



August 19, 2012
Philippians 2:1-2
Pastor Larry Adams

Fulfilling God's Purpose

You know, sometimes we are not involved in a purpose because we don't really understand the purpose for which things are happening. Sometimes it becomes glaringly aware to us later.

I was reading about this guy who was driving when he saw the flash of a traffic camera. It said that he figured his picture had been taken for exceeding the limit even though he knew he was fairly certain he wasn't speeding. So just to be sure, he went around the block and passed the same spot again driving even more slowly, but the camera flashed again. Now he began to think that something was wrong, so also thinking it was quite funny, he drove around again, slower again. This time the camera flashed. So he did it a fourth time with the same result. He did it a fifth time, now laughing when he passed by barely moving, and the camera still flashed. Two weeks later he got five tickets in the mail for driving without a seatbelt.

You know, sometimes we do what we do because we don't realize what's happening. Well, God wants all of us to know what is happening when it comes to our purpose as a church and why we exist as individuals, why he made us and called us and saved us.

Paul was writing in the book of Philippians near the end of his life. This is a prison epistle. Paul had served God faithfully. He sensed, as you can tell in this letter, that he thought his time may be drawing near to a close, so he's calling the church at Philippi and the church at large to pull together. He writes to them in Chapter 2 verse 1:

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.

Let's pray together.

There are not many gods. There's only one. There's only one true Lord of Lords and King of Kings. There's only one Savior and only one body, his church. Each of us who are following you, Lord, are a part of that body. We have been called, saved for a purpose. The more we unite together, the more intent we are in that purpose, the stronger we become, the more you are glorified, and the more the world is impacted and disciples are made. I pray today, God, as we review our purpose again, that you will help each of us to know that we are part of something that is making a difference for eternity in bringing glory to your name. And we'll thank you, God, for all you'll show us today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

When I was a kid, I loved playing baseball. Growing up in New England we had a lot of open fields to play in. We'd play down by the river. We'd play in the fields next to the barns. When we got done with the games, we could play in the woods and go a host of other places. I remember one day after a game in one of those local fields, one kid picked up a rock and whacked it with his bat. That thing took off like a rocket. So I

tossed mine up and hit it, and pretty soon we're all batting these rocks out into the woods and the field. You could knock those things a mile. We were having so much fun hitting the rocks I never noticed what it was doing to my bat, my beautiful, wooden bat. It was getting shredded on the end. Ruined. I learned a valuable lesson that day. Bats aren't made for hitting rocks, they're made for hitting baseballs. When you use something for a purpose it wasn't intended for, it can be wasted. In fact it can end up in ruin.

What's true for baseball bats is even more true for you and me. We weren't made for just any old thing. God didn't create us in his image for no reason. And when we were lost to him he didn't give his son to save us for no reason. Yes, it was a great benefit to us. It's wonderful to know that we're not going to hell, but there's a whole lot more to this life of following Jesus than just keeping out of hell. We were called for a purpose. The more we give our lives to that purpose, the more fulfilling life becomes, the stronger his church becomes, the more known he is in every place that we go and ultimately to all the nations of the world.

You see, that's why our lives individually and our lives corporately are called to a purpose. That purpose is really the same. Individually our purpose is to glorify God becoming more and more like him. Can you imagine that? I'm becoming more like Jesus. It's hard to imagine. I'm not like him yet and I won't be until I see him face-to-face. But Paul told the Romans in Romans 8 verse 29, "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers." We're gonna be like him, every one of us. But God also has that purpose corporately. As his church we worship, grow, and serve as his body, his visible presence bringing him glory as he is magnified in us.

When Paul wrote to the Ephesian church, he said in Ephesians 3 verse 20:

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Which is why we shouldn't be surprised that God in his word speaks so often about our purpose, that God is working in us to accomplish his purpose, that we are called to his purpose, that we are to be intent on his purpose, that we be united in spirit in fulfilling his purpose. Because God doesn't want any life to be wasted, and he certainly doesn't want it to end in ruin. That's why Paul writes so often about our need to be united with God and each other in fulfilling that purpose. Paul said:

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.

