Series: Four Cups

 Based on the book by Chris Hodges.

February 18, 2018

Growth Track

Generosity/Faithfulness

Family Dinner

Message Three:

**Design Reveals Destiny**

Exodus 6:6-7

***Have a third cup of juice on a table to add to the first two.***

**Intro:** We are talking about 4 purposes that God has for our lives based on the four cups that are received in the Jewish Passover celebration. These are the four purposes of New Life Church.

The Passover is the most significant celebration of the Jewish people - and since Jesus came as an extension and fulfillment of all the Jewish promises of the Old Testament, it is highly significant for us as well - and there are four promises and purposes symbolized by these four cups that are extremely important for us as well.

In fact, Jesus was celebrating the Passover meal with His followers just before His crucifixion when He took one of these cups and said that God was making a New Covenant -

Luke 22:20 - After supper he took another cup of wine and said, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you.”

Actually, He was at this cup in the Passover meal - the third cup -

Exodus 6:6-7 - Therefore, say to the people of Israel: ‘I am the Lord. I will free you from your oppression and will rescue you from your slavery in Egypt. I will redeem you with a powerful arm and great acts of judgment. I will claim you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God who has freed you from your oppression in Egypt.

* I will free you from your oppression.
* I will rescue you from your slavery in Egypt.
* I will redeem you with a powerful arm and great acts of judgment.
* I will claim you as my own people, and I will be your God.

These four statements are memorialized by four cups of wine that are part of the Passover celebration.

When we have surrendered our lives to Jesus, we have been brought into the family of God and these commitments become ours - and these become our purposes - this is what we are teaching in this series.

In the first message, we talked about **the first cup - The Cup of Sanctification -**

Exodus 6:6 - …I will free you from your oppression…

To be sanctified means to be cleaned up and set apart for God’s purpose.

We drink the cup of Sanctification by accepting Jesus as God’s Son and Savior of our sins …we accept that Jesus’ work on the cross brings us forgiveness and freedom from those sins.

Last week we talked about **the second cup - the Cup of Deliverance -**

Exodus 6:6- I will … rescue you from your slavery.

God promised not only to bring them out of Egypt, but to set them free from a slavery mindset.

First we are forgiven - then we are set free from our past. For that to fully happen, we need each other -

This is why we small groups are such a key part of our opportunities here - and that is what they are - opportunities - we can’t make anyone do anything - we can’t change anyone’s lives - but we can offer opportunities that we believe will be life-changing - and we know that the relationships people find in small group provide significant life-change!

James 5:16 - Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.

Being together - living together - doing life together - loving each other - holding one another accountable - supporting one another - listening to one another - confessing to one another - praying for one another -

This is God’s plan for us to live in freedom beyond forgiveness.

**The third cup is the Cup of Redemption -**

Exodus 6:6 - … I will redeem you with a powerful arm and great acts of judgment.

Redemption - to buy back … to recover … the exchange one item of value for another item of value.

***Have coupons & cards … - give away …***

This piece of paper is worthless … unless you take it to Culver’s … Dairy Queen…

A Gift card is worthless … unless you take it to the restaurant…

Now you can do it with apps …

I get points at Speedway … but I have to redeem them … It’s valuable to me to get 50 cents off per gallon when I fill up my truck!

I get points on the GM Card … not much … but if I can get a few dollars off another vehicle in a few years, I’ll take a few hundred dollars off - but I have to remember to REDEEM them!

I get cash back on my Discover Card - I can redeem that when I buy things on Amazon … or I can get store cards … restaurant cards -

This is REDEMPTION!

When God redeemed His people from slavery in Egypt - they took the life of a lamb … spread its blood on the doorposts of their homes … that was what they presented for lives of their firstborn children to be saved … Death angel would “pass over” …

When Jesus came - He was the “Lamb of God”…

God presented Jesus’ life - in exchange for our lives! So - before we know Christ, we are owned by our sin. We are owned by the enemy of our souls.

But, when we accept God’s offer of redemption - we are owned by God! He’s a much better owner!

You are going to be owned by someone or something - the only way to be truly free, is to be owned by God!

John 8:36 - So if the Son sets you free, you are truly free.

Why does He redeem us? Why does He value us so?

Because He has a plan and a purpose for our lives!

God’s plan for the Israelites was more than making bricks out of mud and straw and building cities for Egypt -

God’s plan for you is much greater than waking up - eating breakfast - going to work - going home - eating dinner - and doing the same thing over and over again the next day.

Everything you do - including your daily work - can be sacred and holy once you realize the purpose for which God has redeemed you!

I redeem a coupon for ice cream so I can eat it - enjoy it - be fulfilled!

Jesus redeems us with a purpose - and living in that purpose will bring greater fulfillment than ice cream!

Ephesians 2:10 - For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Wow! God’s got great plans for us!

The Greek word for “masterpiece” here is the same word that is translated “poem" and “poetry” -

**We are the poem that God knew He wanted to write before the world began!**

He has redeemed us so that we can be followers of and learn from Him. The essence of being a follower and learner of Christ is to discover and develop the reason why we were created.

Why are you here? Why were you born? Why were you redeemed?

The third purpose of our church is to help you discover this for yourself!

We have a process - the Growth Track - it’s about your growth!

