

I. Introduction

- A. For my message today, I am going to set aside the topic I had planned to speak about. We do make a planning calendar. It let's all of us — Tim with worship and all our ministries — stay in sync.
- B. But sometimes, I feel a prompting from the Holy Spirit to pick a different topic, and this talk is one of those times.
- C. We are still in the series, Giant Steps, for this year. This is the year, the season, the time
 1. ...to take **Giant Steps Out** of the habits and hangups that are chronically holding you back,
 2. ...to take **Giant Steps Into** your riches and resources as a Christian, and
 3. ...to take **Giant Steps Up** to making a dent in the devil's darkness and an impact for Christ and the Gospel.
- D. I'm taking my topic today from one of the best selling books ever in the world... that is *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren.
 1. His idea is that you should live with God's purposes in mind, and I say yes to that. It's a very good book.
 2. But I want to take that idea to another level.
 3. Because there is an essential, non-negotiable, absolutely necessary quality that is tragically missing from most teaching, most preaching, most preachers, most churches, and most Christian people today.
 4. It is true that our lives should be driven and molded by our truest and deepest purpose. Amen?
- E. But there is something above and beyond living with purpose which is even more powerful and more true.
- F. Let me show you God's Word, and then I'll tell you our topic for today:
 1. *"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth."* (Colossians 3:1-2)
- G. If we were to go to the place where Christ is now seated at the right hand of God, where would be be?
- H. Heaven.
 1. Seek those things which are above... having to do with heaven.
 2. Set your mind on those things where are above... having to do with heaven.
- I. So our topic today is this:
 1. **Step Up to the Heaven-Driven Life**
- J. You might have seen memes online with a picture of what's happening in a person's brain: a man's brain, a woman's brain, a teenager's brain, etc.
- K. That if we were going to map our brains, and what we think about through our days, and what topics fill our attention... there would be a massive jumble of things:
 1. Food, job, friends, marriage, parenting, love, sex, church, Bible, God, Jesus, children, money, retirement, fix the car, mow the lawn, homework, grades, studying, workout, depression, finances, loss, hope...
 2. And we have to devote mental powers to things on that list every single day.
- L. But here is my big idea for today:
 1. **Unless a very large portion of your thinking and feeling is linked to thoughts about Heaven, then all the steps you take in life will be steps in the wrong direction.**
- M. Why?
- N. Because heaven is the final and enduring destination for every child of God. If you are saved, then your last day on earth will be your best day. You will close your eyes on earth, and open your eyes in glory. You will run to see Jesus, your Savior and your Friend. You will feast at the banquet of grace, and step into your inheritance. You will be your truest deepest self. You will be more alive than ever before.
- O. Heaven is our true homeland. Until then, we are pilgrims. This whole life is a pilgrimage. We are traveling a short and uncertain journey. This world is not our home, we're just passing through.
 1. James asked, "For what is your life? It is but a vapor that appears for an instant and then vanishes away."
 2. Peter says that we are "strangers and pilgrims in this world."
- P. Heaven is our home, and earth is our temporary stopping place. Your Savior is right now in Heaven, and he is preparing a place for you.
- Q. With heaven, you've got a place to take your confusions.
 1. With heaven, you've got a way to cope with tragedy.
 2. With heaven, you've got a guarantee that hope is real.
 3. With heaven, you've got a home where love never dies.
 4. With heaven, you've got a truth to heal your hurts.
 5. With heaven, you've got an earthly life worth living.
 6. With heaven, death—as painful and horrible as it is—death, for the child of God, has become transportation home.
- R. With heaven, you've got answers to all the profoundly perplexing questions that simply cannot be answered here within the confines of this this intellectually clouded, morally broken pain machine called planet earth.
 1. I am here to say today, there is simply no philosophy, no science, no therapy, no religion, no spiritual practice, and no other doctrine that can do for you what heaven can do when you live with heaven on your mind.

II. Truths About Heaven

- A. **Your World is Governed by Heaven**
 1. *"The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all."* (Psalm 103:19)
 2. The world is governed by heaven. Not by fate, not by the stars, not by randomness, not by impersonal laws of physics and nature that came out of nowhere and are taking us no place.
 3. The world is governed by heaven, and that means your life is governed by heaven.
 4. Jesus is Lord of all. Amen?

- a) Governments and kings have tremendous power. But they all bow to King Jesus.
- b) Satan is the prince of this world and he exercises tremendous influence over our world. But God has him on a leash, and even he, one day will bow to Jesus.
- c) Where there are shadowy forces, where there are diabolical plots, where there are conspiracies and cabals seeking to dominate our lives, heaven is greater than all.
- d) This fallen world is a morally broken pain machine, and horrible things can happen. That is because of the fall, because of sin. But God still has the final say, and the grace machine defeats the pain machine and spits it out in the end.
5. The more chaotic things become, the more important it is to fasten your mind on heaven. There is no chaos in the throne room of God. God is not confused. He is not surprised. His plan is right on schedule and perfectly executed.
6. What makes you afraid? What makes you worried? What makes you dismayed or defeated or discouraged?
7. For one joining moment, bring your thoughts and imaginations up to heaven. There you will see something you could never see on earth. That God is working 24/7 with perfect calmness, and he is bringing good out of evil, beauty out of horror, mercy out of cruelty, and life out of death. What wicked forces meant for evil, God hijacks and somewhere, somehow, downstream, in ways we never saw coming, God hijacks evil and brings about good.
8. Grieve your losses. Feel your pains. Look squarely at the darkness of this life. And then remind yourself that God is still on his throne. Heaven isn't going anywhere. It is the one fixed point in a universe in continual upheaval and flux.
9. Your world is governed by heaven.

