**First Step – Teacher’s Guide**

May the people raise you, O God. Then the earth will yield its harvests.

What is My Purpose

**The Lord is with you!**

God has a special purpose and plan for your life and it is for good!

**Introduction:**

Welcome back everyone!

Today’s topic is on what your purpose is.

**MAIN RULES:**

**1. Respect each other’s privacy**

**(Please do not ask for contact number, no business transactions)**

**2. Honor the vision of this church**

**(Please do not promote or invite to other church events and programs)**

**3. Humility and Order**

**(Be humble despite disagreements. Other questions can be discussed after the class)**

We’ve learned who is Jesus, what is the Bible, How to pray and now: how does it all fit together practically?

**Attempt & Failure:**

Have you ever had questions about your life and what is the meaning of it?

Many books have been written about it!

All sorts of questions are such as:

What on earth are you doing in there?"

What is life all about?

Why am I here?

Where am I going?

What is the purpose of life?

Is there meaning to all of this?

Some interesting facts about our life on average:

If you're an average person this is what you'll do.

You will live an average of 25,550 days.

If you live to be 70 among other things you will spend your life this way:

 23 years sleeping

 17 years working

 11 years playing and watching TV

 6 years traveling

 6 years eating

 2 years dressing

 6 months at stop lights

When we don’t find a purpose in life, it wouldn’t matter how many nights we can sleep, all the food we can have, all the money we can have or the friends we have.

SUGGESTED for INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

1. What is the meaning of life to you?

2. Are everyone’s purpose the same?

So, what can we do?

Rick Warren, the author of “Purpose Driven Life” begins his book with this opening line: “It’s not about you. The purpose of your life is far greater than your own personal fulfillment, your peace of mind, or even your happiness. It’s far greater than your family, your career, or even you wildest dreams and ambitions. If you want to know why you were placed on this planet, you must begin with God. You were born ***by*** His purpose and ***for*** His purpose.”

Firstly,

* + - * 1. Your purpose begins with God

– lost presence of God

**Explanation:**

1. God made you to know Him

Eph 1:4-5 Even before the world was made, God had already chosen us to be his through our union with Christ, …Because of his love 5 God had already decided that through Jesus Christ he would make us his sons--this was his pleasure and purpose. TEV

You were created for friendship, for relationship with God. God takes pleasure in you. God made you to love you. You were made as an object of God’s love.

**Illustration:**

(Teachers, please use your own illustration if you have)

A piece of the jigsaw puzzle may be beautiful, but meaningless on its own. It is unique, specially made for a purpose.

 So unless it is fitted with the rest of the other jigsaw pieces, you cannot form the main big picture without it.

2. God made you to be like Him

Rom. 8:28-29 "We know that all that happens to us is working for our good if we love God and are fitting into his plans. For from the beginning God decided that those who come to Him . . should become like his Son . . ." LB

Not just to know God but to be like Him, develop His characteristics. We are created in the image of God yes, but sin drew a wedge between us and God.

Because of what Jesus did, there is no longer a separation between us and God. With God, we have the fruits of the spirit like patience, kindness, goodness, love, joy, peace, gentleness and self-control.

The more we behold God, the more we are transformed into His image. Loving people He loves.

Patient with people like He is

Kind with people like He is

Peaceful like He is

Good like He is

Exercising self-control like He is

3. God made you to serve Him

Rom. 12:1-3 "Offer yourselves . . . to God, dedicated to his service ... This is the true WORSHIP that you should offer. … Then you will be able to know the will of God, what is good, pleasing and perfect." GN

The word here is “offer”. It is out of free will and not compulsion that we serve the Lord. God gave you a free will and will never force you to serve Him.

However, we will never find our true purpose without Him and without His purpose involved. We were created to serve God for His glory, for His purpose and for His honor and not our own. This is why we look for our purpose not in ourselves but in God.

**Illustration:**

(Teachers, please use your own illustration if you have)

Just like a glove. How do you use it?

Yes, you have to put your hands in and perhaps you can use it in construction work, in dyeing hair, in opening durian, in any rough work, against snow etc

The glove has no purpose if the person’s hand is not using it. But when the person fits their hands into the glove, the potential of the glove is maximized.

 In the same way, we are like the glove that only find true purpose in the hands that fit inside.

**Application:**

(Teachers, please use your own illustration if you have)

Surrendering the question of your purposes is not giving up on your dreams. Rather, it is giving in to God’s plan.

He knows what it the best path for us even when we can’t see it now.

Discussion:

Q: What do you think purpose is for?

Q: Why is our purpose linked to His plan?

Q: How do we know what is our purpose meant to be?

SUGGESTED for INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

1. What does it mean to really know who God is?

2. Why is it important to involve God in every decision that we make?

3. How does God lead us with His peace?

Which leads us to the next point:

And:

* + - * 1. Together we thrive and shine

In the bible, there is an account in which people wanted to receive healing from Jesus.

Luke 5:18-26

18 Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. 19 When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

**Explanation:**

They did something creative and only possible because of teamwork. They are able to achieve greater things because they worked creatively as a team.

