

The Purpose of Your Life

by Francis Chan

Francis Chan's sermon emphasizes the importance of humility, servanthood, and reliance on God's sovereignty through prayer and community.

Duration: 49:17

Scripture: Matthew 28:18

Topics: "Gods Sovereignty", "Discipleship"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing God's authority and sovereignty, urging the congregation to follow faithful leaders and make disciples as commanded by Jesus. The speaker reflects on the trustworthiness of the church's elders and the need for humility and obedience in aligning with God's will. The message encourages a focus on discipleship and living out biblical Christianity, even in the face of cultural pressures and personal challenges.

Transcript

Father, we just recognize you in heaven right now. No one is greater, nothing is greater than you. Everything is under your control.

God, we just come here confessing we are nothing. We're breathing right now because of you. You are so beautiful, so wonderful.

We don't dare demand anything from you. We just thank you for your grace to allow us into your presence. Yet you ask us to make requests to you, God.

So this morning, I just request right now on behalf of all the mothers in this room that you continue to strengthen them. I pray for the moms right now who are struggling because their children are not following you, and they love you so much, and they want their kids to know you, God, and yet you're the only one that can draw them to yourself. So we ask that you would do that.

God, pray for the moms who are living for you and really trying to instruct their kids in your ways, that you continue to give them strength and give them boldness and courage when other people in the world will tell them to just take it easier or not take this so seriously or even to be strong enough to lead their kids in the right way when their own kids fight against them. God, pray for the kids that are in this room right now, Lord, and the ones over in the children's ministry right now, that this morning you would humble

themselves, that you would humble them, and they would just learn to respect and love their moms like you intended, like your desire. But God, right now, I just pray for everyone in the room who doesn't know you, God, that by the end of today that they'll recognize that this whole world is all about you, and you're a great God, so worth following, so worth worshiping.

Beautiful, beautiful Jesus. We love you. In his name we pray.

Amen. And have a seat. Well, I have so many things to say, and you know, a few weeks ago, I taught out of Acts 20.

I told us how that would kind of be a theme of, you know, as Paul was leaving the Ephesian church, he was leaving with a clear conscience, knowing that he had shared everything, that he didn't hold anything back. And I talked about how I wanted to do that before I left, just re-emphasize the things that are so important and so often repeated in Scripture. But now, as we're winding down and we've only got a couple weeks left, you know, I'm trying to narrow it down and go, okay, what are the two things I really want to say? And I realize there aren't two things.

There's like 10 or 15, and so I'm going to try to hit them all. But I'll be quick. First of all, a lot of you guys have been asking how Lisa and I are doing with the transition, and a lot of you have just been telling us how you've been praying for us, and I so appreciate that.

And just quick update, Lisa and I are doing great. I think our marriage is better than it's ever been, more focused on the mission than we've ever been. Great conversations, and we're just excited.

We still don't know where we've been traveling around and looking around neighborhoods. Been out in LA a lot. Something that's really been intriguing the last few days, just thinking about South Central LA and over by USC in that area, and just so many needs over there.

And one of the statements, though, that we hear a lot of is, you guys don't have to do this. You know, God's okay if you guys spend a bunch of money on yourselves and just really set yourselves up and set your kids up. I mean, God's not going to get mad at you for doing that.

And it's like, no, no, I understand that. Okay, you're free to do whatever you want, you know, freedom in Christ, absolutely. But isn't there anything in you that wants to do that? Like where you look at Christ, like the passage that Joshua read out of Philippians 2. You know, Jesus didn't have to leave heaven, you know.

People probably were saying, angels probably going, hey, you know, you don't have to leave here. But it's that whole, it's like, you know, you're God. You deserve this.

You can stay here. You've got equality with God. And what that passage says is that he didn't hold on to that, though.

Yeah, did he have the right to stay in heaven? Of course. But what did he choose to do? He didn't hold on to that, but he humbled himself. He made himself nothing.

He took the form of a man. He looked at us and says, no, I'm gonna go. I'm gonna humble myself, make myself nothing.

