



**A PLACE TO BELONG ~ Week 4 of 8
A Place To Find Purpose**

This is week four of our 8 part-series, **A Place To Belong**. If you missed the first three you can find them on our website at WWW.WaikoloaCC.org. You can also find them on our YouTube Channel. You can actually subscribe to either of those, or both, and receive an email every time a new message is uploaded. Incidentally, you can also subscribe to my daily Hawaiian Word Devotional Blog on the website as well. Each day I explore a different 'Oleo Hawai'i word as well as a Scripture that is on the same topic. Then I share a couple of paragraphs devotional for you to start or end you day on. I'd love for you to check it out, let me know what you think, subscribe and share the posts with your friends on social media.

So, far in this series, we have talked about how Waikoloa Community Church is **A Place to Find Love** ~ **A Place to Find Acceptance** and **A Place to Find Forgiveness**. Today, in the finale of the the first half of this series, we're going to talk about how this is also **A place to Find Purpose**. You know, everything has a purpose. The purpose of a hammer is to hit nails. The purpose of a fridge is to keep food cold and delay it from spoiling. The purpose of a book is to be read. And every human being has a purpose as well. In fact, I would say that the two greatest days of your life are the day you were born, and the day you find out why, the day you find out what your purpose is. Knowing something's purpose is vital to making sure it is used in the right way. Not knowing the purpose of something can lead to some tragic consequences.

Consider the young man who knew his mother was lonely but he lived far away from her. She was sad and really needed companionship. Then, he learned of a **special parrot** that had a vocabulary of over 4,000 words, could speak in numerous languages and sing 3 operatic arias. It wasn't cheap. In fact, the cost of the bird was \$50,000, his entire life savings, but he decided his mother was worth it. So, he immediately bought the bird and had it delivered to his mother. The next day he phoned to see if she had received the bird. He asked, "Mom, what did you think of the bird? Do you like it?" She replied: "Oh, thank you son! I loved it! It was delicious!" You see why finding purpose is so important, yeah? If someone doesn't know your purpose they might eat you.

Some of you were here for my previous message series ~ **THE GAP** ~ and you remember I shared a couple of Scriptures by Paul about your purpose. I'll just briefly paraphrase them this morning. Ephesians 1:3-4 tells us that: **God Intentionally Chose To Create You Just The Way You Are**. This wonderful Scriptural truth reminds me of the the chorus of the great Bruno Mars song, Just The Way You Are. He sings:

When I see your face, there's not a thing that I would change
'Cause you're amazing, Just the way you are
And when you smile, The whole world stops and stares for a while
'Cause you're amazing, Just the way you are

That's how God feels about you! God loves you so much that He **CHOSE** you **BEFORE** the foundation of the world! Remember, this means even before Genesis 1:1, even before God created the heavens and the earth, He chose ... **YOU!** How does that make you feel?!? It blows **ME** away.

Paul also shared with us in Ephesians 2:10 that **You Are God's Poetry In Motion**, that you were created to accomplish specific good works as you follow Christ. You are not a cosmic accident! You are **EXACTLY** who God thought, designed, purposed and created you to be. Furthermore, God has decided to include you in His work. Stop for a minute and let that soak in. God, as you can imagine, has a pretty massive **to do list**. You think you're to do list is long? Pssssh! You have no idea. There are all kind of things God wants to accomplish every single day and, whatever His reasons, He has decided to do a **LOT** of it, through people like you and me. God has delegated some very specific things to each of us that He wants us to accomplish.

I mean, really think about that for a second. Wrap your brain around this astounding thing. God could have designed His plan to run His universe and save humanity any way He wanted to. He is infinite, almighty, omnipotent and omniscient. He could have done all of it completely without us being involved. **God doesn't NEED us to accomplish His plans. But God CHOSE us to be a part of His plan anyway.** When this age is done and the new age begins, when God creates a new heaven and a new earth we will be there. We get to share in the celebration of the redemption of a huge number of people in the human race. God said "I want this to be a Team Effort celebration!" That is pretty awesome, yeah?!?