Our first purpose is reflected in the first cup - Sanctification - we are forgiven and set apart by God. We come to know God.

Our second purpose is reflected in the second cup - Deliverance - we become free from the pain of our past life - this happens as our relationships are deepened with other believers - this is why we offer so many Small Groups.

Our third purpose is reflected in this third cup - Redemption. We have been bought by the blood of Christ to fulfill His purpose for our lives!

God wants you to be all that He created you to be!

The Army used to recruit by saying “Be all that you can be!” It takes more than the Army for that - it takes Jesus!

Exodus 6:6 - … I will redeem you with a powerful arm.

God is a spirit - much more than physical flesh - so He doesn’t have arms - but if He did He would have the biggest biceps you’ve ever seen!

He reaches down and pulls us up from the mess our lives were in - It takes some strength to do that!

Psalm 18:35 - Your right hand supports me; your help has made me great.

He comes down to our level - sometimes we have been convinced that we’re not so great. We’ve resigned ourselves to the fact that our lives will be ordinary at best. We accept that - when God has something extraordinary for us!

We often miss it, because our definition of what is extraordinary can be different than His -

I used to think I knew what God had for my life - it was “great” in my mind - by my definition -

That thought hasn’t happened - that thought most likely will never happen -

But here’s what I pray - Come Kingdom of God … Don’t let me miss it …

So, I look back, and I believe God has answered my prayer - and I have not missed God’s will for my life!

Psalm 16:9 - We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps.

Psalm 37:23 - The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.

“God wants to help you discover what you were made to do and experience the fulfillment that comes from that.” - Hodges

Exodus 6:6 - …I will redeem you with a powerful arm and great acts of judgment.

This might be confusing - how is God’s judgment a blessing? Don’t think this judgment is on us! This judgment was on the Egyptians! He redeemed His people by judging their enemies!

He redeems us by judging our ultimate enemy! This is how He sets us free!

Genesis 3:15 - …He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.

1st John 3:8 - …the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil.

John 19:30 - It is finished!

The devil has a plan for your life too - it is to destroy you - and until you come into a relationship with Jesus, you are living according to that plan.

You may not realize it - everything may seem to be going great - that is exactly what the devil wants you to think!

John 10:10 - The thief’s purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

There is the contrast of purposes!

Its easy for us to just focus on what is going on today - and not realize that God often has a greater purpose than the one we are living - and He has an even greater purpose for our future when most of us haven’t even contemplated that!

**Do you pray for God to only meet your immediate needs? Or are you praying for God to reveal how He has designed your life to be part of His purpose for changing the world?**

Hodges: If the devil can’t keep you out of heaven, then he’d at least like you to be ineffective in the meantime.

The first cup is not the end of His plan for your life …

The second cup is not the end of His plan for your life …

God wants you to grow, discover, and develop into all that He created you to be! If you don’t realize this and go for this, you will fall short of His full plan for your life!

Don’t let God’s purposes for your life go unfulfilled!

This is what the Growth Track is all about - helping you to find your purpose - and find your place in God’s purpose!

**Your design reveals your destiny.**

Remember - you are God’s masterpiece - God deliberately made you the way you are. He has given you gifts! Do you know what they are? He gives you the opportunity to live fulfilled in those gifts. Do you know the opportunities there are for that?

Remember Jesus story of the guy who gave three other guys various amounts of money to deal with? One of them buried his gift in the back yard! The one who entrusted him with that gift wasn’t happy!

Are you burying God’s gifts in your life? That doesn’t honor what God has done to redeem you …

1st Corinthians 12:4-7 - There are **different** kinds of spiritual gifts, but the **same** Spirit is the source of them all. There are **different** kinds of service, but we serve the **same** Lord. God works in **different** ways, but it is the **same** God who does the work in all of us.

 A spiritual gift is given to each of us…

We are all made different and given different gifts - but the same God made us and gave us these gifts for His purposes! We find our fulfillment when we live and serve according to the gifts He has given us!

And you have not been left out - EACH ONE OF US!

Here’s how this works - Rick Warren:

Imagine that the various spiritual gifts are like family members around a dinner table - someone drops their dessert -

Mercy - Don’t feel bad, it could have happened to anyone.

Preaching - That’s what happens when you’re not careful.

Serving - Let me snow you clean it up.

Teaching - The reason it fell is because it was too heavy on one side.

Exhortation - Next time, let’s serve the dessert with the meal.

Giving - Let me buy you another dessert!

Administration - Jim, get a mop. Sue, pick it up. Mary, help me fix another dessert.

There are more gifts! It’s wonderful when we know what they are and we all serve together! This is the dream!

We don’t compare ourselves with one another - we are all different - that’s God’s design!

All of these gifts are surrendered to God - and are served with and governed by the fruit of the Spirit -

Galatians 5:22-23 - But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

We will be most effective when all gifts are operating as God desires.

The Bible refers to us as a body. If a body is missing an arm or a leg, it can function, but it’s not as effective … lung …

You need to discover your gifts and purpose to be completely fulfilled - and the Body of Christ needs your gifts and purpose in order to completely fulfill our purpose together!

God can do anything He wants - but He’s shown value in us - by REDEEMING us with the blood of Christ, and giving us the opportunity to be a part of His great purpose!

Are you in?