

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.

## II. Using What God Gave You (Day 32)

### a. Introduction

1. God deserves your best

### b. Discover Your Shape

1. Begin by assessing your gifts and abilities

- i. Take a long honest look at what you are good at and what you're not good at.
- ii. Ask other people for their candid opinion.
  - a. Where have I seen fruit in my life that other people have confirmed?
  - b. Where have I already been successful?
- iii. Spiritual gift tests and ability inventories can have some value, but they are limited in their usefulness.
  - a. First Limitation - they are standardized
  - b. Second Limitation – there are no definitions of the spiritual gifts given in the Bible, so any definitions are arbitrary and usually represent denominational bias.
  - c. Third Limitation – the more mature you become, the more likely you are to manifest the characteristics of a number of the gifts.

2. Consider your heart and your personality

- i. Paul advised, "But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." [Gal. 6:4]

3. Examine your experiences and extract the lessons you have learned

- i. Review your life and think about how it has shaped you.

"Extracting the lessons from your experiences takes time. I recommend that you take an entire weekend for a life review retreat, where you pause to see how God has worked in the various defining moments of your life and consider how he wants to use those lessons to help others. There are resources that can help you do this." (Warren, 2002)

### c. Accept and Enjoy Your Shape

1. God sovereignly determined your shape for his purpose, so you should not resent it or reject it.
2. Part of accepting your shape is recognizing your limitations.



**b. Measure of Real Servants**

1. Real servants make themselves available
  - i. Real servants do what's needed, even when it is inconvenient.
2. Real servants pay attention to needs
  - i. We miss many occasions for serving because we lack sensitivity and spontaneity.
3. Real servants do their best with what they have
  - i. Servants do not make excuses, procrastinate, or wait for better circumstances.
  - ii. One reason people never serve is that they fear they are not good enough to serve.
4. Real servants do every task with equal dedication
5. Real servants are faithful to their ministry
  - i. Servants finish their tasks, fulfill their responsibilities, keep their promises, and complete their commitments.

“Imagine what it would feel like one day to have God say to you, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’” (Warren, 2002)

6. Real servants maintain a low profile
  - i. This was a sin of the Pharisees. They turned helping others, giving, and even prayer into a performance for others.
  - ii. Self-promotion and servanthood don't mix.
  - iii. Even the smallest service is noticed by God and will be rewarded.
    - a. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. “ [1 Cor. 15:58]

**IV. Thinking Like a Servant (Day 34)****a. Introduction**

1. Service starts in your mind
2. To be a servant requires a mental shift, a change in your attitudes.

**b. Five attitude mindsets of servants**

1. Servants think more about others than about themselves
  - i. Servants focus on others, not themselves.
  - ii. They are self-forgetful.
  - iii. Self-denial is the core of servanthood.
  - iv. We can measure our servant's heart by how we respond when others treat us like servants.

2. Servants think like stewards, not owners
  - i. Servants remember that God owns everything.
  - ii. Living for ministry and living for money are mutually exclusive goals.
  - iii. Money has the greatest potential to replace God in your life.
3. Servants think about their work not what others are doing
  - i. They don't compare, criticize, or compete with other servants or ministries
  - ii. Competition is unproductive and illogical
    - a. We're all on the same team.
    - b. Our goal is to make God look good, not ourselves
    - c. We have been given different assignments
    - d. We are uniquely shaped
  - iii. There's not place for petty jealousy between servants
  - iv. If you serve like Jesus, you can expect to be criticized.
4. Servants base their identity in Christ
  - i. If you are going to be a servant, you must settle your identity in Christ.
  - ii. Only secure people can serve.
  - iii. Insecure people are always worrying about how they appear to others.
  - iv. When you base your worth and identity on your relationship to Christ, you are free from the expectations of others, and that allows you to really serve them best.
5. Servants think of ministry as an opportunity, not an obligation.
  - i. "The only happy people are those who have learned how to serve." – Albert Schweitzer

## **V. God's Power in Your Weakness (Day 35)**

- a. Introduction
  1. You have a bundle of flaws and imperfections: physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual.
  2. You also have uncontrollable circumstances – financial or relational limitations.
  3. God wants to use our weaknesses for his glory.
- b. Admit your weaknesses
  1. Stop pretending to have it all together, and be honest about yourself.
  2. Two great confessions of the New Testament
    - i. Peter's confession of Christ's Deity [Matt. 16:16]
    - ii. Paul's confession of his humanity [Acts 14:15]
- c. Be content with your weaknesses
  1. Reasons to be content with our inborn weaknesses
    - i. They cause us to depend on God.
    - ii. They prevent arrogance

- iii. They encourage fellowship between believers
  - iv. They increase our capacity for sympathy.
2. Honestly share your weaknesses
- i. Paul openly shared his faults
    - a. His failures: “When I want to do good, I don’t and when I try not to do wrong, I do it anyway.” [Rom. 7:19]
    - b. His feelings: “I have told you all my feelings.” [2 Cor. 6:11]
    - c. His frustrations: “We were crushed and completely overwhelmed, and we thought we would never live through it.” [2 Cor. 1:8]
    - d. His fears: “When I came to you, I was weak and fearful and trembling.” [1 Cor. 2:3]
  - ii. Vulnerability is emotionally liberating.
  - iii. Opening up relieves stress, defuses your fears, and is the first step to freedom.

“At some point in your life you must decide whether you want to impress people or influence them. You can impress people from a distance, but you must get close to influence them, and when you don that, they will be able to see your flaws.” (Warren, 2002)

- iv. Glory in your weakness

“Instead of posing as self-confident and invincible, see yourself as a trophy of grace. When Satan points out your weaknesses, agree with him and fill your heart with praise for Jesus, who ‘understands every weakness of ours,’ and for the Holy Spirit, who ‘helps us in our weakness.’” (Warren, 2002)