

Week Five.
A PURPOSE TO LIVE FOR

05

It's easy to drift away from the church, especially with the disruption that COVID forced on our normal routines. We don't need to go; we can watch online. We won't be missed. We unconsciously adopted a new normal with reordered priorities and church has fallen down on the list. But church is essential.

The Bible teaches that it must be a high priority in our lives, or we will miss out on some very important benefits that will affect both our spiritual life and our quality of life. God wants to meet us in the gathering of his people, where he will sustain us, strengthen us, teach us and give us a story and a purpose for our lives. We are better together!

Introduction.

The Church provides a purpose to live for that's bigger than ourselves. A purpose that spans eternity and ties generation after generation together. Church answers basic questions all people ask: 1) Why am I here? 2) What should I live for? 3) Is all this worth it? Our lives find meaning and purpose alongside the people of God and the Word of God.

Starter Questions

What do you feel most people's lives are driven by? During different seasons of your life, what was your driving force?

What do people get attached to on earth that keeps them from living for God's purposes?

If someone asked you to tell them the purpose of Fairhaven Church, how would you answer them?

What's one idea from this week's sermon that impacted you or how have you responded to the Call to Action?

Into the Word.

1. READ ACTS 2:45-47

What would you say was the purpose of the early church in Jerusalem? How was that purpose apparent to those on the outside who were watching them?

2. READ MATTHEW 28:19-20

What are some ways the command (Great Commission) might have affected the behaviors and lifestyles of the early church? How does that command relate today to Fairhaven Church in Dayton?

Into the **Word.**

3. READ EPHESIANS 5:25-27

How does Paul describe Jesus' love for the Church? In what way is the Church sanctified or "holy and without blemish"? Do you think these verses still describe Jesus' love for the Church? How might this relate to giving us a purpose to live for?

4. READ EPHESIANS 4:11-14

How does this passage relate to God's purpose in the Church? How might that purpose relate to you?

Application.

1. What thought or idea from our time “Into the Word” is most compelling or most challenging to you? Why?

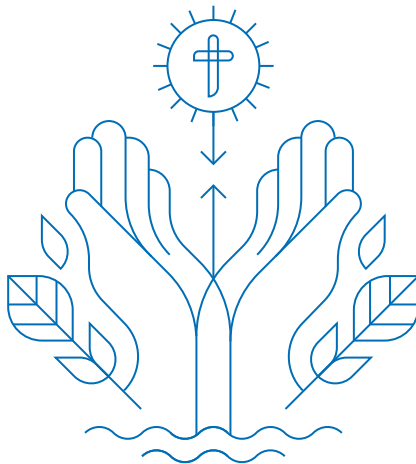
2. How does the command of Matt. 28:19-20 affect you, personally? How might it affect the way you live your life this week? What might need to be changed or need to be different, in order to allow the Great Commission to shape our purpose?

3. How has the church helped you in living with a purpose? What ministries or resources have been most beneficial? Who do you know that might be similarly helped in the same ways you have been, and how could you share this with them?

4. If the work of the church is ultimately all about reaching people and making disciples, what commitments are you willing to make today to support that purpose? How might this small group be part of your commitment?

Closing Prayer.

Holy Father, we give thanks for this time to learn about and discuss your purpose for our lives and for our church. Help us to realize that our commitment to the church is the natural expression of our devotion to you. Help us to find personal meaning by living in sacred community with fellow believers. Help us to encourage one another toward love and good deeds and celebrate together your gracious work in our lives. We pray in the holy name of Jesus, Amen.



Through the **Week.**

Morning Prayer

Our God and Father, I give thanks for this new day and the purpose you have for it. You are working all things for my good. In spite of what I may see or experience, help me to rest in your promise to love me and keep me. May I live today with holy purpose. I resolve to love what you love and to live this day for things that are eternal. Moment by moment, let me be aware of your presence with me and in me. And may your presence give me courage to live for you. Thank you, Father. Amen.

Evening Prayer

O Lord, I give you thanks for this day. Your grace and mercy were with me. Your love surrounded me. Your presence was my strength. I know that my love and devotion toward you is imperfect, yet your forgiveness and your righteousness uphold me. May you rest at the center of my life and may your purpose be written on my heart. Allow my friends and those I love to rest in your warm embrace and to be certain that you will never fail us. Because of you, we are always better together. In Jesus' love, Amen.