So, maybe you are hearing this today and asking, “Tell me Pastor G, what is MY purpose? I’ll bite. I believe you that I have a specific purpose in life and you have told me this morning that Waikoloa Community Church is **A Place To Find Purpose**, A Place To Find My Purpose. So, show it to me! What is MY purpose? Why am I here on this earth?” If you are ready for the answer to that question let me hear you say “HIT ME WIT’ IT G! I’M READY!” This morning I am going to share with you that you actually have, not one, not two, not three but **you actually have FOUR Purposes in life** and I’ll tell you what they are.

1) You have an **ETERNAL PURPOSE!**

This is actually a SHARED purpose that we ALL have, but it is not your ONLY purpose. We’ll get to your other three purposes in a few minutes. First, though, let’s talk about this mutually shared eternal purpose we all have. Why did God create human beings? God is perfect, lacking nothing. He already existed in community as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. So it wasn’t that He was lonely and needed to create some friends. So why were we created? The Bible is very consistent in it’s teaching about this. **We were created to give God glory.** That is our eternal purpose. We were created to be in relationship with God and to give Him the glory He deserves. Look at Isaiah 43:7

Everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made.” ~ Isaiah 43:7

Although the specific context of this passage is in reference to the nation of Israel, this is true of all human beings. We were all created for God’s glory. To bring glory to God is to exalt him, to lift Him up and to give Him praise. It means to live our lives in such a way that we don’t bring dishonor to Him or to His name. We are His ambassadors to the world. We represent Him. And it is not just human beings that were created for this ultimate, eternal purpose. It is all of Creation. Look at Psalm 19:1

*The heavens are telling of the glory of God;
And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. ~ Psalm 19:1*

Isaiah 6:3 tells of glorious and magnificent Seraphim angels flying all around the throne room of God as they constantly say:

*“Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory.”
~ Isaiah 6:3*

The angels know their purpose for existing. It is to constantly give glory to God. In fact, every star, every planet, every animal, every plant, every human, every single atom of matter and every single millisecond of time and all of space itself was created by God to point toward Him and to give Him glory. That is your first and foremost purpose for existing. That’s why, when the Pharisees scolded Jesus disciples for glorifying Him during the triumphal entry Jesus answered.

I tell you, if these [people] become silent, the stones will cry out! ~ Luke 19:40

Even the stones exist to bring glory to God! Anybody here today have a Presbyterian Background? Then you have definitely heard of Westminster Shorter Catechism yeah? For those of you who may not know, the Catechism teaches the basics of the Christian faith to new converts and asks a series of faith based questions. We've got kind of our own catechism of sorts here. Annette and I recently completed a **membership class book** that also will serve as the first launching point study for our new Aloha Groups here.

This book walks each group through the foundational truths of Christianity. We'll talk about who God the Father is, who Jesus the Son is, who the Holy Spirit is. How the Trinity functions and how it is possible that God is both Three and One. We'll talk about the origins of sin, how salvation works, how prayer works, what Baptism is and why we do it, what Communion is and why we do it, what heaven is like, and much more. We'll also talk about the beginnings of this local church, how things are structured, how decisions are made, what our core values are, what our mission and vision is for the future and much more. I'd love to take all of you through that study. Often I talk with Christians who know they are Christians but they don't necessarily know what Christians believe or they know what they believe but they don't know why they believe it or they know why they believe it but they don't know how to explain it to someone else. 1 Peter 3:15 tells us

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect... ~ 1 Peter 3:15

That's what this class will help you do. I would love for you to dig deeper with me in this class in the new year. So, back to the Westminster Shorter Catechism. One of the questions which is asked is: **Q: What is the chief end of man?** Does anyone know the official answer? **A: To glorify God and enjoy Him forever.** That's right! To glorify God and enjoy Him forever. This is ultimately why God created every one of us. This is our ultimate purpose for existing. This is why we are on planet earth. God wanted us to bring Him glory and He wanted us to experience His love and joy. He wanted a relationship with us as Creator and Creation.

Your primary, eternal purpose is to know, love, enjoy and especially to glorify God. You were made by God, for God, and until you realize that, nothing else in life is ever going to make any sense. Without God, there is no you. You can't live your life apart from God. The only reason you have life to begin with IS God! God IS life itself. So that is one purpose that we ALL have, the exact same purpose. To glorify God. There is another purpose we ALL share.

2) You have a KINGDOM PURPOSE!