In fact, that purpose is almost a play on words here. He's already called us to be like-minded, but the word "purpose" there means "like-minded harmony." In other words, we are agreeing in mind and heart and we're unified together in what we are pulling toward and living for. Christians are to be one in mind and purpose with God and each other as they live for God and bring glory to his name.

What is that unifying purpose? Well, more than 25 years ago a group of us met in an old warehouse on Sunset Drive in Antioch to search the Scriptures and to ask God to reveal to us a purpose statement that would allow us to capture the purpose in the Scripture that would not change. It would be enduring. It would be something we could give our lives to forever - something that could be a unifying purpose for our church. What resulted was the statement found on the wall out here in the lobby and in the wall there in Antioch at the Antioch campus. It's found in our Constitution. It's found on our website. It's in most of our published materials. It's in the banner displayed for you here this morning. Our purpose is to glorify God by making disciples who will impact every area of the world for Christ. And this is why we exist.

This is why I get up in the morning. This is what's on my mind day and night honestly. It's why we shape all the programs of our church. It's why we send missionaries. It's why we preach the word of God. It's why we have Sunday School and Bible classes. It's why we work with children, youth, and adults. It's why we have a COC. It's why we have a Bethesda Village Recovery and Discipling Center. It's why we do everything that we do is to help fulfill this purpose.

Today, I want to break down and help us to understand this purpose, because we need every single hand in this church, every single hand in the world who follows Jesus to have their hand on the rope pulling for this purpose. So, today we want to break this down and look at it.

First of all, our purpose is to glorify God. If you go back with me in the Bible to Ephesians Chapter 1, the book of real applied Christianity in the New Testament, you'll find that Paul wastes no time in Chapter 1 getting right to the heart of our purpose. Ephesians 1 and verse 11:

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,¹² in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

When I became a Christian, I knew virtually nothing about God, nothing about Jesus, nothing about the Holy Spirit, nothing about his word. I knew nothing about being a Christian. I mean, I basically knew nothing. As I became engaged in this thing called the local church, which I didn't understand, I began listening to the messages, began going to Bible studies. I began reading my own Bible. I began to learn some things that started transforming me. I remember the first exposure that I had to this passage in Ephesians 1 where it says that I was chosen, "predestined, according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity in the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory."

Now, I'm not the smartest guy on the block, but I had been in business for a while, and I know that every business if it's gonna succeed has to have a central unifying purpose. The more that purpose or vision is sown among the employees, the more they pulled together for that purpose, the better chance that company has to function the way its founders designed it to function. So when I read that I was called and chosen and

predestined according to a purpose that God had for me and all my brothers and sisters, I thought to myself, “Wow, what is that?” To live for the praise of his glory. That I was God's possession for the praise of his glory. I thought to myself, “How in the world do you do that? Because what I've been learning is that God has all the glory already, so how in the world am I supposed to live to make his glory greater?”

That we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

We've shared with you before that that word “glory” is the Greek word “doxa.” It's very simple, and I like it. It means “to suppose or have an opinion.” Glorifying God in this context, as I understand it, means simply that we have come to have a right and high opinion of God because we've come to see him now for who he is.

At one time I didn't know who God was. I had all kinds of crazy ideas as do a lot of other people. I didn't know who God was, but God reveals himself. Now I've come to know who he is. Now I can have a right and high opinion of God. And now my calling is to make this right and high opinion of God, this person of God, known through my life that others may come to know him too. That's why Paul wrote to the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 10 verse 31, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” Do everything you do to magnify that you know this God. You know what he's like. You know his greatness, and you desire for him to be revealed in you and through you in the simplest of things and in the greatest of things.

We live for this purpose. We ask ourselves, “God, how can I glorify you in this?” It's a delightful way to live. It's the way we were designed to live. It brings purpose to everything. So in our blessings and in our trials, it's, “Lord, how you to be glorified in the way I'm going through this with you?”

