

## THE ONLY FAMILY THAT WILL LAST FOREVER

This Is Us – Rick Warren  
Parts 1-3

*"I will build my church, and all the powers of Hell will not defeat it!"*  
Matthew 16:18 (NLT)

### WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

NOT a building . . . place . . . event . . . Institution

### THE CHURCH IS:

#### • GOD'S

*"I'm writing to you . . . so you will know how to live in the family of God. THAT FAMILY IS THE CHURCH of the living God, the support and foundation of the truth."* 1 Timothy 3:14-15 (NCV)

#### • COMPOSED OF

Jesus: *"Whoever believes in me and is baptized will be saved, but whoever refuses to believe will be condemned."* Mark 16:16

(On the day Jesus began his Church) Peter preached: *"Repent and be baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then God will give you his Holy Spirit!"* Acts 2:38

*"Then those who believed were then baptized and they became part of the church—about three thousand people that day."* Acts 2:41

#### • COMMITTED TO

*"First they gave themselves to the Lord; and THEN, by God's will, they gave themselves to us as well."* 2 Corinthians 8:5

*"You are to be DEVOTED to each other as brothers and sisters in God's loving family."* Romans 12:10

*"In Christ's Body, each MEMBER belongs to all the others."*  
Romans 12:5 (NIV)

*"The members must have the same care for each other. If one member is hurt or suffers, all suffer together; and if one member is honored, all the others are to rejoice. You are the Body of Christ and each one of you is a necessary part of it."* 1 Corinthians 12:25-27 (ESV)

#### • PREPARING

*"You are the church of God's children, whose names are registered in heaven, because you have come to God himself . . . and you have come to Jesus."* Hebrews 12:23

## FIVE OF THE MANY BENEFITS OF BELONGING

### 1. IN GOD'S FAMILY:

*"You are members of God's very own family . . . and YOU BELONG in God's household with every other Christian."* Ephesians 2:19

*"Jesus and the people he makes holy all BELONG to the same family. That is why he isn't ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters."*

Hebrews 2:11 (CEV)

### 2. IN GOD'S TEMPLE:

*"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

*"I want us to help each other with the faith we have. Your faith will help me, and my faith will help you."* Romans 1:12 (NCV)

### 3. IN CHRIST'S BODY:

*"Just as there are many parts to our bodies, so it is with Christ's Body. We are all parts of it, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we BELONG to each other, and each of us needs all the others."* Romans 12:4-5 (TLB)

*"If your foot says, 'I'm not a part of the body because I'm not a hand,' that doesn't make it any less a part of the body. And if your ear says, 'I'm not part of the body because I'm only an ear and not an eye,' would that make it any less a part of the body?"* 1 Corinthians 12:15-16 (NLT)

*"In Christ's Body we're all connected to each other."*  
Ephesians 4:25 (The Message)

### 4. IN GOD'S FLOCK:

*"Take care of God's flock, his people, that you are responsible for. Watch over them because you want to, not because you are forced to do it."*

1 Peter 5:2 (ICB)

*"Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ."* Galatians 6:2 (NLT)

### 5. IN GOD'S GARDEN:

*"A branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful apart from me. I am the vine and you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. But apart from me you can do nothing."* John 15:4-5 (NLT)

*Next Step*

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## WHAT ON EARTH AM I HERE FOR?

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*"It is in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for . . . part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone."*  
Ephesians 1:11 (The Message)

*"Everything, absolutely everything . . . got started in Christ and finds its purpose in him."* Colossians 1:16 (The Message)

### 1. GOD PLANNED ME \_\_\_\_\_

*"You God created everything, and it is for your pleasure that they exist and were created!"* Revelation 4:11

*"The Lord takes pleasure in his people."* Psalm 149:4 (GNT)

*"Long before he laid down earth's foundations, God had us in mind, and settled on us as the focus of his love."* Ephesians 1:4 (The Message)

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment."* Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)

*"I don't want your sacrifices—I want your love! I don't want your offerings—I want you to know me!"* Hosea 6:6 (TLB)

THE 1<sup>st</sup> PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
"WORSHIP"

### 2. GOD FORMED ME \_\_\_\_\_

*"God's unchanging plan has always been to ADOPT us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave him great pleasure."*  
Ephesians 1:5 (NLT)

*"God has given us the privilege of being BORN AGAIN so that we are now members of God's own family."* 1 Peter 1:3 (TLB)

*"That family is the church of the living God, the support and foundation of the truth."*  
1 Timothy 3:15 (NCV)

*"Love your spiritual family."* 1 Peter 2:17 (The Message)

THE 2<sup>nd</sup> PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
"FELLOWSHIP"

*"Let us not give up the HABIT OF MEETING TOGETHER . . . instead let us encourage one another."* Hebrews 10:25 (GNT)

### 3. GOD CREATED ME \_\_\_\_\_

*"From the very beginning God decided that those who came to him—and all along he knew who would—should become like his Son."* Romans 8:29 (TLB)

*"We look at the Son and see God's original purpose in everything created."*  
Colossians 1:15 (The Message)

*"In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus."* Philippians 2:5 (NCV)

*"As the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him."*  
2 Corinthians 3:18 (NLT)

THE 3<sup>rd</sup> PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
"DISCIPLESHIP"

*"Let us go on . . . and become mature in our understanding, as strong Christians ought to be."* Hebrews 6:1 (TLB)

