



Who Are We and Why Are We Here

Part 5: Life Together – First Things First

An author was interviewed about his book on living with purpose. He explained his premise to the journalist: know your values, align your life with what you value, and make the most important thing *your* most important thing. In other words, live with purpose on purpose. To which the journalist caught the author by surprise when she replied in total candor, “That sounds like too much work.”

Whatever else her words reveal, they also point out an unavoidable truth: a life of purpose takes effort.

In society today, a sense of fulfillment and meaningfulness have morphed into entitlements. Society owes us contentment and a life of ease, both of which are confused with meaningful living. Is it possible that this deception has infected the perspectives of God’s people as well? Is life together simply a means of getting our personal needs met? Have we lost clarity that life together is about living out a divine design?

As with purpose, so life together requires effort. The vertical relationship of covenant life fits us together horizontally and requires us to live in deliberate pursuit of God’s purpose for His Body.

And for the Church there need not be any ambiguity here. We can find any number of scripture references about how we are to function, but in reality all of them are anchored in a little verse tucked away in Exodus chapter 19: “And you will be my kingdom of priests” (verse 6, NLT).

Is it possible that we too easily fail to comprehend how utterly life-altering those words truly are? Any admonitions or directives for Church-life are designed to enable us to realize our priestly purpose and be the people God designed us to be in keeping with our covenant relationship with Him.

Life together is by its very nature purpose-centered. But that purpose does not come from within ourselves, rather from the One who made us and has chosen to live in covenant with us.

Our relationships within the Body are to reflect God’s design. We as a Body are to make Him evident to others, to corporately put hands and feet to His purpose for all to know Him and be transformed into the likeness of His Son (Romans 8:29-30). While God has placed a sense of eternity in the human heart (Ecclesiastes 3:10), as His priests we offer hope and truth that call others to a covenant life with Him.

But by its nature the priestly role He has chosen for us focuses first and foremost on Him. The priest offered praise and thanksgiving to Him, acknowledged His Kingly authority, and acted at the prompting of His divine design. Nothing done horizontally has meaning unless it emerges from the wonder of our posture of awe as we encounter His presence and act at the impulse of His grace.

Taking Our Next Step Together

Lord God of all grace, we are in awe of Your purpose for us to be the agents of transforming truth in a world filled with people who stagger blindly on in what they believe is light but in fact is the darkness of life without the Light of Your grace. Forgive us, Lord, for any tendencies we have to make life together an exercise of self-indulgence. Heal us from the carnal pre-occupation with convenience and comfort that distorts our capacity to experience the awe and wonder of the priestly privilege of worship.

Lift our eyes above the feebleness of our own version of purpose and fix our gaze on the high calling for us to live out the divine and eternal purpose of our covenant life as Your people.