What is the primary cause of the mess that the world is in today? Frankly, they have a low and faulty view of God. They don't honor him as God. They don't act as if he's really there. They don't live in response to him, so they reap the consequences of the lives they live without God. That was the message that Paul gave to the Romans. You remember in Romans 1? Their society was not a lot different than our own.

In Romans 1 verse 21, Paul said:

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

You see it? They exchanged the glory of God. They put something else in first place. They didn't live for God's glory. They lived for themselves, and they made gods out of all kinds of created things, gods that they could manage, gods that they could control, gods where they could set the rules because ultimately they were living for their glory not for God's glory and reaped the consequence of that. They were not living for their purpose. They became like bats who are smashing rocks. But we live for the praise of his glory - His glory. We are to know God personally, to have him live his life in us and to live his life through us.

Part of becoming a disciple is learning what that looks like and how that is done day in and day out. We are to glorify him to know him and to make him known. We are to do this individually, and we are to do it together as a church along with all believers everywhere in the entire world. If you're part of his church, if you're following Jesus, then this is your purpose. It's why we exist, and it will be our purpose forever. Not only to glorify God but our purpose is to make disciples.

If we go back to the gospel of Matthew after the resurrection, Jesus told his disciples to meet him on a mountain in Galilee. They went there and met him there. In probably one of the most famous missionary passages ever given, Jesus met them on a mountain. In Matthew 28 verse 16 we find out what happened:

Then the eleven disciples

You remember Judas at this point is gone.

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.

Could this really be the one who was crucified in Jerusalem?

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, **“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**

I was reading the paper this week that Tiger Woods is again the number one golfer in the world, at least he's at the top of the FedEx cup money list. He's won more money than any other golfer, which if you follow golf may surprise you because he hasn't won nearly as many tournaments as he normally does. But when you are finishing in the top 5 or the top 10 consistently, and they're paying you 3 and 4 and \$500,000 every time you do it, it doesn't take long to add up to millions.

You might ask why, “Why in the world does a company like Nike that sponsors athletes all over the world, why would they pay millions of dollars to Tiger Woods to wear their hat, wear their clothes, wear their shoes, play their ball, and to use their equipment? Why would they pay him millions to do that?” Because, as we were sharing last week, Tiger Woods has millions of disciples, or at least thousands. People want to play like him so they buy his clothes and they buy the balls he uses, and they buy his equipment. Nike makes millions off of him because Tiger Woods has followers.

Well, Tiger Woods may have thousands of followers, Jesus has millions. So, now you understand why God would make such an investment in each of us to be engaged with him in making more disciples who will want to live like Jesus, look like Jesus, act like Jesus, talk like Jesus, serve like Jesus, live and die like Jesus, and reign with him forever. So, when Jesus was departing and he would leave a church behind led by these initially 11 men, he told them what he wanted them to do. **“I'm commissioning you,”** he said, **“to go into the world and make disciples.”**

We saw last week, disciples are reproducing followers of Jesus. This isn't about just getting saved, this is about God using us to make a difference for him in the lives of others. It's about living so that his life is reproduced in others as we witness to them, encourage them, invite them to church, come alongside them in so many ways and encourage them.

What's interesting is, **“disciples have to be made,”** Jesus said, **“I want you to make disciples.”** Christians are born when they come to Christ. They're made spiritually alive. It's wholly a work of God. We have nothing to do with it. We accept his offer and we are saved. We are born again, but disciples have to be made. They have to be in a healthy incubator called the church, the body of Christ, a church that worships and grows and serves and lives out Christian community in a way that allows people to connect just like I did years ago, to see what discipleship looked like and be drawn and manufactured, and made in that environment to be one who would go out and reproduce for Jesus. That's what the church is about.