And he takes the form of a servant and dies on a cross for us. And the Bible says, you know, like we just heard this morning, he says our attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus. That we shouldn't be thinking about what I can get, or what I deserve, or what I have the right to hold on to, and we grab more and more and more.

This is something I struggled with when I first got into ministry, because I thought to myself, okay, I could become a missionary. But what a missionary would do is you pretty much surrender everything. You go to some third world country, live off of next to nothing, and you suffer like Christ suffered.

Or I could become a pastor in America. And a pastor in America, if you grow the church to a certain size, well, you can start taking more. You can become more famous.

You can grab more for yourself. And I go, man, that's so weird to me. I go, couldn't it be possible to be a minister here in America and not keep climbing up this ladder like everyone else does? I mean, just because a church is bigger, does that mean we're supposed to take more and live better? Or should I try to be like a missionary here? And early on, my wife and I, you know, we just decided, look, let's just, it doesn't matter if the church grows out of our living room or how big it gets.

You know, we shouldn't just keep raising our standard of living. I mean, everyone will tell us that's okay. I'm not seeing that biblically.

You know, it's very American of us, but is it very biblical? It's to hold on to this. And because this is what the world's going after. It's like, okay, let me just keep improving my standard of living.

Go, go, go, go, go. That's not what I see in Jesus. And ever since I've been a believer, ever since the Holy Spirit came into me, there's been this desire to be Christ-like.

There's this desire, and there's a lack of peace sometimes when I'm not that way. And so while it's been one thing to just say, you know what, I'm not going to keep going up, up, up, up, and let's just maintain, there's this exciting phase of life now where we're going, well, that's not totally Christ either. Let's live less than what we could or deserve or have worked for.

And let's try and display Jesus Christ and give a picture of that. And it's actually been a very exciting time in our lives. Very, very exciting for me.

Still don't know what it's going to look like, but just want you to think through this whole idea of not having to. I understand that. And yet 1 John 3 says in verse 16, By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk, but in deed and truth. And I'm just very, very excited about this next phase of life. Even in the uncertainty, we as a family are excited and we thank you for your prayers.

I'm not saying we don't need your prayers, but I would love if you would turn your prayers a little differently now. And if you would pray for the church here, because this is what I do struggle with. I'm not worried about going wherever.

The Lord's been so good to my life. I don't deserve anything I've got. I don't deserve this life I've lived.

It has been nothing short of miraculous where God took me from and where he's placed me now. I just go, God, this is unreal. I know wherever I am, you're with me.

I'm good with that. Honestly, there is a little concern though. And the concern is leaving this body of believers.

You know, I've been looking at that passage in Acts 20 and going with it, but in verse 29, Paul says this. He says, This is the hard part. You know, Paul was saying, okay, my conscience is clear.

I've said everything I need to say. I'm out of here. He goes, but I gotta warn you.

He goes, when I leave, I know after I leave, fierce wolves will come in among you. In fact, the scripture teaches though, it's not obvious, you know, the false teachers. It says they come in sheep's clothing.

They're wolves in sheep's clothing. And here again, he says, look, from among yourselves will arise this type of people twisting things. People are very good at twisting the scriptures nowadays.

You know, you can support any view you want with scripture. Man, I've heard people debate some of the craziest thoughts and they do it well. But at the end of the day, you gotta go, wait, what does the Bible obviously say? And what is the clear teaching of it? And I think when we're alone with scripture and we're praying, we're reading it, aren't there times when you're going, gosh, my life doesn't seem to fit this exactly.

And maybe I'd even twisted to justify certain things I wanted in my life. And you yourself know at the end, you stand before God. But the Bible says that there's going to come a time when, and here's Paul saying, I'm leaving you guys, but I'm just worried about what's going to happen afterwards.

And I know I'm not supposed to worry. And the Bible tells me that, not to be anxious. Instead, the Bible says to pray.

And so I've been praying more and more, not for myself, because I just go, you know what, God, you've been so good. And I'm not really worried about my future. But I do sometimes go, okay, Lord, Cornerstone can go either way right now.

And yet it would be so like you, Lord, to make this the time when the church flourishes, to show that it's always been about you and always been about your power. Because what if Cornerstone, I keep thinking about this, and I read this book, and I look at the pattern of God. And it seems when people humble themselves and not depend on man, but depend on God, that's when amazing things happen.

