



Sermon Discussion Guide

You Are Called To Belong

Live Your Calling: What On Earth Am I Here For? – Part 3

Journey Ministries prepared by Rick Warren

May 5, 2013

*“God is the One who made all things, and all things are for his glory.
He wanted to have many children share his glory ...” Hebrews 2:10 (NCV)*

God doesn't intend for us to live life alone. We can't fulfill God's purposes for our lives on our own, so he has called us to belong to the family he created to love and to be with him in eternity. The English word “church” in the Bible's original Greek means “called out” and not a building or an event: we are called out of the world into God's family. God designed his church as the only way the deepest needs in our lives can be met, so in this discussion we'll seek an understanding of what God's church is like and how it meets our needs.

OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.

*“God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by
bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 1:5 (NLT)*

1. If people truly understood the significance of God's eternal plan for them described in this verse, what kind of response would they have? How would they feel about themselves? How would they feel about God? What would they say or do?

*“In Christ the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him
you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.” Ephesians 2:21-22*

2. God's church is like a temple in which all the pieces of the building support each other. According to the verse above, what are you being built to become and who will live there?
3. Referring to Ephesians 2:21-22 above, in which ways are we being built together to become a dwelling place where God lives? What does this actually look like in the lives of church members?
4. In a support group, the members provide emotional stability for one another. Name people in your life from whom you receive emotional support, and people to whom you give emotional support. If you do not have these types of relationships in your life, name places where you can seek emotional support and try joining such a group.

*(Jesus:) “Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit.
For apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:5 (NLT)*

5. God's church is like a garden in which people's lives become productive and fruitful. What do you think “produce fruit” and “do nothing” mean in this verse above? What do “produce fruit” and “do nothing” look like in people's lives?
6. What do we have to do to follow Jesus' command to “remain in me” in the verse above? What does this look like in your life? Is it something others can see, or is it something private between you and Jesus? What should it look like?

Diving Deeper (optional)

1. God's church provides spiritual security to protect and care for his family. What are some elements of the church that provide this kind of security? What does this security look like?
2. In God's family, we learn our true identity. What relationships define much of your identity, whether through family, friends, work, or a club? How can you allow your identity in Christ to be more significant in each of those relationships?
3. Romans 12:4-5 says that “each of us has different work to do.” Have you discovered the types of work or purposes God shaped you to do in the body of Christ? If so, what are they? If not, seek suggestions from other group members.

REVIEW ANY ASSIGNMENTS OR COMMITMENTS MADE DURING YOUR PREVIOUS MEETING.

Sermon Discussion Guide Leader Notes

Suggestions for This Week's Study

- Ask a few group members to name popular sports teams or colleges that people are excited about or are proud to be associated with.
- Help group members learn that the second purpose of their lives is that God formed them for his family, the church.
- Discuss the benefits of belonging to God's family: (1) finding a true identity in Christ; (2) being supported by others; (3) discovering your unique value in Christ's body; (4) receiving care and protection; and (5) having a productive life.
- Pray: Dear Lord, thank you for calling me into your family and making me your sibling. Bless all my relationships to reflect your love. Make it clear to me where you want me to seek support and whom you want me to care for. Help me stay connected to your church family so my life will become productive and pleasing to you.

Preparing to Lead Your Group

- ✓ **PRAY** for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God's wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God's instrument to lead the group to greater understanding and a willingness to commit to becoming more like God. Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group.
- ✓ **PLAN** where you want to take your group in the next 60-90 days. Is your group strong in some areas and weak in others? How can you challenge the members to live more balanced Christian lives? Consider God's five purposes for the church: Fellowship, Discipleship, Ministry, Mission and Worship, and make a plan to encourage your group members to growth and commitment in their weak areas.
- ✓ **PONDER YOUR PROGRESS** after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what didn't. Re-evaluation is key to your growth as a leader. Consider whether your plan is being effective in moving the group to greater understanding and commitment. How are you doing with leading the discussion: is it stimulating, challenging, and meaningful? Are you able to keep the group on track? Do you need to make some changes?

Using This Sermon Discussion Guide

- Talk It Over is a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. We've designed it so it can be completed easily within 30-45 minutes. As the discussion leader, you should preview and evaluate the questions based on the needs of your group. Decide in advance what is most important to focus on, should time not allow for the entire lesson.
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, consider using the Diving Deeper section or add additional Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- The questions relating to Bible study methods are helpful to develop Bible literacy and spiritual maturity in our lives. You can help your group be aware of their needs in these areas by using these questions as a regular part of each discussion.
- Personal applications are essential for growth and should be included in every discussion. When discussing how they will apply principles, group members may state very general goals such as "I need to spend more time in prayer." It is important for you to help people make goals that are very specific and commit to specific plans of action by asking, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 25 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- Your goal as the leader is to bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their needs for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.