B. Your Purpose is Glory in Heaven

1. *"to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved."* (Ephesians 1:6)
2. Why are you here? Why do you exist? What is your purpose?
3. The greatest differentiator between a Christian's life and a secular life is that we have a purpose that transcends this earthly existence. We exist for purposes that go far beyond the space-time continuum.
4. Far beyond fame. Far beyond wealth. Far beyond comfort and pleasure. Far beyond even good things like justice and compassion. All of those things are good and fine. But all of us fall far short of the heavenly purposes for our existence.
5. Why do you exist?
6. You exist for the glory of God.
7. You exist for the praise of his glory. This is your primary purpose. Whatever other goals you have for yourself, they are all secondary to the glory of God.
8. Your purpose is to glorify God.
9. But how? This verse says how. It says to the praise of the glory of his grace.
10. Literally to the praise of the glory that comes from the source of his grace.
11. The source of God's glory is his grace.
12. Let me unpack that some more because everybody gets this backwards.
 - a) Grace means the unmerited favor of God.
 - b) Grace means all the good things that God does for you.
 - c) Grace does not mean what you do for God, but what God does for you. Can we agree on that?
13. So, if the source of God's glory is his grace, then we can say it this way.
 - a) God is glorified, not by what you do for him, but by what he does for you.
14. Therefore, if you want to bring maximum glory to God, then you must position your life to experience maximum grace from him.
15. Look at how this will work in heaven:
 - a) *"that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."* (Ephesians 2:7)
16. I can only begin to imagine all that that means.
17. The great purpose of God for your life is that in the ages to come, meaning in heaven, you would blaze forth forever as a shining recipient of the infinite riches of his grace.
18. The purpose of God for your life is to make you into a living and eternal monument to the matchless grace of God.
19. And that starts on earth.
20. First you get saved. Second you get mature... which includes you getting unstuck from the dysfunctions, healed from the traumas, and freed from the addictions of your past.
21. God saves you. God blesses you. God grows you. God uses you. That's the pattern. That's the heaven-driven life.
 - a) I hope that you see yourself as a church-going person, in a church-going family for the rest of your life. It's just who you are.

C. Your Psychology is Anchored by Heaven

1. *"This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil."* (Hebrews 6:19)
2. Let's take this verse apart. Starting with soul.
3. The original Greek word for soul is *psyche*, which gives us psychology.
 - a) If you have been at Pathway Church for a while, you have probably heard me say this before:
 - b) Grace comes to life at the intersection where theology meets psychology.
 - c) Real psychological health can never be found without a true theological belief system in your soul.
4. Let's go on to the word anchor.

- a) What does an anchor do? It holds the boat in place. It keeps you from drifting. It keeps you stable in a storm. It keeps you where you choose to be, not where outside forces are trying to drive you.
- b) Do you realize that the Bible says there is an anchor for your soul. That is truly awesome.
- c) And look, it is both sure and steadfast. The anchor holds. It doesn't slip. It doesn't break loose. Don't worry, you're not going anywhere because your anchor holds.
 - (1) And it holds, my anchor holds.
Blow your wildest then, O Gale.
On my bark (boat) so small and frail,
By his grace I shall prevail.
For my anchor holds.
My anchor holds.
- d) That his true psychological health.
- e) So where is that anchor placed?
- 5. It enters the Presence behind the veil...
 - a) What is that?
 - b) This means the presence of God up in heaven.
 - c) And we know it means the presence of God because of the next verse:
 - (1) *"where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."* (Hebrews 6:20)
 - d) Which only begins to make sense if you were here 2 weeks ago... But where is Jesus our forerunner? In heaven. Where is our anchor anchored? In heaven.
 - e) One more factor, and then we can put this all together.
- 6. We have the word hope. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul.
 - a) Hope means confident expectation in future good from God.
 - b) Hope means that even if you freak out, you recover quickly because you expect God to come through for you, one way or another.
 - c) Hope means that you believe God causes all things to work together for your good...
- 7. This verse is saying that your hope, meaning your psychological health, is anchored in heaven.
- 8. There is a direct line between your psychological state, and Jesus sitting on his throne in glory.
 - a) You may be sad. You may be scared. You may be frustrated. You may be disappointed. You may be crushed. You may be hurt. You may be broken.
- 9. But none of that destroys your relationship with God.
- 10. And none of that ultimately defines you.
- 11. You will survive. You will thrive. You will make it. You will see better days.
 - a) Your world may be rocked, but you always come back to the center. You always come back to Jesus. You always come back to a crucified and resurrected Savior. You always come back to Grace and Faith.
- 12. Because, in the heaven-driven life, every time trouble comes, you set your mind on things above and you remember that you are anchored to heaven forever.

