

Week 9: Day 25-28

Week 10: Day 29-31

Week 11: Day 32-35

Week 12: Day 36-40

Introduction

I. The Purpose Driven Life

a. This Teaching

1. Based on a bestselling book written by Rick Warren, lead pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, CA.
2. The book is written as a 40 day series of daily devotionals.
3. The number 40 was selected because of its biblical significance
 - i. Noah's life was transformed by 40 days of rain.
 - ii. Moses was transformed by 40 days on Mount Sinai and 40 years in the desert.
 - iii. The spies were transformed by 40 days in the Promised Land
 - iv. David was transformed by Goliath's 40 day challenge.
 - v. Elijah was transformed when God gave him 40 days of strength from a single meal.
 - vi. The entire city of Nineveh was transformed when God gave the people 40 days to change.
 - vii. Jesus was empowered by 40 days in the wilderness.
 - viii. The disciples were transformed by 40 days with Jesus after his resurrection.

b. The Goals for this teaching

1. Promote personal devotion and understanding of our individual purposes for life.
2. Strengthen the desire of individuals to serve the fellowship of believers through each partner discovering his/her divine calling.
3. Create opportunities for small group leaders to share this information in a small group setting with their un-churched friends and family.

You were put on earth to make a contribution. You weren't created just to consume resources – to eat, breath, and take up space. God designed you to make a difference with your life.

II. Accepting Your Assignment (Day 29)

a. Biblical Details of Service

1. You were created to serve God

- i. We are created with a divine purpose. **[Eph. 2:10]**
- ii. When you serve others in any way you are actually serving God. [Eph.6:7]

2. You were saved to serve God

- i. You're not saved by service, buy you are saved for service.
- ii. We are compelled to glorify God in gratitude for the gift of salvation. [1 Cor. 6:20; Rom. 12:1]
- iii. If you have no love for others, no desire to serve others, and you're only concerned about your needs, you should question whether Christ is really in your life.
- iv. Ministry – every member of God's family is a minister
- v. Most people hear "ministry" and think of pastors, priests, and professional clergy.
- vi. God has a ministry for you in his church and a mission for you in the world.

3. You are called to serve God

- i. Every Christian is called to service [Eph. 4:4-14]
- ii. Anytime you use your God-given abilities to help others, you are fulfilling your calling.
- iii. There is no small service to God – it all matters.
- iv. "Today thousands of local churches are dying because of Christians who are unwilling to serve. They sit on the sidelines as spectators, and the Body suffers.

4. You are commanded to serve God.

- i. Service is at the heart of the Christian Life.
- ii. Serving is the opposite of our natural inclination. Most of the time we're more interested in "serve us" than service.

- iii. We say, I'm looking for a church that meets my needs and blesses me, not I'm looking for a place to serve and be a blessing."

b. Preparing for Eternity

1. At the end of your life on earth you will stand before God, and he will evaluate how well you served others with your life. (Believer's Judgment) [Rom. 14:1]
2. Excuses will not be accepted only our works done in Christ will last.
3. Deitrich Bonhoffer (Feb.4, 1906 – Apr.9, 1945) – expressed the urgency of Christian Service in several writings, most noted – The Cost of Discipleship.

"Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate. Costly-grace is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it give a man the only true life."
(Bonhoffer, 1959)

c. Service and Significance

1. God wants you to make a difference in this world.
2. God wants the local church to make a difference in this world.
3. What excuse have you been using?
 - i. "I'm too busy"
 - ii. "We've never done it this way"
 - iii. "Other people can do it, so why should I?"
 - iv. "I have personal things that require my focus."

III. Shaped for Serving God (Day 30)

a. Introduction

1. Each of us is uniquely designed, or "shaped," to do certain things.
2. God uses all of your experiences and interactions to gently guide you toward His designed goal for your life.

b. How God Shapes You for Your Ministry

1. Whenever God gives us an assignment, he always equips us with what we need to accomplish it.
2. SHAPE
 - i. Spiritual Gifts
 - ii. Heart
 - iii. Abilities
 - iv. Personality
 - v. Experience

- c. SHAPE: Unwrapping Your Spiritual Gifts
1. God personally gives the work and the gifts for that work. [Eph. 4:8-15]
 2. You can't earn your spiritual gifts or deserve them.
 3. You cannot choose your gifts that God gives to you. (That's where many people get into trouble).
 4. Using our gifts cooperatively benefits us all.
 5. Two major problems
 - i. Gift-envy: occurs when we compare our gifts with others, feel dissatisfied with what God gave us, and become resentful or jealous of how God uses others.
 - ii. Gift-projection: we expect everyone else to have our gifts, do what we are called to do, and feel as passionate about it as we do.
- d. SHAPE: Listening to Your Heart
1. Your heart represents the source of all your motivations – what you love to do and what you care about most.
 2. Passion – There are certain subjects you feel passionate about.
 3. Signs of Serving From Your Heart
 - i. Enthusiasm – When you are doing what you love to do, no one has to motivate you or challenge you or check up on you.
 - ii. Effectiveness – When you are doing what you are equipped to do, you get good at it.

Challenge: “ Figure out what you love to do –what God gave you a heart to do – and then do it for his glory.”

IV. Understanding Your Shape (Day 31)

- a. SHAPE: Applying Your Abilities
1. Your abilities are the natural talents you were born with.
 2. All of our abilities come from God
 - i. Many studies have revealed that the average person possesses from 500 to 700 different skills and abilities – far more than you realize.
 3. Every ability can be used for God's glory
 - i. Examples: artistic ability, administering, banking, boat making, fishing, gardening, singing, sewing, mechanical or technical skill, baking...

4. What I'm able to do, God wants me to do
 - i. God never expects us to do those things we cannot do, but he does require us to give those things we are able to do.
 - ii. He matches our calling and our capabilities.
 - iii. Using your talent should not have a dollar fixed to it!

- b. SHAPE: Using Your Personality
 1. God uses introverts, extroverts, thinkers, feelers and everything in between for his glory.
 2. Knowing your personality type will help determine how and where you utilize your Spiritual gifting.

- c. SHAPE: Employing Your Experiences
 1. In determining your shape for serving God, you should examine at least six kinds of experiences from your past:
 - i. Family experiences: What did you learn growing up in your family?
 - ii. Educational experiences: What were your favorite subjects in school?
 - iii. Vocational experiences: What jobs have you been most effective in and enjoyed the most?
 - iv. Spiritual experiences: What have been your most meaningful times with God?
 - v. Ministry experiences: How have you served God in the past?
 - vi. Painful experiences: What problems, hurts, and trials have you learned from? (God uses this category the most to prepare you for ministry.)

"If you really desire to be used by God, you must understand a powerful truth: The very experiences that you have resented or regretted most in life – the ones you've wanted to hide and forget – are the experiences God wants to use to help others."