Do you ever think of the church as being a manufacturing plant? It's not just a place I go. It's not a building. It's a body. I plug into that body, and God uses that body to produce more reproducing followers. That's why we're here. That's why it's important that we get equipped and trained and use our gifts and worship, grow, and serve. Next week, Lord willing, by God's grace we're gonna spend time looking at what that process looks like. And now every single one of us can be a part of it, because if we are not engaged with God in making disciples we're not fulfilling our purpose and our lives are not being given over to the very thing he called us to do. Our lives can be wasted and end in ruin if we are not engaged in the very process of making disciples.

Not only glorifying God and making disciples, but our purpose is to make an impact with that. If you remember, in the greatest sermon ever preached, the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew Chapter 5, 6, and 7, Jesus related there what his disciples were to be in the world. In Matthew 5 verse 13 he said:

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Isn't it interesting that when Jesus described what his disciples were gonna be in the world, he chose two such base elements, salt and light. **“You are the salt of the earth.”** **“You are the light of the world.”** Why did he choose that? Because salt and light are high impact elements. They change. They transform. They flavor. They preserve. They illuminate everything they touch. We are the salt of the earth. Salt preserves and flavors. Salt sprinkled on meat in the right proportions can preserve it for months. Salt sprinkled on anything in the right amounts can enhance its flavor. Salt can provide essential nutrients for life. Jesus said, **“You are the salt of earth.”** Not, **“You will be.”** **“You are the salt of the earth.”** **“Your presence in the world is to preserve**

God's presence and God's way is to flavor and enhance everything with the fragrance of Christ and hold forth the word as an essential nutrient of life.” Salt is powerful.

My family knows how much I love popcorn. I eat way too much of it. I could have a bowl with 20 cups of popcorn popped in it, which is not that much actually. I can take a quarter cup of salt for 20 cups of popcorn and sprinkle a quarter cup of salt on there, and when you bite into the popcorn what do you taste? Salt. You can't even see it, but it overtakes everything. One-quarter to 20 cups! **“You are the salt of the earth.** It doesn't take a lot of Christians before the world starts tasting like Jesus.

“You are the light of the world.” This is a big room. If we blocked all the windows and turned out all the lights, I'm telling you it gets dark in here. In fact, if you've ever been in here at night with no lights on, you cannot see a thing. You cannot see your hand in front of your face. You know, I could go up in the back balcony over there, face the wall, strike a match and hold it like this (facing the wall), and you can see the effect of that light everywhere in the room from one tiny match, even under the balcony if I'm standing up there. You know why that is? Because all the darkness in the world can't hide the effect of one tiny light.

People a lot smarter than me have said and published that they believe that about one-fourth of the US population is professing to be an evangelical follower of Jesus, that they really know the Lord. That represents about 75 million people if that's accurate. How can one-fourth of the US population claim to be followers of the Lord Jesus and yet when you bite into America you do not taste Christ? How can one-fourth of the US population be the light of the world and yet we are increasingly morally and spiritually dark? You do not see Christ illuminated across the land. Jesus said, **“The salt can lose it saltiness. It becomes good for nothing. It's like it wasn't even there. It's not fulfilling a purpose.”** And he said, **“A light can be hidden under a bushel.”**

How many Christians does it take to change the world? One. One is all it takes to change the world. What happens when millions upon millions of them live to be salt and light everywhere they are to make Jesus' impact felt? You see, the questions are these: How is my marriage different because I'm a Christian and I'm in it? How is my family different because I'm a Christian and I'm a part of it? How is my neighborhood different because I'm a Christian and I live there? How is my workplace different because I'm a Christian and I worked there? Well, some day we're all gonna have to answer this question: How is the world different because we were at church there?

You know, I ask our staff sometimes, “If Golden Hills ceased to exist tomorrow, what would change? If this body was no longer on this corner, no longer in the world, no longer doing what it does, what would change?”

