

A Purpose Worth Living For
“An Absolute Dependency”
Part 5

Intro: There are times in life when you must embrace an absolute dependency in order to have an amazing experience. You must be able to give up control, fear, what you know, in order to experience something new.

- A number of years ago we traveled to Cabo San Lucas Mexico on vacation. Our girls were in HS at the time and one the things we wanted to do was go parasailing. – EXPLAIN – The experience requires an absolute dependency on the equipment and the people involved. You depend and have an amazing experience.

Discovering our purpose that we were designed to live is a lot like this. Our purpose is experienced as we learn how to depend on Jesus for this journey. Dependency is the key to experiencing a purpose worth living for.

- Today I want to talk about what this looks like and how we embrace an absolute dependency on Jesus so we can all soar to new heights.

Prov. 3:5-6 “Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding.⁶ Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.” (NLT)

- 4 truths about absolute dependency

1. Dependency is trusting Jesus with all our heart

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart” – What does this mean?

- You trust in His character
 - Do we trust in who God is? What do I mean? Do you trust that God is good? Do you trust that no matter what circumstances you encounter in life that God is still good? Is God still good when life is bad? Is God still good when life doesn't make sense? Do you believe God has good planned for you even though at the moment, life is the opposite?
 - Our belief that God is good is absolutely foundational if we are to trust Him with all our heart.
 - Just think about our parasailing experience. I had to have a belief that the guys running this event had our best interest in mind. We were literally putting our lives in their hands. In order to trust them I had to believe that they intended no harm to us.
 - I know it sounds basic, but it works this way with God. Why do we not trust God? Why do we not follow what He says or trust His instructions? Do we struggle truly trusting His character? Why would He tell us something to harm us?

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- Depending on God is trusting His good character. Doubt this and your dependency is eroded.

Jer. 29:11 “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.” (NLT) Do you truly believe this?

- You trust He knows best

- If you will trust in His character, then the next step is to trust in His wisdom. IN other words, God knows best. If you do not believe this, it will erode your dependency in God when life gets hard. Will you trust what He says?

Is. 40:13-14 “Who is able to advise the Spirit of the LORD? Who knows enough to give him advice or teach him?¹⁴ Has the LORD ever needed anyone’s advice? Does he need instruction about what is good? Did someone teach him what is right or show him the path of justice?” (NLT) (The context is about creation) – explain God is smart enough to give us advice on how to live life.

- Back to Mexico: When it came to parasailing, my input was irrelevant. I needed to trust that those running this event knew best. My job was to follow and do what I was told.
- Dependency works like this as well. If I trust God’s character then I will trust what He has said. I have the conviction that He knows best how I live the purpose I was designed for.

2. Dependency is learning to not rely on our understanding

“do not depend on your own understanding.”

Why shouldn’t I trust my own understanding?

- My understanding is too limited

- We need to remember we are following Someone who knew us before creation. He saw our first day and He sees our last day. He knows how He created us. He knows our purpose. He knows our design.
- He sees events in the context of our entire life. We only see events in the context of our past and present. We have no idea how they relate to our future and the story that Jesus is writing.
- **Illustrate:** When I was voted out of my church over 20 years ago, I had no idea that it was all part of God’s sovereign plan for my life. At the moment, all I could see was a terrible tragedy. Time has allowed me to see His redemptive purpose.
- We judge based upon what we see; and what we see is very limited. Therefore, putting my trust in my own understanding is a recipe for disaster. If I hadn’t trusted God with my confusion and pain Foothills would have never existed.
- I could have drawn the wrong conclusions and then chosen a path for my life in the wrong direction.

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- Some of you because of life pain / relational pain / financial pain / even physical pain have drawn conclusion about God and your life that are wrong. They are understandable from a human perspective.
- BUT, God is not done writing your story. You do not see the chapters yet to be written. He has not yet shown you the redemptive narrative. Today is not the time to trust what you understand and see.
- My understanding is tainted by my fallenness
 - Not only is our understanding limited, it is also tainted by our own brokenness. We are fallen, sinful people and this brokenness influences our understanding.
 - We all have this struggle going on inside of us with the flesh. The Spirit of God is in us yet the flesh still can influence our lives.

