

April 4, 2004 – Palm Sunday
AM Service
Patchogue Church of the Nazarene

God's Fifth Purpose For Your Life – Evangelism, You Were Made For a Mission
(From Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*)
John 12:12-15, Luke 19:41-42a NLT

John 12:12-15

12 The next day, the news that Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem swept through the city. A huge crowd of Passover visitors 13 took palm branches and went down the road to meet him. They shouted,

"Praise God!

Bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Hail to the King of Israel!"

14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, fulfilling the prophecy that said:

15 "Don't be afraid, people of Israel.

Look, your King is coming,
sitting on a donkey's colt."

Luke 19:41-42a

41 But as they came closer to Jerusalem and Jesus saw the city ahead, he began to cry. 42 "I wish that even today you would find the way of peace."

Jesus wept because the people were rejecting Him. He wanted what was best for them. He knew that they would only find peace and purpose if they would believe in Him. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "I wish that even today you would find the way of peace." We too must weep for those who do not know the way of peace and desire that they would find peace and purpose in Jesus just as we have.

During Lent we have been reading *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren. The subtitle of his book is, "WHAT ON EARTH AM I HERE FOR?" We have discovered that we are here for a purpose and our purpose is to know and worship God, to be in fellowship with other believers in God, to become more like God's Son (Discipleship), to serve God and others (Ministry) and, as we will discuss today, to fulfill God's mission of evangelizing the world so that all people will hear of peace through Jesus Christ.

Made For a Mission

You were made for a mission. God is at work in the world, and He wants you to join Him. This assignment is called your *mission*. God wants you to have both a ministry in the Body of Christ and a mission in the world. The English word *mission* comes from the Latin word for "sending." Being a Christian includes being sent into the world as a

representative of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, *“As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”* (John 20:21 – NIV). The mission Jesus had while on earth is now our mission because we are the Body of Christ. What He did in His physical body we are to continue as His spiritual body, the Church. What is that mission? Introducing people to God! (*“Christ changed us from enemies into His friends and gave us the task of making others His friends also.”* – 2 Cor. 5:18 – TEV)

God wants to redeem human beings from Satan and reconcile them to Himself so we can fulfill the five purposes He created us for: To love Him, to be a part of His family, to become like Him, to serve Him, and to tell others about Him. Once we are His, God uses us to reach others. He saves us and then sends us out. We are the messengers of God’s love and purposes to the world.

THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR MISSION

Your mission is a continuation of Jesus’ mission on earth.

As His followers we are to continue what Jesus started. In the Great Commission Jesus said, *“Go to the people of all nations and make them my disciples. Baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to do everything I have told you.”* (Matt 28:19-20 -CEV). This is *your* commission from Jesus, and it is not optional. You are the only Christian some people will ever know, and your mission is to share Jesus with them.

Your mission is a wonderful privilege.

Although it is a big responsibility, it is also an incredible honor to be used by God. (2 Cor 5:18- TLB) *“God has given us the privilege of urging everyone to come into His favor and be reconciled to Him.”* Your mission involves two great privileges: working with God and representing Him. Jesus has secured our salvation, put us in His family, given us His Spirit, and then made us His agents / representatives in the world.

Telling others how they can have eternal life is the greatest thing you can do for them.

If your neighbor had cancer or AIDS and you know the cure, it would be criminal to withhold that lifesaving information. Even worse is to keep secret the way to forgiveness, purpose, peace and eternal life. We have the greatest news in the world, and sharing it is the greatest kindness you can show to anyone. Have you forgotten how hopeless you felt without Christ? The Bible says, *“Jesus is the only One who can save people.”* (Acts 4:12 – NCV). Everybody needs Jesus.

Your mission has eternal significance.

It will impact the eternal destiny of other people, so it’s more important than any job, achievement, or goal you will reach during your life on earth. The consequences of our mission will last forever; the consequences of your job will not. Nothing else you do will ever matter as much as helping people establish an eternal relationship with God. God wants you to share the Good News where you are (The Good News is this: that when we

trust in God's grace to save us through what Jesus did, our sins are forgiven we get a purpose for living, and we are promised a future home in heaven.). Whatever you do, your should continually look for people God places in our path with who you can share the gospel.

Your mission gives your life meaning.

The truth is, only the Kingdom of God is going to last. *Everything* else will eventually vanish. That is why we must live purpose driven lives – lives committed to worship, fellowship, spiritual growth, ministry and fulfilling our mission on earth. The results of these activities *will* last – forever! If you fail to fulfill your God-given mission on earth, you will have wasted the life God gave you. Paul said (Acts 20:24 NLT), *“My life is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus--the work of telling others the Good News about God's wonderful kindness and love.”* There are people on this planet whom *only* you will be able to reach. If just one person will be in heaven because of you, your life will have made a difference for eternity. Start looking around at your personal mission field and pray, “God, who have you put in my life for me to tell about Jesus?”

God's timetable for history's conclusion is connected to the completion of our commission.

Acts 1:7-8 – NIV - *He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

When the disciples wanted to talk about prophecy, Jesus quickly switched the conversation to evangelism. He wanted them to concentrate on their mission to the world. He said in essence, “The details of my return are none of your business. What is your business is the mission I've given you. Focus on that!” Matt 24:14 NLT – *“And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then, finally, the end will come.”* If you want Jesus to come back sooner, focus on fulfilling your mission, not figuring out prophecy. Satan would rather have you do anything besides sharing your faith. The moment you become serious about your mission, expect the devil to throw all kinds of diversions at you.

WHAT IT COSTS TO FULFILL YOUR MISSION

To fulfill your mission will require that you abandon your agenda and accept God's agenda for your life. You can't just “tack it on” to all the other things you'd like to do with your life. You must say, like Jesus, *“Father, ...I want your will, not mine.”* (Luke 22:42 –NLT). You yield your rights, expectations, dreams, plans, and ambitions to Him. You stop praying selfish prayers like “God bless what I want to do.” Instead you pray, “God help me to do what you're blessing!” Rom 6:13 LB – “give yourselves completely to God-every part of you ...to be tools in the hands of God, to be used for his good purposes.” If you will commit to fulfilling your mission in life no matter what it costs, you will experience the blessing of God in ways that few people ever experience. There is almost nothing God won't do the man or woman who is committed to serving the

kingdom of God. Matt 6:33 NLT – “and He will give you all you need from day to day if you live for Him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern.” If you want to be used by God, you must care about what God cares about; what He cares about most is the redemption of the people he made . He wants His lost children found! Nothing matters more to God; the Cross proves that.

The Great Commission is your commission therefore you must:

Shift from self-centered thinking to other-centered thinking.

Shift from local thinking to global thinking.

Shift from “here and now” thinking to eternal thinking.

Shift from thinking of excuses to thinking of creative ways to fulfill your commission.

In concluding our messages on God’s five purposes for your life which you must keep in balance: His purposes are summarized in the Great Commandment and the Great Commission:

1. **“Love God with all your heart”:** You were planned for God’s pleasure, so your purpose is to love God through *worship*.
2. **“Love your neighbor as yourself”:** You were shaped for serving, so your purpose is to show love to others through *ministry*.
3. **“God and make disciples”:** You were made for a mission, so your purpose is to share God’s message through *evangelism*.
4. **“baptize them into...”:** You were formed for God’s family, so your purpose is to identify with His church through *fellowship*.
5. **“teach them to do all things...”:** You were created to become like Christ, so your purpose is to grow to maturity through *discipleship*.

Living with purpose is the only way to *really* live.