This is the power of “togetherness” as seen in Acts 2:46.

The best version of ourselves is achieved when we work together as a team.

The journey is always more enriching and impactful when we are together.

Together, we can make **impossible** things **possible**.

Together, we handle pressures and loads better.

Together, we can heighten our results.

You are called to belong, not just to believe.

Prov 27:17

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

The truth is, we can’t run from interacting with people. We need them to draw out the best in us like mentors, coaches and those that inspire us to do better.

TOGETHER through Care Group:

CARE & PRAYER FOR ONE ANOTHER

PRACTICAL SHARING

DEVELOP LIFE & EQ

DEVELOP GIFTS &

LEADERSHIP SKILLS

TOGETHER through Serving:

SERVING IS A PART OF GOD’S PURPOSE

YOU WITNESS MIRACLES WHEN SERVING

SERVING BRINGS GREAT REWARDS

**Illustration:**

Just like cleaning the house or cooking, it is much faster when everyone is chipping in. We work together, we come together, eat together, pray together and enjoy together.

**Application:**

(Teachers, please use your own illustration if you have)

Like a family, there are going to be moments of celebration, prayer and even friction. But as a family, we stick together through thick and thin to allow God to mold us.

How?

Learning from each other

Encouraging each other

Mentoring each other

Helping each other

And:

* + - * 1. The Great Commission: Sharing Our Faith

Jesus commissioned us to share the good news with our friends and family and the unsaved.

Matthew 28:19-20

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. NIV

Use the 5 Blessings of the Cross:

**C**omplete forgiveness of d your sins

Isa 53:5-7

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our sins.

**Hates sin –** loves you – destroy

**Just** – paid the penalty

To forgive us of our sins and still be just, He came down and paid the penalty of all our sins!

**R**estoration of your relationship with God

Rom 5:11

11 Now we rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God … making us friends of God.

**O**verflowing Abundance

2 Cor 8:9

Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

**S**upernatural Healing

Psa 103:1-3

… Who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases.

**S**upernatural Restoration

Joel 2:25

I will restore to you the years which the locust has eaten.

Lost **relationships** – **opportunities** – **business** – **health** - **honor**

**Restoration** of lost opportunities, relationships, business, health, honor and others.

Discussion:

Q: Why does God want us to be connected with the rest of the church family?

Q: How are is our character and purpose shaped when we are serving and in a Care Group?

SUGGESTED for INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

1. Is there such thing as a perfect church?

2. What if we have disagreements with other church members?

* 1. Benediction

Num 6:24-26

The Lord bless you and keep you;

the Lord cause his face to smile on you and be gracious to you;

the Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.’

Chose

* 1. Article I

**TESTIMONY: CARE GROUP’S LABOUR OF LOVE**

Dear Pastor Joshua, the Lord makes perfect that which concerneth me. In early April, I was hospitalized due to kidney stone. Thank you, Pastor for planting Care Groups close to our vicinity. My hubby was outstation and thank God, the Care Group members came so spontaneously to my aid. Besides sending me to the hospital, they ensured that my kids did not miss school or even for their tuition classes. They took turns in administrating the necessary, plus looking after their meals too.

I am truly grateful that when I felt helpless, my CG members’ act of love lightened my burdens. Wow! Indeed now I realize I have a ‘Big Family’ because of Jesus. All is well as He watches over me and my household. As in Psalms 91:11 “For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.” My appreciation for their prayers and labour of love.

**TESTIMONY: PRAYERS FROM CARE GROUP OPENED DOORS**

I’d like to give God all the glory for opening doors for my daughter to get a job in a large local broadcasting company. She’s a graduate with only a Diploma in Broadcasting with no working experience in that field. She applied for jobs to some smaller companies but was turned down. An opportunity arose for an interview with this large broadcasting company. During the interview, the interviewers commented that she was the youngest.

During one of the Care Group meetings, I requested prayers for her. That evening itself, the company called her up to offer her the job. All thanks to my Care Group members who supported us in prayer.

All glory to Jesus. When one door was closed, God opened up another better door of opportunity, Amen!

**TESTIMONY: OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE**

Thank you Ps Joshua and Ps Carey for the opportunity to serve in the Mission Trip. I really enjoyed serving and had a great time there. The trip was a great learning experience for me. Throughout the trip, I learned the importance of praying in the Holy Spirit especially when we didn’t know what to pray for. The highlight of the mission trip for me was the visit to the nursing home.

God’s overwhelming presence was felt and I was touched during the worship session and also when I saw how the Holy Spirit touched the aunties and uncles there. Though at the end of the day I felt physically tired, I was refreshed and renewed in Christ. Looking forward for more to come.

**TESTIMONY: SERVING AND SEEING MIRACLES**

In February this year I started the third semester of my master’s program. I felt very pressured after this semester started. I needed a lot of time to complete my assignments, but the Holy Spirit kept on reminding me not to give up serving. Therefore, I still served every week. Thank God, through Pastor Joshua’s encouraging messages on Saturday and Sunday, I had peace. My sisters-in-Christ also reminded me to seek God as my study partner. I have learnt to rest in God’s power too.