Gal. 5:16-17 "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do."
(ESV)

- Who can't identify with this? When I'm in any type of pain, my flesh loves to come to the surface. When someone hurts my feelings, my understanding is tainted by my fallenness and now the person who hurt me is a bad person. (Which is not true.)
- My flesh likes to draw conclusions about people, situations, painful events that are entirely wrong. My flesh clouds my understanding. My flesh taints my motives.
- Sometimes I am extremely weary / fatigued by life / empty emotionally / confused mentally / and my perspective is clouded by all of this. Probably not a good time to trust my understanding...my perspective.
- Dependency is acknowledging this reality in all of us and trusting God instead.

HOW?

3. Dependency is seeking after His will in everything

"Seek his will in all you do" – How?

- We follow what has been revealed in His word

Ps. 119:93 "I will never forget your commandments, for by them you give me life." (NLT)

John 8:32 "And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (NLT)

- Our commitment to know and follow the word of God demonstrates our dependency. If God's word is the instruction manual for this life then it might be a good idea that I know and follow it.
- The bible functions like an owner's manual for your vehicle. It is filled with specifications on how your vehicle runs best. Disregard the owner's manual and you will damage your car. Refuse to trust the bible, you will damage your life.
- The place to start in seeking His will is to begin by reading and following the bible. He has already revealed so much of His will for us and wrote it down.

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- We are not depending very well on Jesus if we are not reading what He has already revealed to us and choosing to follow it.
- It is time to get into the habit of reading and reflecting on God's word every day – Share how to do this.

- We pray for the rest

Everything else that is not revealed, we pray for the rest.

John 10:27 "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (ESV)

Matt. 7:7-8 "Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened."

(NLT)

- We need to pray as if our lives depend on it...because they do. Our relationship with Jesus is experiential. He leads us...we follow Him. We pray, asking for His will, asking for clarity and then follow it with a reckless abandon.
 - If you truly want God to reveal to you His will then pray telling Him "YES" in advance. - explain
- This is something that is one of our core values as a church. (share 5 values) It is no accident Prayer it is the first one. Instead of talking about this, I want to give us a collective goal with prayer. I want us to practice this in a way that we have never done before.
- We don't need knowledge about prayer we need experience with prayer. Therefore I want to give you a church-wide prayer goal.
- I am asking that we collectively as a church pray together from now until the end of the year. (9 weeks) What I am asking each person to do is agree to pray 5 minutes a day.
 - We will give you a prayer focus every week in your bulletin – see this weeks
 - We will also give you a tally card to record how many minutes you prayed (next week – slide of the tally card)
 - Every week we will post how many hours we have prayed together.
 - If 700 people prayed 5 minutes a day for 9 weeks we would log in over 3000 hours of prayer as a church. 3000 hours of dependency. This is the goal: To pray for 3000 hours!
 - If we desire God's continual blessing upon this church, then we need to continue depending on Him. Here is a tangible way we can do this together. Your first prayer card is already in your bulletin. This is the focus for this week.

4. Dependency is enjoying a Jesus led life

"he will show you which path to take." (Purpose!)

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Nothing in this life can rob you of the purpose you were created to live when you're following Jesus! If you depend on Jesus, we get to enjoy a Jesus led life.

- A Jesus led life is a confident life
 - When you're following Jesus you will be living the purpose you were created for. Jesus will not lead you anywhere else. This allows you to live with an assurance and a confidence most people do not have.
 - When you're following Jesus you have the confidence to say NO and the confidence to say YES to things. You understand where you're supposed to be and you know you're doing what you are meant to do. Confidence.
 - This is the opposite of continual doubt. How many people live with a nagging doubt every day? They are always wondering if they're doing what God wants.
 - There is tremendous confidence when Jesus shows you what path to take and you take it.

- A Jesus led life is a blessed life
 - The reason a Jesus led life is a blessed life is because you are walking in obedience following Jesus. AND Obedience = Blessing.
 - Following Jesus into the purpose He created you for is by far the most blessed life you can live.
 - It is true for our church as well. As we continue following Jesus into the purpose He created us for we will experience greater levels of blessing with each new season.
 - This is why we are praying our way through this next season of fund raising / building projects / and ministry expansion and influence A blessed life is a Jesus led life. A blessed church is a Jesus led church.
 - This is a purpose worth living for.

Let's depend on Jesus like never before. Let's all grow in an absolute dependency on Jesus.

- End with the prayer card challenge.

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