Because you have become a follower of Jesus, you have joined God's family business. What's the family business? Rescuing as many lost souls as possible before the clock runs out on this world. Your Kingdom Purpose is the same as mine and it is to **spread the Gospel**, to do our best to fulfill the Great Commission in our lifetime.

In Mark 16:15 Jesus told the original disciples:

Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. ~ Mark 16:15

That word preach doesn't mean what I do up here every Sunday morning. It actually comes from a Greek word that just means "to proclaim." Now, you can proclaim something in many different ways. He's just saying talk about the Good News of the Gospel in your conversations with other people. Share the Gospel that Jesus is the way the truth and life and the bridge to eternal life. So, that command to preach the Gospel applies to every single follower of Christ, not just professional pastors. Jesus' purpose was the redemption of as many human beings as possible. When He ascended back to the Father, He assigned that purpose to all of His followers to carry on. I know for a fact this your second purpose. It is vital for you and me to work to fulfill this purpose! If we don't do it, people will not receive eternal life with God. Look at what Paul wrote in Romans 10.

"Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!" ~ Romans 10:13-15

Now, we aren't the original 12 apostles but all of us, as Christ followers have the purpose of being an apostle as well. The Greek word for apostles sounds very similar. It is **apostolos** and it means **sent out ones**. **Apostolos refers to a messenger, an envoy, a delegate, one commissioned by another to represent him in some way**. Jesus has made us His apostles, His sent out ones, responsible for spreading the His Gospel message. So, put yourself back into this Romans 10 passage.

We have been sent by Jesus to preach, to proclaim, to share the good news. If we don't share it, no one will hear it. If they don't hear it, they can't believe it. If they don't believe it, they won't call on Jesus to save them and if they don't call on Jesus to save them they will not be saved.

Jesus came and built the bridge from heaven to earth. He already did the hard work. Our job is easy. We are supposed to make sure people know where that bridge is. But few people seem to know where it is. It is only found through a relationship with Jesus. If we don't tell them they will never understand that. You and I have been chosen by God to tell them! We are the Spiritual Media. We are the Spiritual CNN, the Spiritual Fox News of the universe. There is only one safe way out of this world and it is across the bridge named Jesus Christ. C.S Lewis put our Eternal Purpose and our Kingdom Purpose together in once sentence in this powerful quote.

The glory of God, and, as our only means to glorifying Him, the salvation of human souls, is the real business of life. ~ C.S. Lewis

We are God's PLAN A for spreading the Gospel, and listen, listen, don't miss this. There is NO PLAN B! If you came here this morning to find your purpose, a big part of your purpose is your Kingdom Purpose. You are still alive, you are still here on earth, because there are billions of people who have never heard about who Jesus is or what He has done for us. It is 100% up to you and me to tell them. If we don't tell them then who will? So, again, you have an Eternal Purpose to glorify God, to know Him and love Him better every day. AND you have a Kingdom Purpose to spread the Gospel, the news about Jesus Christ, and to invite other people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus. You have a third purpose as well. I call this your Unique Purpose.

3) You have a UNIQUE PURPOSE!

Recently, I decided to change the way I start conversations with new people I meet. Usually, when you are making that initial chit-chat, someone asks: "So, what do you do for a living?" I think I have found a better question. I want to share it with you. This is my new opener when I meet someone new. **"What have you done in your life that you believe in and you are proud of?"** In fact, I'll ask all of you that question right now and I want to encourage you to think about the answer and maybe even jot it down on your message notes. What have you done in your life that you really believe in and are proud of?

Your answer may be the same thing you do for a living but I doubt it. I bet it is something else. What have you done in your life that you really believe in and are proud of? Second, I want you to prayerfully consider the answer to this question as well: "Do you believe your accomplishment is something God wanted you to do?" Let me ask that one more time, "Do you believe your accomplishment is something God wanted you to do?"

If you have done something in your life that you really believe in and are proud of and you are confident that it was something God wanted you to do, something that God would be happy about seeing you do, then that is a MAJOR clue to your Unique Purpose. Sometimes people tell me they don't believe they have a purpose or if they did they have already fulfilled it, there is nothing else for them to do. Let me tell you a secret. Here is a simple test to see if your purpose on earth is completed yet. Put your fingers on your wrist like this. Feel for your pulse. If you have a pulse then your purpose is not over. If you are wondering if your purpose is over? If you are still alive, it isn't.

