

**THE PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE**  
*Or, The Forty Weeks of Purpose*  
**A Sermon Series Based on the Book by Rick Warren**  
**Message Nineteen (Week Eighteen): Experiencing Life Together**  
**Dr. Greg Tyree, BBC, AM, August 29, 2004**

**INTRODUCTION:** Three men are stranded on an island, with no hope of being rescued. Deprived of water and food, they are on the verge of dying, when one man falls back on the ground, and his hand hits something “hard” under the sand.

He digs a little and discovers that he has found a lamp, the kind that “genies” live in. With nothing to lose, he rubs it and hopes for the best. To his surprise, a genie does come out, and offers the three of them one wish each, totaling the obligatory three wishes.

The first man says, “I wish I was back home in New Jersey eating a big meal with my family.” The second one says, “I wish I was back home in Chicago eating a big meal with my family.”

The third one, who now misses his two buddies, says, “I wish my two friends were back here with me!”

\*\*\*\*\*

Life is meant to be shared.

Real fellowship is so much more than just showing up at services; it is experiencing God together.

\*\*\*\*\*

Key Text: Col. 3:15:

*And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.*

\*\*\*\*\*

This is essentially a sermon about “small groups” (expand). In my first church we started with 19 people. Someone said, “We ought to start a ‘small group’ program.” I said, “But we *are* a small group!”

**PROPOSITION:** People experience four things when there is *real* fellowship.

## ***I. IN REAL FELLOWSHIP PEOPLE EXPERIENCE AUTHENTICITY.***

- A. Authentic Fellowship is ***Intense***.
- B. Authentic Fellowship is ***Infrequent***.
- C. Authentic Fellowship is ***Indispensable*** (Crucial, Essential, Vital, Necessary, Obligatory, Central, Very Important, Key). 1 John 1:7, 8.

*<sup>7</sup>But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. <sup>8</sup>If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

## ***II. IN REAL FELLOWSHIP PEOPLE EXPERIENCE AFFINITY*** ***(Mutuality).***

- A. Note the ***Model*** for Mutual Fellowship. 1 Cor. 12:12-31.

*<sup>12</sup>For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. <sup>13</sup>For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. <sup>14</sup>For in fact the body is not one member but many. <sup>15</sup>If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? <sup>16</sup>And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? <sup>18</sup>But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. <sup>19</sup>And if they were all one member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. <sup>21</sup>And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” <sup>22</sup>No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. <sup>23</sup>And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, <sup>24</sup>but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, <sup>25</sup>that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. <sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. <sup>28</sup>And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. <sup>29</sup>Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? <sup>30</sup>Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all*

interpret? <sup>31</sup>But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

There are essentially four “views” of “spiritual gifts.”

1. There are no such thing as “spiritual gifts” (expand).
2. Every Christian has *all* the spiritual gifts (expand).
3. Each Christian receives any one or more of the spiritual gifts *when* he or she needs them (expand).
4. Each and every Christian, at conversion, receives *certain* spiritual gifts for his or her lifetime (expand).

There are essentially twelve (12) spiritual gifts that fall into four categories (2 Cor. 12:27, 28; Eph. 4:11, 12; Romans 2:6-8):

1. Speaking Gifts.
  - a. Prophecy (Preaching).
  - b. Teaching.
  - c. Evangelism.
2. Serving Gifts.
  - a. Shepherding.
  - b. Serving (Hospitality).
  - c. Administration (Leadership).
3. Sensitive Gifts.
  - a. Mercy.
  - b. Giving.
  - c. Encouragement.
4. Sign Gifts.
  - a. Miracles (Signs and Wonders).

- b. Tongues.
- c. Interpretation of Tongues.

(A. Note the **Model** for Mutual Fellowship. 1 Cor. 12:12-31.)

B. Note the **Mandate** for Mutual Fellowship. Rom. 14:19.

*Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.*

C. Note the **Mission** of (for) Mutual Fellowship.

Rick Warren:

“You are not responsible for everyone in the Body of Christ, but you are responsible to them. God expects you to do whatever you can to help them.”

*I. IN REAL FELLOWSHIP PEOPLE EXPERIENCE AUTHENTICITY.*

*II. IN REAL FELLOWSHIP PEOPLE EXPERIENCE AFFINITY.*

***III. IN REAL FELLOWSHIP PEOPLE EXPERIENCE AFFIRMATION. Col. 3:12, 3.***

*<sup>12</sup>Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; <sup>13</sup>bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*

“Sympathy” is not the same as “empathy.” (expand)

A. Consider the **Purpose** of Affirmation.

There are two personal and human needs that are met through affirmation (or sympathy):

1. Sympathy Meets the Need for **Appreciation**.
2. Sympathy Meets the Need for **Validation**.

B. Consider the **Points** of Affirmation.

1. The Fellowship of **Sharing**.

2. The Fellowship of **Studying**.
3. The Fellowship of **Serving**.
4. The Fellowship of **Suffering**. Phil. 3:10; Heb. 10:32-34.

Phil. 3:10:

*...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death...*

Heb. 10:32-34:

*<sup>32</sup>But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: <sup>33</sup>partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; <sup>34</sup>for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven.*

***I. IN REAL FELLOWSHIP PEOPLE EXPERIENCE AUTHENTICITY.***

***II. IN REAL FELLOWSHIP PEOPLE EXPERIENCE AFFINITY.***

***III. IN REAL FELLOWSHIP PEOPLE EXPERIENCE AFFIRMATION.***

***IV. IN REAL FELLOWSHIP PEOPLE EXPERIENCE AMNESTY.***

A. Consider the **Imperative** of Forgiveness. 2 Cor. 2:7.

*...so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow.*

B. Consider the **Immediacy** of Forgiveness. Col. 3:13.

*...bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*

C. Consider the **Implication** of Forgiveness.

**Read from Purpose Driven Life, pages 142 and 143.**

***APPLICATION*** (next page):

“Small Groups” as a concept is sort of the “craze” in church trends. But the concept was not conceived by Rick Warren or Bill Hybels or Jacksonville Chapel; it is from the scriptures.

Simply, a true “small group”:

- Consists of at least three people (two people is a “pair,” not a group”) who meet as believers or seekers (or a combination of both)
- Is committed to TEAM:
  - Togetherness
  - Edification
  - Accountability
  - Magnification of Christ

There are many opportunities for you to get involved in small groups. There are essentially two types of small groups:

1) Spontaneous Small Groups (Expand).

- Meeting in the Lobby of the Church
- Informal Home Meetings
- A “Spur-of-the-Moment” Invitation to Coffee
- Etc.

2) Strategic Small Groups (Expand).

- Sunday School
- Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting
- Sunday Evening Worship
- Crossroads Gen-X Ministry
- Choir

- Pastor's Prayer Partners
- Ladies' Prayer Group
- Worship Team
- Home Bible Study Groups
- Ladies' Fellowship
- Men's Fellowship
- Youth Group
- AWANA Workers
- The Elder Board
- Deaconesses
- Small Groups

The key is to treat strategically what we tend to treat programmatically (expand).

**Point to Ponder:** I need others in my life.

**Question to Consider:** What one step can I take today to connect with another believer at a more genuine, heart-to-heart level?