

13. What are you going to change or do differently as a result of this series? If nothing changes—nothing

#### A PERSONAL COVENANT

Before God, and in His strength, I prayerfully commit myself to the following changes in the area of:

- A) **Worship**
- B) **Fellowship**
- C) **Discipleship**
- D) **Ministry**
- E) **Mission**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*'Living  
with  
Purpose'*

*'Being Partners in God's eternal plan'*

TERM 3, 2005

# ST ALBAN'S PRESS 'Living with Purpose'

We live in a world that is moving at a very fast pace. One of the consequences of this is that it is often difficult to find time to be still and reflect on what is going on in your life and in the world around you.

Am I actually doing what I want with my life? Does what I am doing have any meaning?

One of the possible consequences of this is that we tend to make decisions quickly with little thought going into them. The result can be that, well down the path of life we finally have an opportunity to stop and only then do we realise that our life is out of control or heading in the wrong direction.

Taking time to think about the purpose of your life will always be a helpful thing to do. Unfortunately it tends to be limited to our teenage years, then again perhaps in mid-life and then finally in old age as we reflect back on the journey we have taken.

If we happen to think about it outside these transition points in life, we often despair on how difficult it would be to change anything and so return to the unsatisfying but familiar rat race!

This series of studies aims to help you think through what it means to live a life that is rich in meaning and purpose.

Ideally those using this study booklet will hear the sermons on Sunday, work through the bible study booklet in a small group each week and also read the book 'The Purpose Driven Life', by Rick Warren. The book is a complement to the sermons and bible study booklet. It is suggested you read a chapter a day and follow the 40 day reading plan opposite.

May this series help us all to know, perhaps in a way that we never have before, what it means to live with purpose under the mighty hand of God and then to get on with the business

- 11. Prayer is a critical aspect to the fulfilment of our mission to reach the world for Christ. See Col. 4.2-6  
Why is prayer so important? What keeps us from praying for the lost? Don't we believe they are lost?  
**List three non-believers you are going to pray for!**  
Commit to praying for them for one year & keep inviting them to gospel events at St Alban's!

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- 12. One of the great joys of being a child of God is that we get to share in what God is doing in the world in the fulfilment of his purposes through Christ. When we are not aligned with God's purposes our lives are a waste!

Rick Warren suggests you write a purpose statement for your life. There are some examples on p317 PDL. Try to write one and share it with the group or simply complete this statement.

The purpose of my life is \_\_\_\_\_

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## Read 2 Corinthians 5.11-21

8. What motivated Paul for mission?

What motivates you? Are you lacking in motivation? Why?

9. The gulf between our church and the community continues to widen. Take time in your group to 'brainstorm' practical ways or activities you could initiate or be part of to reach your peers with the good news of the gospel. Is there an activity or event that your group could run? Be creative but keep thinking—will it lead to the gospel?

10. Rick Warren says, '*A great commitment to the great commandment and the great commission will make a great Christian.*' PDL p306 Do you agree? Is this a helpful way to think about our life, its mission and purpose?

How do you reconcile the fact that most Christians are in secular employment and yet are meant to be committed to God's mission? Are the two irreconcilable?

of doing it for his glory.

*Michael*

<b>Week 1: What on Earth am I Here for? (Introduction)</b>	<b>Week 4: You were created to become like Christ (Discipleship)</b>
15/8: It all starts with God	5/9: Created to Become Like Christ
16/8: You are Not an Accident	6/9: How we Grow
17/8: What drives Your Life?	7/9: Transformed by Truth
18/8: Made to Last Forever	8/9: Transformed by Trouble
19/8: Seeing life from God's view	9/9: Growing Through Temptation
20/8: Life is a Temporary Assignment	10/9: Defeating Temptation
21/8: The Reason for Everything	11/9: It Takes Time
<b>Week 2: You Were Planned for God's Pleasure (Worship)</b>	<b>Week 5: You Were Shaped for Serving God (Ministry)</b>
22/8: Planned for God's pleasure	12/9: Accepting your Assignment
23/8: What makes God Smile?	13/9: Shaped for Serving God
24/8: The Heart of Worship	14/9: Understanding your Shape
25/8: Becoming Best Friends with God	15/9: Using What God Gave You
26/8: Developing Your Friendship with God	16/9: How Real Servants Act
27/8: Worship that Pleases God	17/9: Thinking Like a Servant
28/8: When God seems distant	18/9: God's Power in Your Weakness
<b>Week 3: You Were Formed for God's Family (Fellowship)</b>	<b>Week 6: You Were Made for a Mission (Mission)</b>
29/8: Formed for God's Family	19/9: Made for a Mission
30/8: What Matters most	20/9: Sharing Your Life Message
31/8: A Place to belong	21/9: Becoming a World Class Christian
1/9: Experiencing Life Together	22/9: Balancing Your Life
2/9: Cultivating Community	23/9: Living with Purpose
3/9: Restoring Broken Fellowship	
4/9: Protecting Your Church	