God still has something for you to do, that only you can do. Otherwise, He would have already taken you out of here. You would already be dead. You are on this earth for a very specific purpose. No one else exists in the exact same time and space as you do. No one else has the exact same makeup as you, with your gifts, talents, intellect, personality, experiences, passions, pains, scars, dreams, connections, relationships. You are 100% unique. You can do things for the kingdom of God that I could never do.

I can do things for the kingdom of God that you could never do. Every single one of us is vital, indispensable, to the purposes of God on this earth. Let's just talk about one aspect of your unique purpose, your spiritual gifts. If you are a Christian, the Bible says you have at least one Spiritual Gift, an area that you excel in through the supernatural gifting of the Holy Spirit. Look at what Paul says in Romans 12:4-8

For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.
~ Romans 12:4-8

Paul talks about this idea again in 1 Corinthians 12:14-48. He calls some of us hands and some of us feet and some of us eyes. You get the idea. We are all different parts of the Body of Christ.

For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. ~ 1 Corinthians 12:14-18

I want you to pay special attention to that last sentence. Let me read it again. **But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.** Just as He desired. You are a foot because God chose to make you a foot. You are a hand because God chose to make you a hand. You have a specific and unique purpose designed into you by God Himself.

Now, there is more to your unique purpose other than just your spiritual giftedness. We've talked about this before. There are other God designed factors figure into discovering your life purpose as well. We remember them with the acrostic **S.H.A.P.E.**, your God-given shape that you were molded into by the Master Potter, your Creator, God. The S, of course, stands for SPIRITUAL GIFTS that we've already discussed, but equally important to your spiritual gifts is your **HEART** or your passion for things. For example, some people are passionate about music or painting or running or surfing. Others are passionate about working with their hands. Others are passionate about caring for the elderly or caring for children. Others are passionate about mentoring or coaching other people. We all have something that we are uniquely passionate about. That's your Heart!

This goes back to that question I asked you a little bit ago. What have you done in your life that you really believe in and are proud of? I guarantee your answer to that question is something you are passionate about. And if you couldn't come up with an answer to that question, maybe it is because you haven't zeroed in on what you are really passionate about yet.

Another aspect of your unique purpose is your natural **ABILITIES**. Some people are naturally athletic, some are great at math or science, some are great at sewing or cooking or playing music or singing or organizing or a million other abilities we could all name. You are great at some things others are terrible at and vice versa. We all have a unique ability makeup.

Also involved in figuring out your unique purpose is your **PERSONALITY**. Different roles in the Kingdom work require different personalities. Some people are extroverts. Some are introverts. Some gather data about decisions using their senses, other tend to go with their gut. Some are driven by feelings, others are more analytical. Some organize using a filing cabinet. Others organize by using piles. There are all kinds of unique factors in your personality, things that make you who you are and speak to your unique purpose and every personality is a God designed, God blessed personality for you. There is no sense in pretending you are someone that you are not. Be the best you that you can be.

Finally, there are your **EXPERIENCES**. We all have thousands of experiences that have shaped us into the person we are. Vocational experiences, educational experiences. Positive experiences, negative experiences, painful experiences. You know, God never wastes a hurt. We have learned something from every one of these experiences and they have all contributed to making us who are. Figuring out this last purpose takes some time and some intentional effort on our part. There is a lot to sort through and filter out to get down to the answer, who, exactly, did God create me to be. Why am I here? What, exactly, did you shape me to be. But it is an answer you can figure out. I promise you, you can find the answer to that question.

A couple of months ago I offered a seminar to you, where I can lead you through some introspection and study that will help you arrive at the answer to this question. What is your unique purpose? What is it, exactly, that God put you on earth, specifically, to do? What is it that you can do, that no one else on earth can do? What in the world are you here for? We call it the S.H.A.P.E. Class. There wasn't much interest in doing that study with me. So we postponed it. I think some of you maybe had already done something similar with Pastor Al several years ago. Or, maybe you all already know the answer to that question and that's why the class just wasn't appealing to you. But if you are here today and you still need to figure out your purpose, you have come to the right place. Waikoloa Community Church is **A Place To Find Purpose**.

