



Jesus Provides Strength for Life's Purpose **Adapted from sermon "Making A Lasting Impact" by Rick Allen**

People seem to ponder the different ways to invest their life in order to make a lasting impact. Rick Allen asked three questions about purpose in his sermon, "Making a Lasting Impact." They are: Do you ever wonder if your life is making any real difference in the world in which you live? Don't you want your life to make a difference in the world? Don't you want to think that at least some of what you are doing with your life is making a positive and lasting impact on the world?

One of life's greatest tragedies is a wasted life. There are benefits of knowing your life's purpose. Consider the following article:

Do you have a sense of purpose?

For decades, psychologists have studied how long-term, meaningful goals develop over the span of our lives. The goals that foster a sense of purpose are ones that can potentially change the lives of other people, like launching an organization, researching disease, or teaching kids to read. Indeed, a sense of purpose appears to have evolved in humans so that we can accomplish big things together—which may be why it's associated with better physical and mental health. Purpose is adaptive, in an evolutionary sense. It helps both individuals and the species to survive.

Many seem to believe that purpose arises from your special gifts and sets you apart from other people—but that's only part of the truth. It also grows from our connection to others, which is why a crisis of purpose is often a symptom of isolation. Once you find your path, you'll almost certainly find others traveling along with you, hoping to reach the same destination—a community.¹

In this lesson, you will read about a man who lived to get ahead only to die suddenly and leave everything he had spent his life on behind. Jesus died and rose again so as believers we would never have to live the tragedy of living a wasted life.

¹ Jeremy Adam Smith, How to Find Your Purpose in Life, https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_find_your_purpose_in_life (Accessed May, 24, 2018).

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COURAGE

C1: Does it matter what I do with my life? Why or Why Not? Do you believe that at least some of what you are doing with your life is making a positive and lasting impact on the world? Why or Why Not?

C2: When you hear the phrase “he wasted his life,” what does that mean to you?

C3: Read and answer the following.

Luke 12:13-21 (ESV)

- How many times is the first-person pronouns “I” and “my” used in these verses?
- What does the use of first-person pronouns indicate?

C4: What adjustments can you make in order to live a more God-centered life?

STRENGTH

S1: We are all sons of Adam and we are born with a predisposition toward self-centered living. Read and answer the following.

Genesis 1:27 (ESV)

Genesis 5:3 (ESV)

- What difference do you notice in the two verses?
- What happens to us when we have the wrong basis of identity?

S2: Read and answer the following.

Deuteronomy 8:18 (ESV)

Psalms 50:10-11 (ESV)

Psalms 75:6-7 (ESV)

Psalms 89:11 (ESV)

Luke 12:17-19 (ESV)

- From these verses, what is man's view of success?
- What is God's view of success?
- From these verses, who owns it all? What does that make us?
- On a scale of 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not very well, rate yourself on how well you are as a steward of the resources God has entrusted to you. Write out a plan to improve.

S3: Read and answer the following.

Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV)

Mark 8:36 (ESV)

- What do these verses mean to you today?
- How well do you live for the immediate rather than the eternal? What steps can you take to ensure your focus is on eternal things and not immediate gratification?

ENDURANCE

E1: Jesus promised He would bless generously and supernaturally enrich our lives if we would be governed by a spirit of generosity rather than greed. Read and answer the following.

Luke 6:38 (ESV)

Luke 12:17 (ESV)

2 Corinthians 5:7 (ESV)

- When you get your paycheck, what is the first thought that goes through your mind with regards to the money? Why?
- Notice the phrase from Luke 12:17, “he thought to himself...” What does this phrase bring to mind?
- How should we live our daily life? How well do you walk by faith and not by sight? Define your plan to live out the faith journey?

E2: Read **Luke 12:19-21 (ESV)** and answer the following.

- What are two – three things you discover from these verses?

E3: In verse 20 the word “required” comes from the word “*apaitousun*” which means to demand back. When you die, God will demand back the life, resources, and opportunities He has given to you. Take time to consider the following.

If today your soul would be “demanded back” from you:

- How would you fare?
- Would you enter eternity with the regrets of a wasted life?

E4: Complete the following to help determine your purpose for life.

- Take some time to think and reflect and then fill in the following blanks: I exist to _____.
- In 250 words or less, write the obituary announcement that you would like to see in the paper the day after your death (of old age and by natural causes). Write it in the third person, like a reporter. Include the following:

- Significant professional accomplishments – what would you like the paper to say you accomplished in your professional life?
 - Community accomplishments
 - Church accomplishments
 - A quote from your wife
 - A quote from each of your children (present and/or future dream of children)
 - A quote from your best friend²
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- What did you learn from completing these two exercises?
 - In the next seven days, share your thoughts from this exercise with a friend. What did you learn?

² James Campbell, *Mentor Like Jesus* (Nashville: B & H Publishing, 2009), Location 1154, Kindle.