## Purpose Driven Life 40 Day Reading Plan

### Study 1.

### *Living with Purpose*

#### 'WHAT ON EARTH AM I HERE FOR?'

1. Do you think people take the time to consider their purpose in life and therefore make intentional decisions about what they are living for? Why? Why not?
2. Do you think people tend to define their purpose in terms of what they do or who they are, or something else?

#### Read Genesis 1.26-2.3

3. What do these verses have to teach us about ourselves, our relationships and our purpose?

#### Read Psalm 139.1-16

4. How do these verses further heighten the value of a human life?
5. What would you say to someone who said, 'My life was a mistake?' or 'I am just an accident of nature?'
6. Rick Warren in Purpose Driven p28-29 says many people's lives are driven by guilt, anger, fear, materialism and the need for approval. Do you agree? Can you sight examples?

3. Jesus give three imperatives here (commands) - what are they?  
Why are we often so reluctant to 'go'? How can we constructively address this issue?
4. How is making disciples defined for us? Why is this critical? What happens if this aspect of evangelism is not followed through?

#### Read Acts 1.1-11

5. What is the connection between Jesus mission, our mission and what Jesus says here ?
6. If we are to be faithful witnesses for Christ we must be able to share 'our story' of how we came to Christ— simply and clearly. Take time to write out and share a 3 minute testimony.  
A simple outline could be:
  - a. Before you became a Christian describe your life
  - b. How you came to recognise the need for Christ
  - c. What has changed—what difference Jesus has made to your life.
7. People need to see that Christianity 'works'! If someone said, 'Why should I become a Christian?' What would you say?' Try and avoid theological jargon.

**Study 6.*****LIVING WITH PURPOSE*****MADE FOR MISSION—EVANGELISM**

1. It has been said, 'If you don't have anything your willing to die for, you don't have anything worth living for.' Do you agree? Discuss.

William James said, 'The best use of life is to spend it for something that outlasts it.' PDL p285 Is this a helpful suggestion? Why/why not?

**Please note: There is a lot to cover in this chapter so either be efficient or selective or allow more time! Don't avoid Q.6 or 13**

2. Read the following verses. In each of them how does Jesus define or describe his mission?

i. Luke 5.27-32 \_\_\_\_\_

ii. 19.1-10 \_\_\_\_\_

iii. Mark 10.35 — 45 \_\_\_\_\_

What would be the cost of the mission?

In contrast what was the preoccupation of the disciples at this time? Could we be guilty of the same thing?

**Read Matthew 28.16-20**

7. If an independent audit was taken of your life, by say your spouse or a close friend, what would they say drives your life? What is the driving force of your life? Try to be honest!
8. Many Christians seem to lose their 'first love' of Christ with the passing of years. Has this happened to you? What evidence is there that you love Christ as fervently today as when you first believed?

**Read Ecclesiastes 1.1-1-18**

9. What is the writers view of life and the world at this point? Do you agree?

**Read Ecclesiastes 3.1-15**

10. The 'Teacher' identifies a number of other features of life in this passage, what are they?

v1. \_\_\_\_\_

v11a \_\_\_\_\_

11b. \_\_\_\_\_

v13. \_\_\_\_\_

Is this helpful or not as we seek to understand our purpose?

**Read Ecclesiastes 12.1-14**

11. After much searching what is the 'Teachers' conclusion as to how life should be lived?

So how would you conclude the following sentence?

'My life will have purpose and meaning when \_\_\_\_\_

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Our purpose in life is undeniably tied up with being in relationship with God, who created us to know him and enjoy him forever. But how is such a relationship established? This is critical!

