



Why am I here?

Chapters 1 & 2

Notes: This Bible Study is intended to be a companion to “The Purpose Driven Life” by Rick Warren. The Scripture references in this Bible study are taken from the New King James Version.

Chapter 1 – It All Starts with God

What do you think are the implications of the first sentence of this book, “It’s not about you”?

My perspective needs to shift from myself to my Creator.

Why will focusing on my Creator help me to understand my purpose?

Everything God does serves His purpose. Since God created me, God brought me into being for a purpose. The better I understand what motivates God, the better I’ll understand His purpose for me.

Job 12:9-10 - Who among all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this, In whose hand is the life of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind?

Every breath we take is by God’s will.

What is essential for people to understand for life to make sense?

I exist because God wills that I exist. I was made by God and for God...

Colossians 1:16 - For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

What is the problem with the attitude that God lives just to serve you?

The idea that God lives just to hear from people and answer their prayers is a reversal of nature and doomed to failure. An obsession with your self is selfishness and the root of all sin. The Bible calls an obsession with self, carnal-mindedness...

Romans 8:6 - For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Can Christians be carnally-minded?

Yes, all people can be self-absorbed. In the case of Christians, death is the death of relationships with others and the Lord, not the second death that is the consequence for

non-believers who never enter into a relationship with the Lord.

What is the benefit of considering how things in the world relate to spiritual matters?

Life & peace... You will have peace with God and peace despite your circumstances. Life will be more full...

John 10:10 - I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

What do self-help books have in common?

Go for your dreams, set goals, believe you can accomplish them, never give up, believe in yourself...

Do these kind of self-help suggestions pay off?

They do, the human spirit is powerful and you can often achieve great success if you put your mind to it.

Is being successful and fulfilling your life’s purpose the same?

Not necessarily, you can be a raving success by the world’s standard but still miss the purposes for which God created you. If you’re counting on self-help to fulfill your life’s purpose, you will fail...

Matt 16:24-25 - Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Self-help books preach that we should not deny ourselves, the exact opposite from what Jesus says that we should do to serve the purposes of God.

Did Rick Warren intend his book on “The Purpose Driven Life” to help you accomplish more in life?

No, it will actually teach you to do less in life and to focus instead on what matters most.

How do you discover the purpose you were created for? What are the only two options that all people have?

You can either speculate as philosophers do, or you can seek revelation from the Originator of life.

Why did God give us the Bible?

God gave us His Word so that we may know Him and fulfill the five purposes He has for us.

The Purpose Driven Life outlines five general purposes God has for us... What are they?

1. Magnifier of God's glory
2. Member of God's family
3. Model of God's character
4. Minister of God's grace
5. Messenger of God's good news

What insight does Ephesians 1:11 give us about our purpose?

Ephesians 1:11 - In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

How do we come by the inheritance described here?

Our identity and purpose come from having a relationship with Jesus Christ.

When did God determine our purpose in life?

God planned our purpose in life before we were even conceived (without our input!).

How does the fact that God works all things together according to His will relate to our purpose?

Our purpose in life is part of a much larger, cosmic purpose.

In spite of all the advertising around us, how can I remind myself that life is really about living for God instead of myself?

When I see an ad that says I need something, I should instead consider what God's will is for me concerning the product being offered.

Chapter 2 – You Are Not an Accident

Why are we alive at this moment?

God wanted to create us and He is not finished with us...

Psalm 138:8 - The LORD will perfect that which concerns me;

Is there any detail about us that God did not have a hand in?

No, even the hairs on our heads are numbered (Matthew 10:30). God continues to chart out the course of our lives...

Psalm 139:16 - Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.

The more scientists learn about DNA, the more this reinforces a supernatural origin. Our DNA is our own unique, personal programming that determines our physical

characteristics as well as our propensity toward certain behavior.

Acts 17:26 - And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings

Since we are part of God's creation, what role do we play in His creation?

People are unique among all God's creation.

James 1:18 - Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

What does it mean that people are the firstfruits of God's creation?

The term firstfruits pertains to preeminence, or importance. As the first of a farmer's crop was considered to be the best, likewise, people are the best of God's creation.

