

Week 1: Discovering Your Place in the Body of Christ

Speaker: Pastor Ken James (Columbia, MO)

1. Every Believer Has a God-Given Purpose

- God has placed and arranged each of us in the body of Christ with a specific function.
(*1 Corinthians 12:18-20, 27*)
- We are not here by accident—God has uniquely designed us for a purpose.
- Whether young or old, we all have a role to play in the kingdom.

2. Finding Your Purpose in the Body of Christ

- Your purpose is not random—it is divinely appointed.
- You may call it a mission, calling, responsibility, or placement, but everyone has a role.
- The enemy will try to keep believers inactive or unfruitful, but that is not God's design.
(*1 Corinthians 12:18, 27*)
- Being present in church is not the same as actively fulfilling your purpose.

3. Biblical Examples of Purpose in Action

Moses: Called to Lead (*Exodus 3:10-12, Hebrews 11:24-26*)

- Moses was saved for a purpose, even when circumstances seemed against him.
- He was trained in Egypt, but his real purpose was to lead Israel out of bondage.
- God's plan often requires preparation and growth before stepping into purpose.

Mary, the Mother of Jesus: Purpose in Humility (*Luke 1:26-38*)

- Mary's purpose didn't change her external circumstances—she remained humble and faithful.
- Our calling may not always make us more prosperous or well-liked, but it brings true fulfillment.
- Sometimes accepting God's purpose is easier than living it out.

Esther: Positioned for a Greater Purpose (*Esther 4:13-14*)

- Esther likely didn't see her greater purpose when she first entered the palace.
- God placed her where she was for a critical moment in history.
- Sometimes, our calling unfolds gradually, and we must walk in faith.

Solomon: Purpose Comes with Responsibility (*1 Kings 3:5-14*)

- Solomon was born into his purpose, but he still had to seek wisdom to fulfill it well.
- Purpose is not just about personal blessing—it is meant to serve and bless others.

Paul: Misguided Purpose Can Be Redirected (*Acts 9:15-16*)

- Paul was zealous but misguided—he thought he was serving God by persecuting Christians.
- A God-given purpose aligns with His will, not just our own passion.
- Even when we've been heading in the wrong direction, God can redirect us toward His true calling.

4. Purpose is Not Just About You—It's About the Church

- The body of Christ functions best when every part is active. (*Ephesians 4:16*)
- Discovering your purpose is not just for your own fulfillment, but to strengthen the entire church.
- God's desire is for each of us to contribute in a way that makes the church more effective.

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Things to Think About (Discussion Questions):

- Have you discovered your purpose in the body of Christ? If not, what steps can you take to seek it out?
- Are you actively fulfilling your role in the church, or are you just present?
- Which biblical example from today's lesson resonates with you the most? Why?
- Have you ever experienced a season where God was preparing you before stepping into your purpose? What did you learn?
- Do you believe that your calling is meant to serve others? How does that shape your perspective?
- What obstacles—fear, doubt, insecurity—keep people from stepping into their God-given purpose? How can those be overcome?
- How can you start walking in your purpose today, even in small ways?