And so I've been praying, going, Lord, Lord, could this be a time when Cornerstone gets more serious about prayer than they ever had? And then you just pour out your spirit like you never have, to show that this was never about Francis. And sure, you used me as a tool up to this point, but it's always been about him and what he wanted to establish here in Simi Valley. And that's why we've been focusing on prayer and begging you to spend more time praying and praying for the church here, because Satan would love to see things fall apart.

And yet when I look in Scripture, I go, gosh, God did great things when the people got serious about prayer. And so I've been praying more and more, and one of the passages that has helped me and just brought me to some peace is Isaiah chapter 40. In Isaiah 40, verse 22, it says, it is he who sits above the

circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them like a tent to dwell in, who brings princes to nothing and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.

Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows on them and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him, says the Holy One. The Bible says it's he who sits above the vault of the earth.

And I want you to think, do you really believe that? Think about this. Think about what your life would look like if you really believed that right now there's a God who sits above the vault of the earth, and whose inhabitants are like grasshoppers. I start thinking, okay, if I really believe that, that I'm just a little speck on this planet, and there's a being sitting above the vault of the earth, who's looking down, and it says you can take any of the rulers, and he merely blows on them and they wither.

If I really believe that, then why do I do anything other than pray? You know what I mean? Like really, what determines whether or not Cornerstone flourishes in the next 10 years or not? God. That's it. Wait, is it up to this guy? No, it's just up to God.

And this whole idea of the rulers of the earth, he says they barely get to that powerful point, and God says, don't you understand, I would just blow on them and they would wither. It's not about the rulers. They don't determine what happens on the earth.

God does. And he sits above this earth. And to think about, if I really believe that, what would my prayer life look like? And wouldn't there be a lot less of the stress, anxiety, and trying to work this out, and more and more of just this time of prayers.

And God, amazingly, by the blood of Jesus, I get to come before you, and here's what I'm asking for. Bring glory to yourself. I had one of my students teaching in class this last week.

I teach a communications class over at the college, and one of the gals was teaching, and she was talking about how nervous she was, and how, you know, the whole time she's like, God, you know what, please just show up. Just show up when I'm speaking. Show up in that room.

And she says, and the thought occurred to her, where God's saying, this is my party. I invited you. And it just, it was such a great statement, because so often, like, come on, God, help me.

Come show up, show up, show up. And he's going, no, Francis, this has always been my party, and just be glad that you were invited into it. I'm going to do what I'm going to do, and I invited you to be a piece of that, and to look at Cornerstone Church, and why is it established? Why has God done what he's done? Because he wanted to, and he invited me to be a part of that party, and what a blast to get invited, and get to do my little deal, you know.

And now he's got another party, you know, somewhere else, and he's saying, hey, I want you to come to this one now. This one's just raging, you know, and you're invited. And in the same way, we've got to start thinking this way about life, about what's happened, and what God's doing, and us just joining him in what he's doing, rather than us trying to conjure something up, and saying, God, please show up, please show up, please show up.

He's going, it's my party. And I thought, wow, what a great statement. It's all about God, and we've got to understand this sovereign God, this power of God.

I want to talk about this for a moment here. You see, there are people in the scriptures that really get this understanding that everything is up to God. Okay, they get God's sovereignty, or his control.

Okay, when you think about the Bible, because I'm thinking about one person in particular in the Bible, I go, okay, this guy really understood the sovereignty of God, the control of God. Okay, who do you think I'm thinking about? Daniel. Daniel's a good one, yeah, because he understood, look, it's not about me.

Jesus, yeah, I think he understood it. And, okay, I'm thinking about a different one, but yes, yes, of course, he is God, so he knows, yeah, that's, okay, that's number two. Okay, number two guy, okay, Jesus wins.

Joseph, Joseph, no, but that's a good one. Job, Job too. I mean, these are all good, these are all good.

I'm thinking about someone else though. Paul, no. Okay, Paul, Paul was good too, because you think about it, he was killing all the Christians, and then suddenly he understood God had control, right, because God just blinds him, goes, no, I'm going to change your whole life.