During the Anointing and Empowering Prayer, Pastor Carey prophesied “students will obtain ‘A’ for all subjects, even for those difficult subjects.” Immediately, I received it. For the next two weeks during my major exams, I kept on confessing this prophecy that God gave me in my heart. I got my results a month later. True enough I have obtained five ‘A’s. Truly this is God’s ability and favor. He is able to turn around those people who did not favor me and give me good grades and people whom I did not even know well, helped me complete my assignments. Pastor, thank you for teaching and also thanks to this big family of RLC.

* 1. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHO IS GOD AND HOW DO WE KNOW THAT HE EXIST?

As we partake of this bread and wine, help us to receive the Body and Blood of Christ with faith and to discern His Body and receive the Covenantal Blessings and record-breaking favor You promised. Through Christ’s offering of Himself made once for all, You have made us a people for Your own possession and Your own special treasure. Deut7:6

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

Jesus Christ is described in "biographies" written by men who were His followers. Those were called the FOUR GOSPELS. Jesus Christ is unique. Jesus is not like any other man who has ever come on the world scene. He was a man who was born through supernatural circumstances (The Gospel of Luke, chapters 1 and 2).

Some say He was the world's greatest living example, a moral teacher of the highest caliber. However, with all due respect to the leaders of other world religions He is the only one who has Risen from the dead. Jesus was the only man who claimed to be God. (John 1:1; 4:26; 5:19-25; Matthew 16:13-17; Mark 2:3-12; Luke 22:66-70).

HOW DO I PROVE THE BIBLE (THE HOLY SCRIPTURES) TO BE TRUSTWORTHY?

i The Bible was written by many authors over a period of several centuries. Yet there is a supernatural thread of continuity guiding its content; in effect, the same Truth and content as seen from different viewpoints. For example, the four Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John - are suited to four distinct and different audiences. They were meant for the Jewish mind, the Roman, the Greek and the philosophical mind.

The Old and New Testaments consist of 66 individual books - a library of books, all with an unusual unity that transcends centuries of time, differences in cultural and philosophical backgrounds, and speaks of Jesus Christ. God is the Author of the Scriptures. His Holy Spirit "breathed” His own thoughts into the minds of the men who wrote the Bible. (Read II Timothy 3:16- 17)

Those who are intellectually too proud or willingly immoral or disobedient will learn little from the Scriptures. However, the one who is mentally and spiritually receptive to God's thoughts will profit much from Scripture and gain deep spiritual insight and understanding, for they reveal the Truth about Jesus. (John 5:39)

HOW DO I KNOW THAT GOD LOVES ME?

God loves each person in the world. (John 3:16; 1 John 2:29; 3:1). Love is the greatest expression of God. God has a plan for each life. He alone can answer the great questions of life - who am I? - from where did I come? - why am I here? - where am I going? The story is told of a devout young man. One day while out walking, he discovered he had strayed away from town and into a farmer's field. In this field was an anthill, a busy "city" where thousands of ants were going busily about their business. The young man noticed a farmer coming toward the anthill with his plow, the ant colony in the path of sure destruction. Immediately the man was distressed. Gripped with the same concern someone might have for people trapped in a burning building, the young man wanted to warn the ants somehow of the impending doom. But how? He could shout to them, but could they hear? He could write in the dirt, but could they read? Then he understood. In order to communicate with them, he would have to become an ant. This crude allegory shows in concept the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation: how God loved mankind so much that He chose to become flesh and blood humanity in order to communicate with him. John 1:1-14.

WHAT IS SIN?

Sin is the Biblical word for failing to live up to God's standards and expectations for us. It includes various shades of meaning under this broad category, ranging from "error" to "wickedness". The Bible teaches that sin is not a list or category of deeds or attitudes, but rather a condition. Man is, by his nature, a sinner; therefore, he commits actions which are sinful. (Romans 3:10-12; 1 John 1:8-10; James 4:6-12) Man's sinful condition (a "spiritual disease") has separated him from God, since God is holy and just and must punish sin. (Romans 2:12-15). However, God is also a personal, loving Deity. He knows no man can live up to His standards. So, He took the form of man (Jesus Christ) and lived that life for us. Then He took upon Himself the punishment His justice demanded and gave Himself as a "sacrifice" in our place, dying for our sins. This sacrificial death and subsequent resurrection of Jesus from the dead is deemed by God to be sufficient penalty. We must accept Christ's sacrificial death as having validity and meaning for us. If we are repentant, and come to God by faith, He will forgive our sins and give us new natures and eternal life. (Romans 3:21-22; John 3:16; Ephesians 2:1-10; Romans 5:6-8)

WHAT IS FAITH?

The Bible defines "faith" as the confident assurance that something we want is going to happen. (Hebrews 11:1-3) Faith comes from God's Word, (Romans 10:17) and without faith, man cannot approach God (Hebrews 11:6). Faith is a condition for salvation (forgiveness and eternal life) and curiously, is a quality that is the result of salvation as well. (John 3:14-16 and Galatians 5:22).