

# ON PURPOSE

GOD BLESSES ON PURPOSE

On Purpose | *Giving* | Chad Bruegman | 1.22.17

LG Weekly

## START.

To get things started, go around the circle and answer this question:

**When you have free time, what is your favorite thing to do and why?**

## SHARE.

Welcome to our series “On Purpose.”

*God blesses with a purpose. What we have in life was given to us for a reason. Think for a moment about what God has given to you (besides a relationship with Him, which is the best thing). He has given each of us time, abilities, and resources that we get to choose how to use.*

*There is a purpose behind the blessing of time. God has granted us a window of time to walk upon this earth, to get to know Him better, and to make an impact with our lives. We can ‘on purpose’ use our time for things that matter, or we can choose to waste it away.*

*There is a purpose behind the talents and abilities you have. You have been hard-wired with abilities that are unique and special. For some, abilities to teach, discern, write, paint, design, create music ... for others, abilities to devour books, make money, run companies or excel in sports. These are all God-given, and He allows us to choose whether we use those abilities to build His kingdom or our own kingdoms.*

*Finally, we have been blessed, ‘on purpose,’ with resources. It can sometimes be difficult to see that our resources are God-given, but when we really think about it, how did we earn those resources? The answer is: by our God-given talents, abilities, and time! Through these, God made us able and capable to earn a*

*living, which enables us to purchase the things we enjoy. When we look around at what we own – our homes, cars, bank accounts, bikes, boats, furniture, etc.; these are amazing things that we get to steward. It's our prerogative to choose if and how we purposefully bless others with what we have been given. We can open our homes, pick people up in our cars, bike with others, or give away things someone else might need. We can honor God in giving our resources toward building His Kingdom, or we can hoard them for ourselves. It is our choice.*

This week, Chad continued our series talking about our finances and what that all has to do with God. We believe that scripture unapologetically points to the fact that all we have has been given to us by God and with that comes a responsibility to give back to God. Let's be clear: God does not need anything from us, but desires for us to have a heart after his and to seek first his kingdom; not our own. Throughout this series, we are continually revisiting our theme verse:

*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

*Matthew 6:33*

So how do we seek first God's kingdom with our finances? What does that look like in the lives of those who follow Jesus? There are a lot of other things that most of us would prefer God teach us than the principles of first fruits. Maybe teach us about relationships ... serving ... prayer ... forgiveness ... but finances? That hits home. Giving our first and best to God doesn't feel practical when it comes to money. That is because it is a principle first which then flows into the practical. It's about trusting God and walking with him with the understanding that God knows the best way for us to live and to live the most abundant life possible. Like all principles, they can touch and transform all areas of our life.

Let's read Matthew 11:28-30

In the message, Chad described what a remarkably efficient technology it was for farmers to have cattle working together or being yoked together. They were able to get more accomplished, in less time with more power and more energy left over. It helped the farmer and the cattle work together and not waste time and energy.

**Jesus asks us to take his yoke on and learn from him. What is Jesus wanting for us according to Scripture?**

**When we follow Jesus, the burden is light and actually produces ‘rest for your souls.’ If you have experienced this, how would you best describe rest for your soul?**

## **G R O W**

In the previous section, someone may have shared a story of how being yoked with Jesus has changed their life. It is the great irony; when we are weary and burdened down, the last thing we want is to go ahead and add some kind of ‘religious’ burden. We are over-burdened already! But God’s kingdom works differently. Jesus promises to exchange the heavy burden and weariness with a light burden and rest. It is a great exchange, but requires that we trust what Jesus says is completely true and where he leads is the best possible path for our lives, and that includes how we steward our finances. Jesus, the master teacher, taught about what is the core issue when it comes to money and it isn’t the condition of your bank account, but the condition of your heart.

Let’s read Matthew 6:19-24

In *Wiersbe’s expository outlines on the New Testament (1992)*, Warren Wiersbe expounds on how what we focus on reveals more about our heart condition than anything else.

Christ states several reasons why living for material things is foolish. For one thing, material things do not last. Fabrics were treasured by Jews, yet moths ruin them. Rust ruins metal; thieves steal riches. But treasure used for God’s glory is invested in heaven where it lasts eternally. The way people use wealth is an indication of the condition of their hearts. If we spend our time and money only on business, and neglect God, then our hearts are in business and not fixed on God. Compare Abraham and Lot in Gen. 13:5-18 for an illustration of the “single eye.” The eye here speaks of the outlook of the heart. A single eye means one that is fixed on the spiritual. It is the opposite of the double-minded person in James 1:8; 4:4, 8. “Evil” in v. 23 means the opposite of simple; it suggests a sinful outlook, a double vision. In v. 24 Jesus clearly tells us that we cannot look in two directions at one time, serve two masters, and live for God and material wealth. The Bible does not condemn the possession of wealth, but it does warn against the love of money and the wrong use of wealth (see 1 Tim. 6:9-10, 17-18; Heb. 13:5; Luke 16:1-31).

**Can you relate to this kind of internal heart struggle of trying to look in two different directions simultaneously?**

**If you have made a decision to put God first with your finances, could you share your story and maybe what God has done in your life as you have been obedient in giving?**

**Equally important, many of us have practical issues, doubts, previous church baggage, or just simple questions about giving. Are you willing to share some of your hang-ups when it comes to giving and why it is difficult for you?**

## **M O V E**

As Chad mentioned in the message this week, God doesn't just want you to do what he says, He wants us to want what He wants. When we want what God wants, we desire to do what he says because we know it is the best possible way to live. Ask any parent - we don't want our kids just to do what we say, we want them to want to do the right thing. Parents desire that change to happen in the heart of their child; not an external begrudging obedience. It is the same with God. It is the heart he is after, not behavior modification. Our hope is that this study will encourage you to begin praying and studying more regarding giving, asking more questions and processing how it applies to your life. For others, we hope that this encourages those who faithfully give and that we should never lose the joy in giving back to God.

Let's finish today with reading through examples of what God says about giving our first fruits back to God.

Have people in the group pick a verse and read aloud. During the reading, write a word or phrase that stands out to you in each verse:

- Genesis 18:20
- 2 Chronicles 31:5
- Leviticus 27:30
- Exodus 13:2
- Nehemiah 10:35
- Ezekiel 44:30
- Romans 11:16
- 1 Corinthians 15:20
- Genesis 4:3-5
- Matthew 6:33

**What do you think the common principle is from both these old and new testament verses?**

**Equally important, many of us have practical issues, doubts, previous church baggage, or just simple questions about giving. Are you willing to share some of your hang-ups when it comes to giving and why it is difficult for you?**

**Is there a next step you need to take in stewarding your finances?** (*pray about it, read more about it, start giving, making a plan, etc.*)

**An important note about today's study:** *Giving is not a salvation issue. Regardless of whether you tithe or not, you are loved by God and welcome at Red Rocks Church. Our hope for this study is to help remind all of us of the goodness of God -- that he so loved us that he gave his one and only son. We give because we follow his example of love; not out of compulsion or fear. If you have more questions about giving, talk to your Life Group Leader or Campus Pastor. We love that you came to Life Group today!*

## **P R A Y**

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

## **T O G O**

### **Psalm 9:10**

*Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.*