**Read Romans 5.6-11**

12. What does this tell us about our standing before God?

What has God done about it?

What can we do?

How does our status change through Christ?

13. Conclusion: We were created for a meaningful eternal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. This being the case is there one thing I should **stop** doing in my life today and perhaps one thing I should **start** doing?
14. What impact should having a clear understanding of our purpose have on the way we approach our work, our

**E**.xperience...what experiences have you had?

Take time to think about each of these and see if you can identify an area of ministry in which you should consider serving in - if you are not already?

It may be helpful to ask others in your group what gifts you have and what area of ministry you might be suited to.

**Read Mark 10.35-45 and Philipians 2.1-11**

10. How does Jesus define greatness? Why do Christians not aspire more readily to this sort of greatness?
11. When we serve in the life of the church who are we doing it for? What difference should that understanding make?

What would you say to someone who said, 'I am giving up on that ministry—no one appreciated me—I didn't feel valued.'

12. In ministry it's not just what you do but the way that you do it! What does Jesus' example (Phil. 2) have to teach us about ministry?

5. Why are there no grounds for complaining about your gift or not using it?

**Read 1 Corinthians 12.12-31**

6. What are some of the consequences when part of your physical body stops working, even if temporarily?
7. Are there any parts of the body at St Alban's that are not functioning as they should?
- Do we give greater honour to certain parts over others?  
Which?
8. It is reliably said that 20% of the people do 80% of the ministry in the church. Why is that so? If people are inactive in the life of the church, what can be done to encourage them to serve?
9. Rick Warren talks about the need to discover your shape. p236 PDL
- S**..piritual Gifts ...what gifts has God given you?
- H**..eart....what do you have a heart for?
- A**..bilities....what are you good at doing?
- P**..ersonality...how has God wired you up?

family—everything?  
**Study 2**

***Living with Purpose***

**YOU WERE PLANNED FOR GOD'S  
PLEASURE—WORSHIP!**

1. John Piper says, 'God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.'  
That is a profound statement that is worthy of substantial contemplation!
- What activities or things do you find satisfaction in?
- Are they more satisfying than your relationship with God?  
If they are does that mean something is wrong?  
How then do you understand Pipers statement?

**Read Romans 12.1-2**

2. On what basis does Paul suggest we should respond to God by offering ourselves to him?
3. How does Paul define 'worship' for us in these verses?
- Is this different from how we usually think about the worship of God?

4. If we are to live lives that are holy and pleasing to God what two things must we do? v2

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

Why is it impossible to do one without the other?

5. What is the pattern of this world that Paul is referring to?

How do we see people conforming to the world?

6. How does the transforming of ones mind take place?  
Can you give examples of how this takes place in your life?

Can you think of things that are a hindrance to the transforming of your mind?

7. Rightly understood worship is all about pleasing God, not pleasing ourselves.

If we grasp this, how will it affect the way we come to:

a. Church on Sunday

b. Work on Monday

## Study 5.

## *Living with Purpose*

### SHAPED FOR SERVING GOD—MINISTRY

1. Summarize our series so far. My life will have purpose when .....

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. It seems that in most volunteer organizations it is increasingly difficult to get people to 'do their bit'. Is this an issue in the church? If so, why do you think that is the case?

### Read 1 Corinthians 12.4-11

3. Why is serving in the life of the local church essential to fulfilling my God given purpose for life?

Who is the 'common good' in view? v7

4. What would you say to someone who said, 'My ministry is my job during the week as social worker—I don't have time to serve in the church.'?

8. How do you explain v25? What does it mean to keep in step with the Spirit?

**Read 2 Timothy 3.10-17**

9. What is the place of scripture in our journey to become like Jesus?

Why does living a godly life of necessity lead to being persecuted? v12 Does it have to be so? See John 15.18-21

**Read John 15.1-12**

10. These verses take us back to the image of fruit.

According to these verses what is the key to bearing fruit?

What fruit seems to be particularly in view?

11. What is the connection between obedience, love, bearing fruit and the word?
12. None of us like change but God is committed to transforming us. Is there anything in your life that you need to do or stop doing in order to speed up the process?

8. How would you respond to the person who said, 'What did you get out of the service on Sunday?'

What makes for a good time of worship on a Sunday?

