

Study notes, Sunday 11th November 2018
Purpose – What are you here for?

Starter question(s) – choose one perhaps?

- Are there any aspects of the 100 year anniversary of the Armistice that you have found particularly moving?
- Are you more the type of person who gets up each day with a clear idea of the things you want to do/achieve, or do you tend to just “go with the flow” a bit more? What are the strengths/weaknesses of each approach?

Worship

- Listen to “Here for You” by Matt Redman (from the album 10,000 Reasons), available on Youtube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtj-G1gKnD8>
- Move into a time of prayer in approach to God...

Word - Re-cap...

Introduction

- Approaching the question as to our purpose through the perspective of “What does God say we are here for?”, rather than “What am I here for?” encourages an approach based on God-given revelation, rather than self-generated speculation.
- From the World’s perspective: What we DO often forms our Identity, from God’s Perspective: Who we ARE determines our Purpose

Our purpose - God’s Word

- We are “dearly loved children of God” and in response to this our purpose is to love: God, others, ourselves – 1 John 3:1, 1 John 4:19, Matthew 22:34-40
- This love should express itself through: Worship, Discipleship, Relationship, Mission, Generosity – NMBC’s Core Values
- Ultimately, this leads to a collective, common purpose of seeking to glorify God – In Christ, we have ‘a purpose which will always be greater than our position.’ (Carl Lentz)

Our purpose – Jesus’ example

- Baptism in the River Jordan = obedience, but BEING more important than doing – Matthew 3:17
- Foot-washing in the Upper Room = servanthood – John 13:3
- From Gethsemane to the Cross = self-denying sacrifice – Luke 22:42, Luke 23:46
- Our purpose (both collective and individual) is to seek to imitate Christ – Ephesians 5:1-2

Our purpose – Holy Spirit

- Important message for many... “Be my child”

Possible discussion questions (choose a few to focus on perhaps)

- Which are the factors/influences which contribute to your identity? Are any of these particularly strong in defining who you are?
- As Christians, is it wrong to want to find an individual purpose for our lives?
- Do you believe that God has a particular purpose for each one or us? If so, how can we be sure we won’t “miss it”? If not, are we free to choose to follow any purpose we see fit?
- Do you agree with NMBC’s five core values of: Worship, Discipleship, Relationship, Mission, Generosity? Would you change/add anything? Do we tend to emphasise one more than the others?
- How does a commitment to loving God, others and ourselves express itself in down-to-earth, everyday living?
- How do you understand the quotation from Carl Lentz, “In Christ, your purpose will always be greater than your position”?
- Is it a bit too much to ask for us to see our purpose as imitating Christ in sacrifice, servanthood and obedience?
- Isn’t the suggestion that it is perhaps more important to BE than to DO a little unrealistic/out-dated in today’s world?
- Did you sense the Holy Spirit putting anything on your heart, during the time of quiet reflection following the sermon? Share anything you feel is appropriate...¹

Prayer and witness (focus on a few)

- Give thanks for the sacrifice and commitment of those who have gone before us and who have given of themselves and their lives in order that we might enjoy peace and freedom today.
- Pray for each other as individuals and for us as a church as we seek to live out God’s purpose in our lives...
- Pray for Jung Reggio as she prepares to speak to us next Sunday on the story of Esther...

¹ You may feel you’d like some more opportunity to simply “be” in God’s presence... If so, you could try this exercise at some point over the coming week perhaps?... For 3 hours cease from doing work (including domestic work) and entertainment (including activities on-line, in nature, in community). You are allowed to read the Bible and pray, but do not do this all the time. You should spend a lot of time in silence. You can talk to your family members, but do not talk too much. You can drink. You can eat simple food if it does not require preparation (i.e. you are not allowed to cook or make food in any other way). You should not watch TV, check mobile phone, play video games, write e-mails, etc. If possible, stay at home.