If the answer was, “Nothing,” then you have to wonder are we fulfilling any purpose? But if this church stopped tomorrow, I can tell you there are hundreds or thousands of lives who would immediately begin to feel its impact because so many of you are engaged in fulfilling the purpose for which God called you to do. We need everybody doing it. The world would be a different place. **“Let your light so shine before men,”** Jesus said, **“that they will see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”** We are to impact every area of the world.

In 2 Corinthians 2 verse 14, Paul wrote, “But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.”

You ever been to the Gilroy Garlic Festival? I've never been to it, but I know it's there. You know how I know? I've driven down 101. I didn't even know about the Gilroy Garlic Festival. We're driving down 101 and suddenly you're overwhelmed with the smell of garlic. I remember saying, “Karla, what in the world is that?”

She said, “We're near Gilroy. They must be having the Gilroy Garlic Festival.”

Man, from San Jose to Morgan Hill and everywhere around there, you don't even have to go to know the thing's in swing because the smell of it impacts everywhere. Do you understand that's the way Jesus designed a Christian to be? So full of Jesus that everywhere he goes, the impact of that person's life leaves the fragrance of Jesus in that place. They're impacted by it. “Thanks be to God, through us he spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him,” Paul said.

I don't know what I smell like, but apparently I have a smell. My daughter made the statement while ago, “This room smells like daddy.” I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing, but that's what she said, “This room smells like daddy.” If your grandparents are still alive, you ever been around them? You get close to them and it's kinda like grandparents have a smell. The older they get, the smell changes, but anyway they have a smell.

That's what Paul meant when he said, 2 Corinthians 2 verse 15, “We are to God the aroma of Christ.” How about that? Not just to the world, we are to God the aroma of Christ. God loves to smell us when we're living for Jesus because we smell like his son. And when you're living for Jesus fulfilling your purpose, guess what God loves to do? He loves to stick you here and there and across the street and at your workplace and around the world, because he knows that smell's gonna rub off, and people are gonna know that Jesus has been there. That's why it's so important we are to God the aroma of Christ. Amazing.

It's humbling to think that over time our lives being in a certain place, people would say, “You know what? It feels like Jesus has been here.” Not only glorifying God by making disciples who will impact every area of the world, every nation, every tribe, every language, every tongue, but our purpose is to do it for Jesus. Romans 8 verse 31:

What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Look at this.

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

Paul, why do you face hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword? Why do you give yourself to this purpose? Why do you live for the praise of his glory? He said, "It's easy. It's for his sake."

A couple of years ago, Disneyland was offering a deal that if you came on your birthday you got in for free. That was too good to resist. Of course, they know you'll bring ten people with you, but that's alright. It was Karla's birthday. We'd never been to Disneyland together just the two of us, so we went. She got in free on her birthday. Now it's just the two of us. Karla knows I don't go on those rides very often. I get motion sick really easy for some reason, but I was bound and determined, "Man, I ain't letting her go alone on those rides on her birthday." So we start out at the Matterhorn. I've never been on the Matterhorn. There's all kinds of warning signs for guys like me saying, "If you get dizzy easy and bla, bla, bla, you don't want do this."

But I thought, "You know what? I can do this." So we get on this thing. We're wheeling around. I'm sitting behind Karla. You know how those carts are. You're all in a line. Karla's in the front screaming, yelling, laughing. I'm back there silent, sick, and turning green. I was so sick I didn't even see the abominable snowman go by, and that's the guy I was hoping to see. I got off the ride, I was so dizzy and so motion sick, but I was not gonna let it stop. We went over to Peter Pan, and I almost lost it over London. I'm serious. It was tough.

You know, when you love somebody, you'll do things for their sake that normally you would never do. Karla's done a lot of things for my sake that normally she would probably not choose. So why would you offer your bodies as living sacrifices? Why would you live to glorify God and make disciples? Why would you give yourself to fulfilling a purpose of impacting the world and all that comes with that as a part of a church? Because you do it for Jesus sake. That's why you do it. Because you'll do things for people you love that you would not normally do on your own. "We do it for his sake," Paul said.

