Fully You - Part 2

# Living Out Your Purpose

# (Matthew 28:19-20)

Welcome to Christ’s Community Church. This morning we’re continuing with part two of our series “Fully You” and we’re talking about unlocking our identity in Christ. In the Bible, God makes it very clear that he invites us to change, he expects us to change, but he also gives us the power to make that change and live that new life. In other words, we each have the opportunity to take on a new identity, to be transformed, to become a new person, and it all begins the moment we say yes to Jesus and embrace the crucified life that he’s called us to live.

But shaking off the old ways, those habits and ways of thinking that we had before Christ can be very difficult. There are things of this world that are deeply ingrained in our hearts and our minds like grease or grime on our hands. Many of you have worked on an older engine, maybe changing the oil in an older car, lawnmower, or tractor, and that oil is so black that it may take days of washing your hands before they are without stain, wrinkle, or any other blemish. And in the same way there are there are many things in our lives that we need to unlearn, the Bible says “hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh” because it’s these things that keep us from walking in who Christ says we are (Jude 23).

It’s for that reason that the Bible tells us that God gave some… “as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-12, NASU).

And so, you and I are in the process of being sanctified, being made holy, striving to attain to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ, and walking out who God says we are in him. The apostle Paul refers to it as “the equipping of the saints” meaning the equipping of those who are “in Christ Jesus”. You and I, like all those addressed in the opening of his letter to the church in Rome,

“Are loved by God and called to be saints” (Romans 1:7).

And this Greek word translated saints is hagios which refers to those people or things that are set aside or consecrated to the Lord. In other words, that’s all true Christians, it’s those who believe and have been born again, because the Bible tells us that,

“We’ve been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:10).

And so, if you’ve believed and been born again, you’ve been made holy. Through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross 2000 years ago, the Bible tells us that by faith in Christ’s death and resurrection that you’ve become the righteousness of God. In other words, you’re a saint in God’s eyes and it’s we who live by the Spirit who are eagerly awaiting to receive the fulfillment of what God has promised. That’s what the Bible tells us in Galatians chapter five, and so we’re engaged in the process, we’re on that journey, and I want to encourage you to be “Fully You”. There is greatness in this room, God has a purpose for you, and if you’re ready to reach for it, he’s ready to help you fulfill your destiny. God’s purpose for your life begins right now, right where you are, as you embrace your new identity in Christ, surrendering yourself to his power.

This week I stumbled across an article on CNBC about the world’s oldest billionaire who recently celebrated his 100th birthday. But what I found most interesting was that even though Mr. Chung could most certainly take it easy and enjoy the fruit of his 80-year career, he insists on going into the office every day. Even though he’s given the role of executive chairman to his son, he still visits the shipping firm’s headquarters daily to check in with each department head because he says, “I can’t stay at home because I’d get very, very bored.” Now, I’m sure that most of us, if we had a billion dollars could find something interesting to do every single day, 365 days a year, that didn’t involve going to work. But I think what Mr. Chung demonstrates so well is a life with a clear-cut, well-defined, sense of purpose. You see, when you have a deep sense of purpose, you’ll pursue it every day whether it pays a little, a lot, or nothing at all.

My hope this morning, is that as you embrace your identity in Christ, that you’ll discover a deep sense of purpose, even deeper than Mr. Chung’s, but a deep sense of purpose like Jesus’. You see, Jesus knew his purpose, he was driven by that purpose, and so today I want to talk to you about your one primary purpose, that one objective that supersedes everything else. Now, I wish I could tell you what it is and how to put it into practice in a 30 second sound-bite, but it’s not one-size-fits-all, instead it’s custom-made for each one of you. And so, this morning, we’re going to look at some guidelines to help you be “Fully You” as you refine your life’s purpose. Number one, you have a high calling to live up to.

## 1. High Calling

You see, it’s not just preachers and missionaries who have a divine calling. No matter who you are, God has also called you toward a specific purpose. We know this, because when Jesus died and rose again, during those 40 days before he went back to heaven, he gave many directives to his followers. They’re recorded in all four Gospels as well as the Book of Acts, but the most famous of these is known as the Great Commission which is found in Matthew’s Gospel. Now, some Bible scholars suggest that this meeting with the resurrected Jesus was likely the same event which was mentioned in first Corinthians where it says that,

“He appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time…” (1 Corinthians 15:6).

