

THE ONLY FAMILY THAT WILL LAST FOREVER

This Is Us
Rick Warren

"I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it."
Matthew 16:18 (NLT)

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?
NOT a building. . . place. . . event. . . Institution

THE CHURCH IS:

- **GOD'S** _____
"I am writing these things to you . . . Then . . . you will know how to live in the family of God. That family is the church of the living God, the support and foundation of the truth." 1 Timothy 3:14-15 (NCV)
- **COMPOSED OF** _____
"Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned." Mark 16:16 (NLT)

"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."
Acts 2:38 (NIV)

"Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all." Acts 2:41 (NLT)
- **COMMITTED TO** _____
"First they gave themselves to the Lord; and then, by God's will they gave themselves to us as well." 2 Corinthians 8:5 (GNT)

"Be devoted to each other like a loving family." Romans 12:10 (GW)

"In Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." Romans 12:5 (NIV)

"The members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."
1 Corinthians 12:25-26 (ESV)

"All of you together are the one body of Christ, and each one of you is a separate and necessary part of it." 1 Corinthians 12:27 (TLB)

- **PREPARING** _____
"To the church, composed of all those registered in heaven . . ."
Hebrews 12:23 (TLB)

". . . You have come to God himself." Hebrews 12:23 (NLT)

FIVE OF THE MANY BENEFITS OF BELONGING

1. **IN GOD'S FAMILY:** _____
"You are members of God's very own family. . . . And you belong in God's household with every other Christian." Ephesians 2:19 (TLB)

"Jesus and the people he makes holy all belong to the same family. That is why he isn't ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters." Hebrews 2:11 (CEV)
2. **IN GOD'S TEMPLE:** _____
"In [Christ] the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit." Ephesians 2:21-22 (NIV)

"I want us to help each other with the faith we have. Your faith will help me, and my faith will help you." Romans 1:12 (NCV)
3. **IN CHRIST'S BODY:** _____
"Just as there are many parts to our bodies, so it is with Christ's body. We are all parts of it, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we belong to each other, and each needs all the others."
Romans 12:4-5 (TLB)

"If the foot says, 'I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,' that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, 'I am not part of the body because I am not an eye,' would that make it any less a part of the body?"
1 Corinthians 12:15-16 (NLT)

"In Christ's body we're all connected to each other." Ephesians 4:25 (MSG)
4. **IN GOD'S FLOCK:** _____
"Take care of God's flock, his people, that you are responsible for. Watch over it because you want to, not because you are forced to do it." 1 Peter 5:2 (ICB)

"Share each other's troubles and problems . . ." Galatians 6:2 (TLB)

". . . and in this way obey the law of Christ." Galatians 6:2 (NLT)
5. **IN GOD'S GARDEN:** _____
"A branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those

who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:4-5 (NLT)

Next Steps

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WHAT ON EARTH AM I HERE FOR?

God's 5 Purposes for Your Life
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"It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. . . . part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone."

Ephesians 1:11 (MSG)

"For everything, absolutely everything . . . got started in [God's Son] and finds its purpose in him." Colossians 1:16 (MSG)

"[The Lord] has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Revelation 4:11 (KJV)

1. GOD PLANNED ME _____

"[The Lord] has created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." Revelation 4:11 (KJV)

"The LORD takes pleasure in his people." Psalm 149:4 (GNT)

"Long before [God] laid down earth's foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love." Ephesians 1:4 (MSG)

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment." Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)

"I don't want your sacrifices—I want your love; I don't want your offerings—I want you to know me." Hosea 6:6 (TLB)

THE 1st PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO: _____

"WORSHIP"

2. GOD FORMED ME _____

"[God's] unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by sending Jesus Christ to die for us. And he did this because he wanted to!"
Ephesians 1:5 (TLB)

"It is his boundless mercy that has given us the privilege of being born again so that we are now members of God's own family." 1 Peter 1:3 (TLB)

"That family is the church of the living God, the support and foundation of the truth." 1 Timothy 3:15 (NCV)

"Love your spiritual family." 1 Peter 2:17 (MSG)

THE 2nd PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO: _____ **"FELLOWSHIP"**

"Let us not give up the habit of meeting together. . . . Instead, let us encourage one another." Hebrews 10:25 (GNT)

3. GOD CREATED ME _____

"From the very beginning God decided that those who came to him -- and all along he knew who would--should become like his Son." Romans 8:29 (TLB)

"We look at this Son and see God's original purpose in everything created."
Colossians 1:15 (MSG)

"In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus." Philippians 2:5 (NCV)

"As the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him."
2 Corinthians 3:18 (TLB)

THE 3rd PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO: _____ **"DISCIPLESHIP"**

"Let us go on . . . and become mature in our understanding, as strong Christians ought to be." Hebrews 6:1 (TLB)

"By now you should be teachers. Instead, you still need someone to teach you."
Hebrews 5:12 (GW)