I looked up "sake" in the dictionary. I was shocked by what I saw. It said, "a Japanese fermented alcoholic beverage made from rice."

I'm thinking, "s-a-k-e," a Japanese fermented bev -- "oh, sake!" I looked down s-a-k-e the next one was the word I was looking for. I was shocked for a moment. I was thinking, "Whoa, it's gonna change my theology." Sake said, "purpose, motive end." We do it for Jesus' purpose, for his motives, and to achieve his end." That's exactly why Paul chose that word. We do it for his sake.

You see, I can do some things for my sake, but if it gets too tough I quit because, after all, if I don't like it I'm not gonna do it. After all, it's all for me. I could do it for your sake, but sometimes you don't appreciate what I do, and if you don't appreciate it I lose motivation and so I quit. I could do it for the church, but sometimes the church doesn't act like they appreciate me or even need me, so if I do it for the church I can get disgusted and quit. But you know what? You do it for Jesus' sake and you never lose your motivation --- ever, unless you don't love him.

People say, "You know what? I don't really feel like I want to give my life to that purpose."

“Really? Your problem is you don't love Jesus.”

And they say, “Well, how can you say that?”

I said, “I didn't. You did. You said it. Because if you don't want to give your life to what he's called you to do, why he created you, why he saved you, and why he's asked you to follow him as his disciple. If you don't want to do that, then it's because you don't love him, because if you love him you'll do things for him that you would never do for yourself.”

“For your sake,” Paul said, “we face death all day long for your sake.”

You know, Karla and I have been involved in a lot of camp situations as counselors and host of other things. They always break the kids up into teams. The kids get there; they form into teams. Teamwork and a lot of other things they're gonna learn through this. Then they compete together in a whole wide variety of things. They choke down a can of Spam and chug root beer to see who can make the biggest mess. They get points for cleaning up their campground. They ride bikes into the lake and see how far they can jump before they crash and do all kinds of things to earn points. One of our favorites is the tug-of-war. One of my favorites to watch is the tug-of-war because there's so many life lessons in it.

Over the years we've had some winning tug-of-war teams. You know why? It wasn't because they were the biggest, the strongest, the most able, it's because we coach the kids that if everybody puts their hand on the rope and everybody pulls at the same time with the same intent and the same purpose and really digs in, you can defeat bigger, stronger, more athletic teams because we've got everybody pulling on our side.

You know what happens when you lose a tug-of-war? You have people holding onto the rope but they're not pulling. You have people that really aren't putting their hearts into it. Or you have part of the team, even worse, standing on the sidelines saying they don't want to be a part. Well, God's handed us a rope and he said, “**I've called you to be a part of my team.**” So here's our purpose, to glorify God by making disciples who will impact every area of the world for Christ. Now, is your hand on the rope? If isn't, you're not a part of that team, and you're not fulfilling that purpose, and your life could be wasted, and it could end up in ruin. If your hand is on that rope, are you pulling with all you got? Because it isn't the biggest, most able, strongest teams that win, it's the ones who are pulling in the same direction with God all together.

Can you imagine what one church like this one -- could you imagine the difference one church like this could make in the communities surrounding this church? Or the difference we could make in the world if every single person was living to fulfill this purpose? Well imagine what would happen to the world if every single Christian in the world was committed to that purpose and living it out? The world would be a different place, and we would be a different people. It's why Paul said, “If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.”

Over the next few weeks, Lord willing, we're gonna learn what it means to put our hand on the rope and pull with God together for the praise of his glory.

Father, I want to thank you. I want to thank you, God, for having a purpose so clear that it cannot be missed; a purpose that can shape our thoughts, drive our motives, control our actions, and make our joy complete. There are far too many Christians who have never understood why they were created and why they were saved. I'm praying, God, you'll help all of us to see that we were created for your purpose. Help us, God, to be united in spirit intent on that purpose every day. And we'll thank you. In Jesus' name, Amen.