Peter, Peter, no, it's just, again, Elijah, yeah, he's a good one too. Lots of good, okay, okay, let's stop. Who? Nehemiah, no, I know, but all these people, you're all right, they understood.

Here's the one, here's mine, nope, Moses was cool too. Okay, I like them all, I like them all, okay, no wrong answers here, but mine, Nebuchadnezzar, okay, Nebuchadnezzar, everyone's going, well, I was going to say him next. No, here's a guy that I believe understood God's control more than anyone.

Daniel 4, verse 35, listen to what he says. King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, he says, all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the hosts of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say to him, what have you done? This is a beautiful, beautiful statement, but he says this, he goes, all the inhabitants of the earth, they're accounted as nothing. In fact, he says, okay, if you took everyone on the planet, all of the people, every single, imagine this, everyone in every single country, and you gathered them to one spot, God says, count them all together, and they count as nothing in my eyes.

That's a powerful statement. Nebuchadnezzar says, you know what, you gotta understand, okay, what if all of us, what if we got all of our services together, though, and we all thought the same thing, and we all approached God together, and even grabbed a couple angels, and said, hey, we all think you should, it doesn't matter. God says, you can gather every single person on that earth.

That's nothing in my sight. All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing. He does according to his will.

Do you understand that? So if everyone on this planet all screams out in one voice, God, we disagree, it doesn't matter. He says, God does according to his will. But we think you should change this law, this law, we, we, it doesn't matter.

He does according to his will. Can you throw that back up for a second? He does according to his will or his desire. He says, among the host of heaven.

What about everyone up there? What about all the angels, everyone? It doesn't matter. It's all up to one person. All the hosts of heaven, among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stand, no one can stop his hand.

If God's, if God wants to do something, he's going to do it. Can the whole earth rebel and say, let's, let's all work together to try to stop him. Let's try to get all the angels, all the humans, all the, everything created, and let's try to stop him from doing something.

He goes, it's not going to happen. Do you understand how much power that is? And he says, and no one can say to him after he's done it, no one can go, hey, what did you just do? Do you understand this God that we came in this room to worship? He's a God that's in control of everything, that no one's going to stop him. No one can question him.

No one after the fact of why'd you do that? You're not allowed to do that. No, he has complete freedom, complete authority, and a complete sovereignty to do as he wishes. We got to understand this, and when you read this in its context, you'll understand why Nebuchadnezzar said this, and you'll understand why he's so much in my mind right now when I think about the control of God.

This guy got it. This guy got it because a few verses later in Daniel chapter four, verse 28, there was a prophecy made about him. Verse 28 says, all this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar.

Verse 29, at the end of 12 months, he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, and the king answered and said, is not this great Babylon which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty? Okay, so get this. He's a king of Babylon, and this is interesting too. Babylon is a theme you see throughout scripture, and you see in the book of Revelation too.

It's this world power. It's this center of just almost self-centeredness, and it's very interesting to me that there we have in that mall there in Hollywood right next to where the red carpet comes out, where they named that court, the court of Babylon, and they have the Babylonian gods up there, and we all go there and, you know, have dinner out there and everything else. I just, I don't think it's coincidence.

It's a statement. It's a statement about, look, look at what I've made, and that's what King Nebuchadnezzar was doing at that moment, saying look at this kingdom. Look at what I built by my own hands, and then in the next verse, verse 31, while the words were still in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven.

O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken the kingdom has departed from you, and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men, and gives it to whom he will. Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among men, and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hair grew out as long as eagle's feathers, and his nails were like bird's claws.

You know, some of you guys look at that and go, come on, did that really happen? It's because you don't believe in the power of God. You believe, oh, God can speak a world into existence, but can he really screw with our minds? Can he really make me turn into a beast, and go out there and start eating the grass? Yeah, he can. Wait, so he took a man, he took the king, he took this powerful leader, and said, look, because of your arrogance, I'm gonna mess with your mind.