4. GOD SHAPED ME _____

"You shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother's womb."
Psalms 139:13 (MSG)

Spiritual Gifts
Heart
Abilities
Personality
Experiences

"God has made us what we are. In Christ Jesus, God made us to do good works, which God planned in advance for us to live our lives doing."
Ephesians 2:10 (NCV)

"God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God's many kinds of blessings."
1 Peter 4:10 (TLB)

THE 4th PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO: _____
“MINISTRY”

“What can I give back to God for the blessings he’s poured out on me?”
Psalms 116:12 (MSG)

5. GOD MADE ME _____
Jesus speaking to God the Father: “In the same way that you gave me a mission in the world, I give them a mission in the world.” John 17:18 (MSG)

“I don’t care about my own life. The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work that the Lord Jesus gave me—to tell people the Good News about God’s grace.” Acts 20:24 (NCV)

THE 5th PURPOSE OF LIFE IS TO: _____
“WITNESSING”

“You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.” 2 Timothy 2:2 (NLT)

“Through Christ, God made peace between us and himself, and God gave us the work of telling everyone about the peace we can have with him. . . . So we have been sent to speak for Christ.” 2 Corinthians 5:18, 20 (NCV)

“Godly men are growing a tree that bears life-giving fruit, and all who win souls are wise.” Proverbs 11:30 (TLB)

THE FIRST CHRISTIANS & CHURCH DID GOD’S PURPOSES

“Those who believed . . . were baptized and added to the church.”
Acts 2:41 (NLT)

“They joined with the other believers . . .” Acts 2:42 (TLB)

“. . . They committed themselves to the teaching of the apostles.”
Acts 2:42 (MSG)

“All the believers devoted themselves . . . to fellowship.” Acts 2:42 (NLT)

“All the believers were together and shared everything.” Acts 2:44 (NCV)

“They worshiped together regularly at the Temple each day, met in small groups in homes . . .” Acts 2:46 (TLB)

“And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”
Acts 2:47 (NIV)

NOTE THE ORDER:

1. God wants me to BELIEVE in Jesus
2. Next, he wants me to be BAPTIZED
3. JOIN the MEMBERSHIP of a church family
4. Commit to regular WORSHIP
5. Connect to a small group FELLOWSHIP
6. Start serving in some MINISTRY
7. BRING my friends and neighbors to Christ

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HOW GOD GROWS OUR FAITH

Lessons from Our 40 Year Journey in Faith

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"The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!'" Luke 17:5 (NIV)

"Without faith it is impossible to please God." Hebrews 11:6 (NIV)

"According to your faith will it be done to you." Matthew 9:29 (BSB)

"Let your roots grow down into him and draw up nourishment from him. See that you go on growing in the Lord, and become strong and vigorous in the truth you were taught." Colossians 2:7 (TLB)

2 WAYS GOD GROWS OUR FAITH

1. THROUGH _____

"Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ." Romans 10:17 (NIV)

2. THROUGH _____

"When your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow."
James 1:3 (NLT)

3 Tests

1. GOD TESTS & GROWS OUR FAITH THROUGH _____

"I know what I have planned for you," says the Lord. "I have good plans for you. I don't plan to hurt you. I plan to give you hope and a good future."

Jeremiah 29:11 (ICB)

"God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams!" Ephesians 3:20 (MSG)

• TO GROW IN FAITH, I MUST LEARN TO _____

2. GOD TESTS & GROWS OUR FAITH THROUGH _____

"These things I plan won't happen right away. Slowly, steadily, surely, the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass. Just be patient! They will not be overdue a single day!" Habakkuk 2:3 (TLB)

"God . . . acts on behalf of those who wait for him." Isaiah 64:4 (NIV)

• TO GROW IN FAITH, I MUST LEARN TO _____

3. GOD TESTS & GROWS OUR FAITH THROUGH _____

"If you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?" Luke 16:11 (NLT)

"You do everything better than anyone else. You have stronger faith. . . . Now you must give more generously than anyone else." 2 Corinthians 8:7 (CEV)

"Give to others, and God will give to you. . . ." Luke 6:30 (GNT)

". . . A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."
Luke 6:30 (NIV)

• TO GROW IN FAITH, I MUST LEARN TO _____

4. GOD TESTS & GROWS OUR FAITH THROUGH _____

"My friends, do not be surprised at the painful things you are now suffering. These things are testing your faith. So do not think that something strange is happening to you." 1 Peter 4:12 (ICB)

"These trials are only to test your faith, to see whether or not it is strong and pure. It is being tested as fire tests gold and purifies it—and your faith is far more precious to God than mere gold." 1 Peter 1:7 (TLB)

Let's go to Lazarus "Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus has died, but I'm glad that I wasn't there so that you can grow in faith.'" John 11:14-15 (GW)

• TO GROW IN FAITH, I MUST LEARN TO _____

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