We've actually got an Aloha Group that is going to go through this S.H.A.P.E. study with me soon. If you decide you are interested too, fill out a yellow connection card and let me know and maybe we can try launching it again for the rest of you.

I'll just tell you, when I went through that same process many years ago, it was a real eye opener for me. I learned so much about how God had specifically designed me, what made me tick, why I do things the way I do, why I learn the way I do, why I am affected by people the way I am. I learned what my strengths were and I learned how to concentrate on rocking it with my strengths instead of always trying to balance out my weaknesses. I also learned one of my most valuable life lessons and that is there is a fourth element to finding your purpose and it is this. You have an Eternal Purpose. You have a Kingdom Purpose. You have a Unique Purpose and

4) You have a SEASONAL PURPOSE!

Let me explain it this way. In different seasons of life God uses us in some specific way, in some specific time and place. Then, He may move us to a different place to do something slightly different but it all still connects in some way to our overarching Unique Purpose.

My purpose, on a mega scale, is fixed, but my micro purpose can change. Here's what I mean by that. For example, I know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, my mega purpose, my unique purpose is to be a teacher and a shepherd leader. I exist on this earth to make complex subjects accessible to people and to lead them toward a better future as a shepherding or pastoring person.

There is just something about the way God wired me, that I can quickly absorb a lot of information, sometimes very complex, very complicated information, and I can boil it down to a couple of Big Ideas that I am able to effectively teach to other people. That's a big part of my life purpose. God gifted me to be able to do that and I've been doing it in one form or another my entire life, as a tutor of others, as a Sunday School teacher, as a Youth Leader, as a Chemical Dependency Counselor, as a Life Coach and as a Pastor. I actually get a lot of affirmation and confirmation from many different people who tell me I am very good at this. That's because I have settled into my niche, my unique purpose from God and I am allowing Him to use that in different ways in different seasons of my life.

The same thing is true of my shepherd leader purpose. As I look back over the course of my life I clearly see that is who I have always been, even from my youngest days leading my peer group in school. I have always been the shepherd leader of my peer groups. But, the specific way I live that purpose out has shifted from season to season in life.

In Junior High I was a football team co-captain. Then in senior high I was a drama club president. Then in college I was a Sigma Chi Fraternity Pledge Class President. Then my first post college career was as a chemical dependency counselor working with teenage addicts. Then in seminary, for I led a ministry that brought in 25,000 guests for a Christian rock music teaching and evangelistic weekend festival. Then, after seminary I became a pastor. Over the last 25 years, sometimes God has put the emphasis on me being a pastor.

Other times, God has put the emphasis on me being a Life Coach, or a motivational speaker or a writer. Or a leader of some other community group. My mega purpose of teacher and shepherd leader has never changed, but it is a growing purpose. It is constantly changing. God is constantly tweaking it, adapting it, shifting it to fit into His larger purpose for the universe and the redemption of humanity, depending on various seasons of my life.

So, at least for the next five years, I am the pastor of Waikoloa Community Church, but that's not all I am. I am also father, husband, friend, writer, speaker, life coach, wedding officiant. In all those roles and seasons of life God has me fulfilling my Unique Purpose in various ways. Five years from now, who knows, God may keep me in this role as your pastor or He may move me to do something else.

He might keep me in Hawaii or He might send me to the mainland or to China or England or Africa or maybe I will be the first **Mars Colonization Chaplain**. Wherever and whatever He has me doing, I know, I will still be a teacher and shepherd leader of some kind. I know that for a fact, because that's my purpose.

So, I guarantee He is doing the same thing with you. If you spend the time to dig deep enough to find your unique purpose, your mega purpose, you will then notice a common thread that runs through every accomplishment, every positive experience in your life. Like me, that purpose will not look the same from decade to decade or even year to year. It will change by season but it always stems from a core purpose as it grows and shifts. You have an eternal purpose. You have a kingdom purpose. You have a unique purpose and you have an evolving purpose. If you don't know what your unique and evolving purposes are, I really want to encourage you to take that seminar with me and we will discover it together.

I'm sure there are other places you could go to find purpose, but again, I've traveled to a lot of places and when the local church is working right, there is no place better to find your purpose in life. When the local church is working right, this is A Place To Find Purpose. YAY GOD?

~~~~~ LET'S PRAY ~~~~~