How are people distinguished from the animals?

Only mankind is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Only in mankind did God give a spirit...

Genesis 2:7 - And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

I take it that this breath of life is more than life in this world since it does not say that God did the same for the animals. Certainly since we are in the image of God, we are unique...

What are the implications of being made in the image of God?

We have the ability to know God, we have a triune nature (body, soul, and spirit), we have a will to make sovereign choices, we will live into eternity future.

What motivated God to create us and give us a universe to live in?

God created us because of His love...

Ephesians 1:4 - just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love

God specifically created the universe to be a place for us...

Isaiah 45:18 - For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens, who is God, who formed the earth and made it, who has established it, who did not create it in vain, who formed it to be inhabited: "I am the LORD, and there is no other.

Did God create us because He needed us?

God did not create us because He was lonely. There was perfect fellowship in the Trinity from eternity past. God created us to be an object of His love...

I John 4:8 - for God is love.

If there were no God, what would our purpose in life be?

If there were no God as the evolutionists propose, we'd just be accidents of random natural processes... we'd have no purpose, there'd be no right or wrong, we'd have no hope. But God does exist and He created us for a purpose...

Isaiah 44:2 - Thus says the LORD who made you and formed you from the womb, who will help you: `Fear not.

Knowing that God uniquely created me, what areas of my personality, background and physical appearance am I struggling to accept?

These are things that people often are not comfortable discussing with others. There really shouldn't be anything on this list but since we are human, there will be things if we are honest with ourselves. One item of baggage I need to discard is not listening close enough to others.

What kind of a role does luck play in our lives?

There is no luck.

What is luck?

Webster's defines luck as "a force that brings good fortune or adversity". But Webster's does not specify what causes this "force" and goes on to associate "luck" with "chance".

What is the problem with thinking that luck is a factor in your life?

Luck denies the sovereign control of God. The Bible teaches that God is in control of everything. Jesus Christ said in Matthew 10:29, *"Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground without your Father's will."*

Can you think of any examples from the Bible that illustrates that luck has nothing to do with the course of events?

There is a story in 1 Samuel 4-6 about Israel being defeated by the pagan Philistines who took the ark of God from them. The Philistines soon suspected their taking the ark was causing people to be stricken with tumors and die in every city they kept it. They thought the afflictions might still be "by chance" and decided to test this by putting the ark on a cart hitched to two unsupervised milk cows. When released, the cows did not go home to be with their calves, they took the most direct roads to Israel. God makes it clear even to the pagans that He is in control.

Jesus Christ told a story in Luke 10:30-36 about two religious men who came "by chance" upon a man who had been mugged and did not help him. Another man who was not as highly regarded because he was a Samaritan stopped and rendered aid. Being religious does not make one a believer who cares about pleasing God. Opportunities to help others are simply chance occurrences to unbelievers

while Christians recognize them as divine providence to act as a vessel for God.

What is a better way to encourage someone rather than to wish them "good luck"?

The next time you have an opportunity to encourage someone, you may consider telling them you hope it works out for the best instead of just wishing them luck. Better yet, remind them that God is in control and answers prayer. An offer to pray for them and asking God to bless them may be appropriate as well. *"The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."* (James 5:16)

Are people taking a chance on Christ when they yield their lives to Him?

I clearly remember when I decided to "take a chance" on following Jesus Christ. My attitude about Jesus had been much the same as an observation made by a secular writer in an April 4, 1994 Newsweek article, "the fact that a great religion (Christianity) grew from such humble beginnings may, in itself, suggest a divine plan." This favorable predisposition based on human logic did not save me but it was evidence of the Holy Spirit opening my heart to Jesus. I now know I wasn't taking a chance at all, I was responding to God's love. *"We love Him because He first loved us."* (1 John 4:19)

Why should people "take a chance" on Jesus?

Those who "take a chance" in following Jesus will learn that it is the best decision they ever made...

Psalms 34:8 - Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

If you haven't "taken a chance" on Jesus Christ, give Him a try. Jesus said in Matthew 11:30, *"My yoke is easy and My burden is light."* Life is better when we trust the Lord in all things. *"And try Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it."* (Malachi 3:10)