I'm gonna cause you to lose all reasoning, like he talks about in Romans 1. I'm gonna get you to start acting like a beast in the field, because that's what you're acting like. And I'll have you there for years, just eating the grass like an ox, and I'll have your whole body just contort and turn into like a beast of the field. And so Nebuchadnezzar, the king, is taken and humbled in that way, and then it's in that context that Nebuchadnezzar says what he says.

In verse 34, he goes, at the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes up to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever. For his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation, and all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing. He does according to his will among the hosts of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say to him, what have you done? At the same time, my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me.

My counselors and my Lord sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me. And now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the king of heaven, for all his works are right, and his ways are just, and those who walk in pride, he is able to humble. He got it, right? See, it's after all of that happened to him that he goes, okay, I just realized it doesn't matter that I'm the king of the most powerful empire right now.

There's really only one king, and he does whatever he wants. I know because he took all reasoning away from me. I'm nothing.

He made me eat grass like an ox. He made me look like a beast, and I finally looked back up to heaven, and he gave me my reasoning back, and he re-established me here, and he goes, now I know there's only one king. It's his dominion that lasts forever, ever, not mine.

He has total power. Can you understand why he would make a statement like that now, where he goes, I just realized he does whatever he wants, and I can't stop him. You can't stop him.

Doesn't matter if we all gather together, we can't stop him. And that last phrase, I love it. He just, he can humble.

All his ways are just, and those who walk in pride, he's able to humble. Just like he says in Isaiah 40, I can just blow on them, and they'd wither. So why has God shown his favor on Cornerstone Church? Because he chose to show his favor on Cornerstone Church.

He could have said years ago, okay, Francis is going to start, try to start this thing, and everyone's just going to leave, and it's going to do nothing. You see, that's all that matters. Everything is in the hand of God, and I know some of you in this room, there's, we all wrestle with pride to some degree, but some of you, I mean, you still believe you've done something, and that this is your story, and your party, and you've been so kind to invite God into your life, when the reality was, no, this is always about God, and I hope you understand that.

And he is able to humble anyone in this room. One of the prayers I pray often is, God, please help me humble myself, so you don't have to do it. Because I, you know, some of you guys know what I'm talking about.

You've been on the other side, where God had to humble you, and that's not fun. And I do, I earnestly, I go, God, help me learn this lesson. Help me learn this lesson.

I'm reading your word. Help me to get it. Help me to do it, because I don't want you to be the one that has to humble me.

Can you just do it in my heart? Can you just, by your spirit, and he does, and he does, and he does, and yet at the same time, I go, God, if, you know, humble me somehow, because I want to be under, it's so good to be under your sovereign hand. But please, please, please help me to humble myself. Give me the power by the spirit to humble myself, because God will humble you.

Some of you have been coming for a while, and you won't humble yourself. You have a hard time thinking about bowing to anyone. And can I just tell you, one day you will bow.

You will bow to Jesus. I don't care who you are. I don't care how rebellious, or angry, or how intelligent, or powerful you think you are.

You will bow. The Bible says one day every single knee is going to bow, and he'll force you to your knees. Nebuchadnezzar understood that.

The hope is, is that humbling would take place while you're still on this earth, before your life is over. But I needed to, I just, I realized I never taught that passage, at least spending time in it. That's another one of those passages where I go, I gotta, I gotta teach this before I go, because I want to make sure you understand.

It's all about him. Nebuchadnezzar understood that, and I want you to hear one other statement that relates to that, because at our elder meeting this week, Bill Lucas kind of said a passage in, in passing, and it just hit me. Thinking about this passage in Daniel, and then when I heard these words, I thought, that's a powerful statement.

It hit me harder than it has in the past. And it's Matthew 28, verse 18, and it's a passage many of you guys have memorized. But in verse 18, listen to this statement, just in this verse, Jesus came and said to them, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Okay, look at that verse. Jesus, and remember, this is Jesus after he died on the cross, and after he rose from the dead. So this is the risen Christ, who is standing before you now, to stand before these people.

He just conquered death, and he looks at these people, and he says, he goes, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Understand his power, but also understand his authority. To understand authority, like I have the right to do, see some of you are going, well God doesn't have, no, God has the right to do anything he wants.