But it was as they gathered together, the 11 remaining disciples, along with all the others, that Jesus gave one of the most detailed, comprehensive, and important life assignment to those of us who call ourselves Christians, to those of us who are disciples of Christ. And in Matthew chapter 28 he said,

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you…” (Matthew 28:19-20).

In other words, what Jesus said was, “While you’re going, as you’re doing life, make disciples of all people.” And so, no matter where you are or what you’re doing, you’re called to be a witness, introducing others to Jesus Christ. Just like Moses told the people of God to talk about these things when you sit at home, when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. No matter who you are or what you’re doing, whether you’re at home, in school, or working, whatever you’re doing is part of God’s calling.

Now, he may be preparing you for something different, but whatever you’re doing today is part of his calling, it’s all part of the process. The best advice I can give you today is to live up to your calling, to do whatever you’re doing with passion and the same level of excellence as if you were working your dream job. That’s why, the apostle Paul encouraged the churches praying for them that,

“God may make you worthy of his calling…” (2 Thessalonians 1:11).

You see, as disciples of Christ we have a high calling and God’s calling is always just a little bigger, better, and more difficult than the one we’d choose for ourselves. We often find ourselves taking the path of least resistance, but God’s calling challenges us to go further, to be better, and that’s why the apostle said to the church at Ephesus,

“I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you’ve received” (Ephesians 4:1).

And so, we need to remember that God has called us to something greater than a life of mediocrity. His calling begins wherever you are right now, doing whatever you’re doing with excellence and integrity, and that’s why the Bible says,

“Whatever you do, work at with all your heart, as working for the Lord and not for men” (Colossians 3:23).

Whatever you do, right here, right now, wherever you are. And then the second part of being “Fully You”, this process of living out your purpose is to recognize that you have some big plans to pursue.

## 2. Big Plans

In other words, you might say that you have some good intentions or some big ideas, but I imagine there are some of you who are wondering just exactly what a disciple is? You know, you may be like that expert in the law who asked Jesus, “Well, who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29). You know, “What is a disciple?” And so, let me describe for you what a disciple is.

I think the most practical definition is that you could say a disciple is like an apprentice, they’re learning from their teacher, they’re shadowing them, identifying with them, and doing life with them. And so, a disciple is much more than a new believer, a church member, or someone wearing a Christ’s Community Church T-shirt. A disciple is more than just someone attending Unashamed Youth. It’s a person who is seeking and hungering for more of God like Elisha who followed the prophet Elijah. In the Old Testament, he wanted to be just like Elijah and so he said,

"Let me inherit a double portion of your Spirit” (2 Kings 2:9).

And so, a disciple is the relationship of one who would follow a master or teacher, adhering to their teachings, kind of like Ruth who told Naomi,

“Where you go, I will go, where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God” (Ruth 1:16).

This was the relationship that Jesus had with his disciples, he called them to follow him, to learn from him, not just by listening, but also by doing. Jesus taught his disciples so that they might be able to teach others like Paul taught Timothy. You see, Timothy was under Paul’s teaching, he learned from him, wanted to be like him and serve God like him. And so, it’s much like the relationship of Mark with Barnabas and Paul who the Bible records took with them…

“John, also called Mark” (Acts 12:25).

He shadowed them and this was the pattern of the New Testament church, disciples wanted to be under Christ’s teaching, memorizing what he said, becoming more like him in every way. And so, as these early believers would do life, they would make disciples, reproducing themselves and sharing the love of Jesus.

Unfortunately, in our culture today we’ve fallen way short of this pattern. Many of us refuse to humble ourselves, to put ourselves in that place as a disciple, and then others of us refuse to take any personal responsibility for making disciples, but the Bible tells us that we have a high calling and some big plans to pursue. And so, how do we get there, how do we get to that place where we take seriously the call to make disciples?

Well, if we’re going to live out our purpose today, if you’re going to be “Fully You”, no matter where you are, or what you’re doing, you’ve got to consider what Christ has done in you. Theologian Frederick Buechner once said,

“The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”

It’s this place of gratitude, of deep gladness, where God calls you and which determines your motivation. This deep gladness inside determines how you spend your time, where you spend your money, and what your priorities are.

And so, as you’re driving home today, as you look at the streets of our community, who can you identify, what is that care, that concern, or that unmet need? What is that opportunity or possibility that most captures your attention? Maybe God’s already been speaking to you, maybe you already know, or maybe this week you’ll discover that person whom you can disciple. I love this prayer from the apostle Paul. He prayed for the believers in Thessalonica and I pray for you, “By his power may God fulfill every good purpose of yours and…

“…every act prompted by your faith” (2 Thessalonians 1:11).

