

✘ Sense of Purpose ✘

YOUNG PERSON REPORTS THAT, "MY LIFE HAS A PURPOSE."

By Jackie Heyda

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My name is Jackie Heyda and I'm a senior at Augsburg College majoring in Elementary Education. I grew up in the historic town of New Prague, MN. I have one sister named Jodie who is a sophomore at Winona State University. I'm also a Big Sister in Minneapolis to Latrice, who is eleven years old.

On Your Mark, Get Set, Go!

2 Timothy 4:5-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.



- Describe your race.
 - What happened during it?
 - Describe the various feeling you felt preparing, running and finishing the race.
 - What was it along the way and at the end that gave your race meaning and purpose?
 - Did you want to give up?
 - What made you finish?
- Who are the people you know that seem to be living life with purpose? Tell about them.
- Who are the people you know that seem to draw strength from their faith?
- What are the stories and people written about in the Bible that most influence your (or others) purpose?
- How has life seemed like running a long distance race?
- What gives your life meaning?
- What goals do you hope to reach in life?
- How do you stay focused on the goals that give you purpose and meaning in life?
- What happens when things don't go smoothly? What life-storms slow you down?
- How might faith in God shape your sense of purpose?

So What?

Pick one of the following that best describes your reflection on this discussion and complete the sentence with your own thoughts.

- I need...
- I hope...
- I learned...
- I will pray...
- I am still wondering...
- I am feeling...
- I will take action by...



Candle Time

Read Romans 8:28 and Jeremiah 29:11 as a closing prayer:
 "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."
 "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."



EXPLORE

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| Isaiah 43: 1-7 | I have called you by name, you are mine. |
| Exodus 9:16 | ...I have let you live: to show you my... |
| Romans 8:28- | ...all things work together for good... |
| Hebrews 12:1-2 | ...let us run with perseverance the race that... |
| Micah 6:8 | ...do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with... |
| Proverbs 19:21 | The human mind may devise many plans, but... |



▣ Leader Page ▣

Discussion Goal

Name and claim life purposes as goals worth living for.

Background

It is important for people to know that they have purpose in life and that they are special and precious in God's sight. People need a goal to strive for which gives life meaning and worth. Imagine a life with no purpose or meaning. It would be empty and shallow. Making a difference for another person, for one's family and for the world can only be called life-giving purpose. In II Timothy 4:5-11 Paul is writing as he looks back over 30 years as an apostle. Like an athlete who has engaged successfully in a contest, he feels he has "finished the race" and has "kept the faith." Paul finds meaning and hope in this purpose-filled life. The crown of righteousness refers to a crown given as a reward for a righteous life, a prize worth hoping for. This session offers a chance to identify and name purposes worth striving for.

Motivate

Before reading the text, have all persons in the group close their eyes. Ask them to imagine that they are running a race. Remember preparing and training for this race. Imagine this long distance race. Remember the anticipation. Remember the starting gunshot and how your heart raced. Remember running over hazards, running up hills, running through bad weather, as well as the flat, cool, sunny days. Remember the joys and the disappointments. As you run, who do you see cheering you on? Who do you see offering help and encouragement? What is it like when you pass people who point and laugh at you, calling you names and mocking saying that you are wasting your time? How do you feel when you pass people who never ran a race but seem loaded with stuff that just seemed to come to them? As you run, imagine what your thoughts are about the question, "Why do I run?" What might be your own doubts? What are the joys along the way? What are the rewards? What do you hope to find at the finish line? What is it that makes your life meaningful, purpose-filled and worth the running?

Read 2 Timothy 4:5-8.

Invite everyone to slowly open their eyes.

Option

Ask the group to write letters to God about what they see their purpose in life is or anything they want to write about. They can write about their worries about the future or any concerns they have.



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