring glory to God. Not because He craves attention or needs our approval; but because we were created in His image to reflect Him and become like Him. And the fact is: We become what we glorify

It's not about me ... it's all about Him. And the rest of this series will focus on the five ways that each one of us can uniquely bring Him glory.

1. Through worshipping Him.
2. Through loving one another in His name.
3. Through becoming like Him.
4. Through serving Him with our gifts and talents.
5. Through sharing Him with those around us.

When *anything* in creation fulfills its purpose, it brings glory to God. Birds bring glory to God by flying, chirping, nesting, and doing all the bird-stuff that God intended them to do.

- Jesus honored God by fulfilling His purpose on earth.

We honor God the same way.