D. Your Supply is Provided by Heaven

- 1. *"And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 4:19)
- 2. Heaven is a storehouse, and God is your supplier.
- 3. He never fails. He is never late. He is never stingy. He never holds back on you.
- 4. And look at how God supplies your need. When God calculates how much to supply, where does he look?
 - a) Does he look to how much you deserve? No.
 - b) Does he look to how much you need? No.
 - c) Does he look to the situation you are in? No.
 - d) Does he look to how hard you prayed and if you got the right words? No.
- 5. It says right here where God looks and how God calculates supply in your life.
- 6. According to his riches in glory.
- 7. The standard is not your need, or your merit, or even your prayer.
- 8. The standard is his riches in glory up there in heaven. God looks into his wide open vaults and sees there the immensity of his treasures and lavishes them upon you, his child, with incredible affection and care.
- 9. If you are living a heaven-driven life, you will not constantly fret about these things. You will work hard. You will save up. You will tithe and give to the Lord. You will be wise. Because heaven is big to you. And heaven is real to you.
- 10. Do you want to step up to the heaven-driven life? Here you go:
 - a) *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* (Matthew 6:19-21)

E. Your Evaluation is Coming in Heaven

- 1. *"For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will*

receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." (1 Corinthians 3:11-15)

2. This is really where the heaven-driven life matters big time, because this is forever.
3. One of the biggest surprises for many Christians—I'm talking about born again believers in Jesus Christ—one of their biggest surprises will be that HEAVEN IS NOT EQUAL FOR EVERYBODY.
4. The Bible says that there will be huge variations among the population of heaven.
5. There's a really common misconception about heaven: you check in, you are issued a pair of wings, maybe a halo, a harp, and a cloud. Then you spend the rest of eternity being bored.
6. However, the Bible paints a radically different picture. God wants you to receive new motivation, new incentive, and a new understanding of what it means to build up a massive portfolio in heaven.
7. Even though we are talking about rewards IN heaven, don't get confused. Getting into heaven is NOT a reward for good people. It's a FREE gift for believing people.
8. This means that your ticket to heaven is NOT YOUR GOOD WORKS, in any way shape or form. NOT YOUR RELIGION, NOT YOUR RITUALS. NOT your anything. It depends one hundred percent upon Jesus Christ, and his finished work on Calvary. CHRIST EARNED IT.
9. Every believer in Jesus goes to heaven. But NOT every believer has REWARDS in heaven. There are distinctions, and I believe that there will be massive distinctions.
10. God wants you to understand this so much that he has gone to great lengths to communicate it to you in His Word. He has used many different ways to communicate the doctrine of rewards in heaven.
 - a) **REWARD.** (1 Cor 3:14; Col 3:24; Heb 11:26; Matt 16:27)
 - b) **TREASURE.** (Matt. 6:20)
 - c) **ABUNDANCE.** (2 Peter 1:11)
 - d) **STARS OF DIFFERING BRIGHTNESS.** (Dan 12:3; 1 Cor 15:41)
 - e) **BUMPER CROPS.** (Mk. 4:3-21)
 - f) **LARGE ESTATES.** (Luke 19:17; Heb 11:16.)
 - g) **MILITARY DECORATIONS.** (1 Peter 5:4; 2 Tim 5:8; Jam 1:12; Rev 2:10)
 - h) **ATHLETIC MEDALS.** (1 Cor 9:24-26; 2 Tim 2:5)
11. When you die as a Christian, you will go to heaven. One day there will be the judgment seat of Christ. This is described in 2 Corinthians 5:10
 - a) *"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether [eternally] profitable or without value."* (2 Corinthians 5:10 BG)
12. When you stand before him, he is not going to care about how big your bank balance was. He is not going to care about how good looking you were or how many likes you got on social media.
 - a) He is going to reward you for Evangelism, helping people get saved. (Daniel 12:3)
 - b) He is going to reward you for Faith, even when you weren't the winner you hoped you would be. (Hebrews 11:6)
 - c) He is going to reward you for Spiritual Maturity, because your capacity for grace on earth sets your capacity for reward in heaven. (1 John 2:28).
 - d) He is going to reward you many times over for the tough times you went through and kept faith with him.
 - (1) *"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."* (2 Corinthians 4:17)

III. The Heaven-Driven Life

- A. So, step up to **the Heaven Driven Life.**
- B. This world is broken and difficult and painful. I don't want anybody to be discouraged. I want you to believe that you have a home in heaven through Jesus. I want you to be confident in him. I want you to never fear that you can lose salvation. Once you're saved, you're always saved.
- C. I am trying to get us to expand our mental horizons. You're not going to live 80, 90 or 100 years. You're going to live 10,000,000×10,000,000 years. You have an eternity to look forward to.
- D. I am preaching to remind us all that this life is not all there is. This world is not all there is. This is not our home. Our home is in heaven. Our citizenship is in heaven. And one day we will see our Savior face-to-face.