And this is so important, we can’t overlook that phrase “by his power” because in order to live out God’s purpose, to be “Fully You”, you need to understand number three, that your purpose can only be fulfilled through God’s power.

## 3. God’s Power

Now, you can partially fulfill it, you can do your very best, but to be “Fully You” your strength, your purpose, your resources can only be met, only fulfilled through God’s power. For example, in Exodus chapter 3, when God called Moses to lead his people out of Egypt into the promised land, he appeared to him in a burning bush. But because of his past anger management issues and a low sense of self-worth Moses didn’t think that he could do it and so he said,

"Lord, I’ve never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you’ve spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue" (Exodus 4:10).

But God said, "Well, who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the Lord? And so, he told Moses in verse 12,

“Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say” (Exodus 4:12).

In other words, God says, "You can and you will, because my power will work through you." And as we follow the story, we find that God came through for Moses in a big way. He became more confident, a great leader and a mighty prophet of God, but he couldn’t have done any of what he did without the power of God.

In other words, when you consider the opportunities before you to make disciples, you don’t want to look at your abilities, but you want to ask yourself, “What is God wanting to do through me?” And then you respond like Isaiah did saying, "Here am I. Send me!" (Isaiah 6:8). Recognizing that as you are living out your purpose, being “Fully You” it can only be fulfilled through God’s power. That’s why Paul praised God in Ephesians saying that he is,

“…able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us…” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

It’s his power within us, and so, to try to do it without God’s power, would be like the early years of Moses life, when he ended up as fugitive, running from the law, and herding sheep on the backside of nowhere. But if you live, move, and work according to God’s power, you’ll see the miraculous in your life. And like Moses in his later years, you’ll find obstacles parting before you, battles being won, and God’s provision literally falling from heaven.

You see, God’s purpose for your life can only be fulfilled through his power. And so, what that means is that he wants you to surrender to him every day, asking him for the power to do what he wants to do through you, and Jesus promised,

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses…” (Acts 1:8).

Jesus called us to make disciples and many of you know people that God has put in your life that you’re meant to disciple, build up, and encourage. And so, I’d like to encourage you to trust in the promise of Jesus, knowing that he’s able to do immeasurably more than all you ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within you. Opportunities are all around you, you have the promise of the Holy Spirit, the power of God, and the Word of God. You’ve been called for a purpose and one of your most important life assignments is to introduce people to Jesus and help them become more like him.

And so, as we wrap this up, I want to share with you quickly two ways that we can do this, just being really practical. And the first way is that you make disciples by your example. This is what Paul said to the church in Philippi.

“Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you” (Philippians 3:17).

In other words, it’s more than just showing up on Sunday, it’s building relationships with other believers, it happens on Wednesday nights, it happens on Friday nights, it’s Bible study but it’s also so much more. It’s serving, living with purpose, and so as you go, as you’re doing life, you’re purposeful, you’re being an example and then the second thing is that you’re able to encourage and strengthen those around you with your words.

That’s what God told Moses to do. Moses himself was discipling a young man named Joshua and God told him,

“Commission Joshua, encourage and strengthen him, for he will lead the people across the Jordan…" (Deuteronomy 3:28, NLT).

In the same way, you can do that, as you’re doing life, you make disciples with your words. This is living out your purpose, reaching, connecting, and equipping people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. And so, I want to encourage you to be Fully You, being an example, speaking life to your neighbor, your brother or sister, and your coworker, but remembering your dependence upon God’s power.

You see, when Jesus gave the great commission in Matthew chapter 28, he knew that his disciples couldn’t fulfill it in their own power and so he told them to stay in the city until they had been “clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). In Acts chapter 1, Luke records that Jesus gave them this command,

"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:4-5).

In other words, Jesus never expected us to rely on our own ability to do the work of the ministry. He wants to do it through us. So he fills us with the Holy Spirit in order to empower us with his ability. And when we have this experience, the Holy Spirit who is already in us overflows, that’s what’s called “the baptism in the Holy Spirit,” and it simply means to be completely immersed in the Spirit of God. As the Holy Spirit spills out, we begin to experience his supernatural power, and so as we pray we want to seek God allowing the power of Pentecost to fill us.

Let’s bow our heads in prayer.

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