9. In an age that wants to be entertained or have 'feel good' services on Sunday how can we encourage one another to see that our Sunday services are about giving, not getting and about pleasing God not ourselves?

**Read Mark 12.28-34**

10. These verses remind us of the two great commandments. What is the connection between worship and obedience?

**Read John 4.21-26**

11. Jesus says true worshippers, worship in spirit and truth.

What is he referring to by:

a. in spirit

b. truth

12. What needs to change in order for your whole life to be more a spiritual act of worship?

**Study 3.**

***‘Living with Purpose’***

**YOU WERE FORMED FOR GODS’ FAMILY**

1. List the privileges, the joys and responsibilities which come with being born in a human family.

**Read Ephesians 2.11-22**

2. In this passage Paul makes an incredible comparison between our position before we became Christians and after. List them from verses

**Before** we were....

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**After**.....

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What strikes you about our position ‘before’?

**Consider Romans 5.1-5**

Justification is the theological term used to describe our standing before God based on what Jesus has done. Once we have repented and invited Jesus to rule our lives we are justified before God. Sanctification on the other hand is the life long process of becoming like Christ.

How could you tell if someone is committed to becoming like Christ? What would be the signs?

**Read Galatians 5.16-26**

5. What conflict does Paul identify in v16-18?

Why is determination not enough to overcome the desires of the sinful nature?

6. Paul says, ‘the acts of the sinful nature are obvious’. Are there any acts of the sinful nature that are NOT quite so obvious? Identify them. Are they any less serious?

7. Consider the fruit of the Spirit. We can’t judge people but we can be fruit inspectors. Do you think any of these are lacking in our church community or your own life? Why might that be the case? What is the solution?

**Study 4.*****Living with Purpose*****CREATED TO BECOME LIKE CHRIST  
- DISCIPLESHIP**

1. When was the last time you changed something significant in your life? Perhaps a bad habit or even an activity you have done for years.  
Why do we find it difficult to change as people or even to change a habit or our schedule? What does this have to say about us?

**Read Romans 8.28-30**

2. According to v28 what is God most committed to when it comes to us as his people?

If God is committed to our good why would he allow pain and suffering in our life?

Why do we struggle to see the painful and sometimes awful experiences of life as part of God's plan for us?

3. How is the good that God has in mind for us (v28) further explained in v29?
4. How can we combat the false thinking amongst many Christians that God is committed to my comfort rather than my character?

3. What do the following have in common—what is the link ? Gentiles, citizenship, foreigners, members, household, building?

How do you explain the modern phenomenon of individualised Christianity when the biblical position is clearly one of corporate privilege and corporate responsibility?

4. We all like the idea of peace but what does it mean that Jesus is 'our peace'? Explain it in your own words.

**Read Colossians 3.12-17**

5. List all the things we are meant to do as God's family together.

Which of these do we *most* struggle to do individually and as a church community? Why?

6. Rick Warren in his book PDL p136 says, *'The difference between being a church attender and a church member is commitment. Attenders are spectators from the sidelines, members get involved in ministry. Attenders are consumers, members are contributors. Attenders want the benefits of a church without sharing the responsibility.'*

Do you agree? Do you think we have more attenders than members at St Alban's? How do you explain it?

7. What can be done to help an attender become a member?

8. Being a member of a church community takes time. If we are not willing to give time to church attendance, building relationships and serving in the church can you still be called a Christian?

Why is it dangerous to be in such a position?

### **Read Hebrews 10. 19-25**

9. What does this passage exhort 'us' to do?

10. What practical actions can we take to *'spur one another on toward love and good deeds.'*?

11. We live in a community where large numbers of people are private school/church school educated. Many would say they are Christians or at the very least appreciate Christian values but see the church and church attendance as irrelevant. How do you explain that?

What can be done to make a greater connection?

12. If being a Christian is all about being in God's family, the Church, what positive steps can we/you take to make it a better family experience at St Alban's?

**Read Revelation 7.9-17** for a glimpse of our glorified heavenly family.

13. If our heavenly family - the church is eternal and our earthly family lasts only for this life, why do so many Christians struggle to give priority to the eternal over the earthly? Should they?

If one cannot be ignored at the expense of the other how do we get the balance right?