You don't have to give him permission for anything. That's what Nebuchadnezzar was saying. And now here's the son of God, who just rose from the dead, and says, I've got every ounce of authority that exists.

You have no power over me. No one has any power over me. I have the authority.

I have the right to tell you to do anything right now. Nothing in heaven is going to stop me. Nothing on earth is going to stop me, because I have every single ounce of power right now.

That's a pretty powerful preface to what you're about to say. Can you imagine the son of God saying every ounce of authority, so just don't even listen to anyone right now. I don't care what your friends say.

I don't care what your mom says. I don't care what anyone says. I've got every ounce of authority.

I'm about to tell you something. And then he says in verse 19, go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age.

So Jesus says, after making that preface of, listen, I just rose from the grave, and I got every ounce of authority, and I'm telling you right now, you guys go and start making disciples. Go and start getting people, make disciples, disciples of follower, make followers of all the nations, baptize them. Baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe everything I commanded you.

And he goes, and I'll be with you always to the end of the age. That's what he said and ascends into heaven. It's a powerful statement, and many of us memorize this as kids, but I don't think we understood the weight of this.

I memorized it again in high school, but it's just to quote it. And then we've had Bible studies over and everything else, but think about the force of someone commanding you to make disciples. And the crazy thing is most of you have never baptized anyone, and you've never made a disciple, and that's not what your life is about right now.

And you're so funny. Well, God doesn't mind if I do this. God doesn't mind if I do, and we're so busy defending all these things we have the right to do, and yet all those things are keeping us from doing what God commanded us to do, which is to go out and make disciples.

And the Bible says when the leader leaves, there's going to be all sorts of teaching going on and different things, and my fear is not like the overtly anti-baptist biblical anti-Jesus type of message. It's the twisting of scriptures that'll take place, and it'll come out of some of your mouths that'll tell others, well, you know, we don't all have to make this. I'm discipling my kids.

Of course you're discipling your kids. That doesn't mean you don't build into other people's lives. This is our calling.

This is what the risen Christ had all the authority to command, and he commands us to do it, and somehow we create a system that tells us it's okay to get busy with other things, and we get into these studies where we study that passage to death and never actually do it because the truth is we hate doing it. We hate being rejected. We hate telling people to obey these things that God's commanded because those things are not popular today, but I thank God for an elder board and community pastors here that are saying, no, we're not going to let people off the hook.

We all should be making disciples, and we want to lead the people to that end. See, when I think about what's going to happen when I go, I've shared several times here, I don't trust a lot of people. In fact, every year I believe I'm more skeptical because every year people that I thought were real, I go, what? He was faking it the whole time, or she was faking it, or it's like what I talked about last week.

Maybe they weren't even faking it. They just were never tested, you know, like that. Remember last week, the parable of the soils and the one on the rock.

Something shoots up, and they're there, but that's just because they haven't been tested. Once the trial comes, they'll fall away, or once the temptation's great enough, they'll walk away from Jesus, and so you just realize over the years you find out who's for real and who isn't, and that list gets smaller and smaller and smaller, and people you used to lift up and idolize, you realize they were living these double lives, and you're just going, man, who can I trust anymore? And for me, you know, I'll meet people, I'll get excited or whatever, but I'm just, my guard's just up, like, I don't know. I don't know if you're the real thing.

I don't trust most of you. You know, I don't know you. I don't know your lives.

I don't know what's really going on, and the Bible says there'll be people that just look like everyone else, and to do the church thing, they'll bring their Bibles, they'll sing, raise their hands, whatever else, but that doesn't mean they're for real, because there's gonna, you gotta look at their life and say, do they look anything like Jesus? Are they acting like Jesus? It doesn't matter what they'd say. If their life doesn't match up, it doesn't mean anything, and the same way there may be humble people, and at the same time, if they're not teaching the same things that Jesus taught, it doesn't make sense either. That's why Paul tells Timothy, he goes, hey, watch your life and your doctrine closely, and so on.

Do I get a little nervous? You know, I pray. I go, God, please take this peace, because I want you guys to follow and to live and to make disciples. Like I said last week, I want you to stand before God and hear Him say, well done.