*"By now you should be teachers. Instead, you still need someone to teach you!"*  
Hebrews 5:12 (GW)

### 4. GOD SHAPED ME \_\_\_\_\_

*"You shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother's womb."*  
Psalms 139:13 (The Message)

Spiritual Gifts  
Heart  
Abilities  
Personality  
Experiences

*"God made us what we are. In Christ Jesus, God made us to do good works, which he planned in advance for us to live our lives doing."* Ephesians 2:10 (NCV)

*"God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God's many kinds of blessings."* 1 Peter 4:10 (TLB)

THE 4<sup>th</sup> PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO: \_\_\_\_\_  
"MINISTRY"

*"What can I GIVE BACK to God for the blessings he's poured out on me?"*  
Psalms 116:12 (The Message)

### 5. GOD MADE ME \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus: *"In the same way that the Father gave me a mission in the world, I give you a mission in the world."* John 17:18 (The Message)

(Paul) *"I consider that my will be wasted unless I use it to complete my mission and finish the assignment that the Lord Jesus has given to me—to tell everyone the Good News about God's grace."* Acts 20:24

**THE 5<sup>th</sup> PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO: \_\_\_\_\_**  
**“WITNESSING”**

*“The things that you have learned from me I now want you to PASS ON to other reliable people, so that they can pass it all on to even more people.” 2 Timothy 2:2*

*“Through Christ, God has made peace between us and himself, and he gave us the work of telling everyone about the peace we can have with him . . . So we have been sent to speak for Christ!” 2 Corinthians 5:18, 20*

*“God’s people are like trees that bear life-giving fruit. They show their wisdom by saving souls.” Proverbs 11:30*

**THE FIRST CHRISTIANS & CHURCH DID GOD’S PURPOSES**

*“Those who BELIEVED . . . were BAPTIZED and ADDED to the church . . . They JOINED with the other believers and COMMITTED themselves to the apostles’ TEACHING AND FELLOWSHIP . . . they SHARED everything with each other and they WORSHIPED together regularly at the Temple . . . and met in GROUPS in homes . . . and every day the Lord added to their number those who were being SAVED!” Acts 2:41-47*

**NOTE THE ORDER:**

1. God wants me to **BELIEVE** in Jesus
2. Next, he wants me to be **BAPTIZED**
3. **JOIN** the **MEMBERSHIP** of a church family
4. Commit to regular **WORSHIP**
5. Connect to a small group **FELLOWSHIP**
6. Start serving in some **MINISTRY**
7. **BRING** my friends and neighbors to Christ

*Next Steps*

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## HOW GOD GROWS OUR FAITH

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Part 1

“The apostles said, ‘Lord, increase our faith!’” Luke 17:5

“Without faith, it is impossible to please God.” Hebrews 11:6

Jesus: “According to your faith will it be done to you!” Matthew 9:29

“Let your roots grow down into him and draw up nourishment, so that you will grow in faith, strong and vigorous.” Colossians 2:7 (NLT)

### 2 WAYS GOD GROWS OUR FAITH

#### 1. THROUGH \_\_\_\_\_

“Faith comes from hearing God’s message, and God’s message is heard through THE WORD of Christ.” Romans 10:17 (NIV)

#### 2. THROUGH \_\_\_\_\_

“When your faith is tested, your character has a chance to grow.” James 1:3

### 4 TESTS

#### 1. GOD TESTS & GROWS OUR FAITH THROUGH \_\_\_\_\_

“‘I know what I’ve planned for you,’ says the Lord. ‘I have good plans for you. I don’t plan to hurt you. I plan to give you hope and a good future!’” Jeremiah 29:11 (ICB)

“God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams!” Ephesians 3:20 (The Message)

- TO GROW IN FAITH, I MUST LEARN TO \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. GOD TESTS & GROWS OUR FAITH THROUGH \_\_\_\_\_

“These things that I plan for you won’t happen right away. Slowly, steadily, surely, the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass. Just be patient! They will not be overdue a single day!” Habakkuk 2:3 (TLB)

“God acts on the behalf of those who wait for him.” Isaiah 64:4

- TO GROW IN FAITH, I MUST LEARN TO \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. GOD TESTS & GROWS OUR FAITH THROUGH \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus: “If you can’t wisely handle worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches of heaven?” Luke 16:11

Paul to Christians: “You do everything better than anyone else. You have stronger faith . . . so you must give more generously than anyone else.” 2 Corinthians 8:7 (CEV)

Jesus: “Give, and God will give it back to you. You’ll receive a full measure—pressed down, shaken together, running over, and spilling into your lap! For with whatever measure you use to give, it will be measured back to you.” Luke 6:38 (NIV)

- TO GROW IN FAITH, I MUST LEARN TO \_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. GOD TESTS & GROWS OUR FAITH THROUGH \_\_\_\_\_

“Dear friends, do not be surprised when you suffer painful troubles. These things are testing your faith. So do not think that something strange is happening to you.”

1 Peter 4:12 (ICB)

“These trials and troubles are only to test your faith, to show that it is strong and pure. It is being tested as fire purifies gold—and your faith is far more precious to God than mere gold.” 1 Peter 1:7 (NLT)

“Then Jesus told them plainly, ‘Lazarus has died, but I’m glad that I wasn’t there so that you can grow in faith. Let’s go to Lazarus!’” John 11:14-15

- TO GROW IN FAITH, I MUST LEARN TO \_\_\_\_\_

### Next Steps

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