Like, I want that so badly, and yet I know there'll be many people who don't want that, and they'll teach you other things, and they'll twist the doctrines, and sometimes we want people to twist the doctrine for us, because there's things we ultimately want, and so we try to find teachers that'll tell us the things we want, but I think when you're alone with the Word of God and the Holy Spirit, there's certain things in the scriptures you know in your heart. It's just not congruent with your lifestyle right now, and so rather than finding these teachers who will tell you what you want to hear, listen to the Holy Spirit and study the Word of God and do whatever He's called you to, because the American church is a very difficult place to live out biblical Christianity, because everyone will push you toward comfort and toward the American way rather than the biblical way. I'm not anti-American or whatever, you know, like, hey Chinaman, you know, it's not that.

No, no, it's not. I love this country. I love being here and everything else, but you got to admit there's a flow and a way of doing things here that isn't biblical, and what we as believers supposed to do is to live counter our culture, to not conform to the pattern of this world, right, but have our minds transformed and to live a different way.

Having said that, in light of what Paul says, for years I have not felt released from Cornerstone Church because I worry about it, and I think about, well, if I leave, I don't know that this is going to be right. This is going to be right, and I don't trust a lot of people, and so I don't want to just let go and let someone else come take over, but over the last few years, I'm looking at our elder board, and I'm looking at your community pastors and your leaders, and I'm going, I trust them. In fact, I look at a guy like Bill Lucas, Pastor Bill, who did their wedding 15, 16 years ago.

He and Rhonda have watched their lives over the last 15 years, and the man of God that he is, I don't know of anyone with a more pure heart than Bill Lucas and sincerity of motive, and I've been watching that guy for 15 years, and so I go, you know what? I trust him. I look at Steve and Dory Doucette, and when they first started coming to the church, all these people started coming because Steve and Dory had an impact on their lives, and they just started counting. They're just people, you know, just hanging out, but they were just in everyone's lives and ministering to them.

They finally were like, would you be an elder at this church? Because we're seeing what God's done through you, and the sincerity of that faith and sacrifice he made to become a pastor here, and I go, okay, this is the real thing. I hear it in the doctrine. I see it in their life.

Look at Matt Moore, Matt and Sarah, who are willing to do anything, go anywhere on this planet. No one will work harder for the sake of the gospel or sacrifice more. Sometimes he works himself to a fault, and yet he has this childlike faith and prayer that's contagious.

I think you heard that when he preached here a couple weeks ago. Terry and Sheila Earwood, that's the real thing right there. There are times when I've heard Terry pastor someone, and I almost get envious, like why don't I love like he loves? Why can't I love like that? And every time my wife talks to Sheila, you can't talk to her without crying.

There's just like this sincerity, this realness to them, and why do I leave? Because I go, it's not like I'm leaving a place without shepherds. I travel the world, and I don't trust people like I trust these community pastors, and then there's Todd Niswonger, who this was the real one that kind of put me over the edge, where I go, you know what? For the first time, I believe there's someone that loves Cornerstone Church more than I do, and he's shown it the last couple of years, and he's been leading this church for the last couple of years. I'm still preaching whatever, but I would look at his life, and I go, he loves the church more than me, Lord.

He loves these people more than me. He works harder for them. He prays for them more, and he's the one that got me thinking biblically in so many different areas, and challenged me, and really sharpened me, and I've shared this before.

He was the first person to make me feel like I wasn't crazy, you know? Seriously, like I go, gosh, I just see this in scripture. Could it be that we're supposed to just do it? And he goes, no, you're right. I agree with you.

You do. Like, you know, it's just for years, it just felt like everyone's like, oh, that's Francis. That's Francis, and Todd was just kind of the first guy to go, no, that's the way we're all supposed to be.

I go, thank you, and looking at his love, looking at his passion, and he has a better handle of the scriptures than I do, and so I don't fear in that sense. I go, God, it's definitely true that I'm not leaving this group without a shepherd. The question is, is will you follow them? Because I understand there are some differences, and some of you guys have been attracted to me, and my ministry, and I thank you for that, and I, you know, some of you have trusted me because you not only heard my doctrine, but you saw my life as well, and I will do my heart, my best, and before the Lord, by the power of the Spirit, to maintain that reputation before you.

I don't want you to hear 10 years from now, oh, Francis blew it, he went off the deep end, because we've heard that story way too many times, but I do sense a real freedom to go that direction because of where the elders are today, and the question is, is will you follow them? Hebrews 13 verse 7 says this, Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God, consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Consider the outcome of their way of life. See, that's so important, because I don't want you just to listen to anyone, because there's a lot of great teachers, but look at their lives, do they resemble Jesus? That's the goal here, is that my life should try, I should be looking more and more like Jesus every year, my actions should look more and more like his, that humility that he had, that giving of himself, the considering others more important than himself, look at their lives, don't just listen to these great teachers, look at their lives, and then it says consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith, and I just see these guys as men of faith, and I hope that you imitate them, because too many people just get church all screwed up, they think church is a place where you're supposed to come, evaluate the music, evaluate the message, you don't like it, the child care, the programs, if not, I'll go to a different one.

No, what church was supposed to be was a bunch of people that were spending their days out making disciples, trying to get other people to follow God, and they get so beat up that they just naturally would gather together, and have this fellowship, this bond where they bandage one another up, and send them back out, and sometimes the reason why churches don't work quite right, is like we're a bunch of soldiers that never went to war, and yet we all go to the war hospital, and start playing with the bandages, and go, hey look at this, you know, it's like you haven't even been beat up, because you haven't been at war, and so it doesn't even make sense to gather together, you know, and try to encourage each other, because we're not even after the mission anymore, and yeah, look at these elders, and I'm going, no, they're going to push things, and we're going to make sure that we're heading toward this direction. I thank God for these men, and I hope that you do follow them, and I still got a couple weeks here, but I just thought, you know, I need to share some of these things. I'm heading out for 10 days, I'm going out to London tonight, and then Chicago, and then I'll be back in two weeks, and then I'll speak, and then I'll have one more, and so I figure next time is really going to be the last time I'll be able to say anything, because I'll probably be a basket case the last weekend, but I thought these were the things that the Lord laid on my heart this week, and I hope you listen, and follow these leaders, because I trust them so much, and I feel real peace about leaving because of that, and I understand some things are different, you know, my personality is a little different, because you know, well yeah, but you're funnier, and I agree, I am you know, and a little more attractive, those types of things, so, and I know you'll miss some of the eye candy, you know, it's just, but when you look at the things that matter, you know, and just the life of these guys, I just go, okay, you know what, Lord, nothing's really changing.

In fact, isn't that what making disciples is all about, is you train people, you live with people, and then they do what you were doing for all those years, and I get excited about this next phase in the church, and I hope that you really would join them in prayer, because really, if it's all in God's hands, and it's his party, then it's all about coming before him, and as a worship team, worship team is going to come up right now, and we're going to have some songs, and sing to the Lord, but it's so cool, this first service, at first service, and there's so many people getting baptized, but one was like this 10-year-old kid who brought his little buddy up here, and he's introducing him, and he goes, yeah, I've known so-and-so, how long have I known you, like four years, you know, yeah, yeah, you know, and he's just saying he gave his life to the Lord last night, and so I'm going to baptize him, and I thought, that's awesome, here's this 10-year-old kid making disciples, and there's no excuse for anyone, you know, it's that type of life, and just seeing person

after person baptizing their friends, and maybe this morning, some of you, I'm going to pray that God humbles you, one way or another, but maybe this morning, you heard the message for the first time, and maybe it's the first time God finally humbles you, and you recognize this is not your party, and it's not about you, and you want to join him in his, maybe this first time you understand that Jesus actually left heaven, he didn't have to, he came down and died for you, paid for all your sins on that cross, and rose from that grave, and says he can put his spirit in you now, maybe you want that, and if that's you during this time of worship, there'll be some pastors whom I trust, who will pray with you, baptize you, and join our body, and maybe some of you just need some prayer, so you have some questions, come and talk to someone during this time, but the rest of us, let's think about this God that we're about to worship, okay, think about who we're singing to, and let's worship him.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/vtzGtO3pC7c.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/francis-chan/the-purpose-of-your-life/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net