

FIND YOUR PURPOSE

JOHN 14:1-3

OUR PURPOSE: GOD'S HOME



FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

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INTRODUCTION

Homelessness is a miserable experience. We see it in our big cities especially: New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, etc. But we also see it closer to home at with homeless beggars at many Grand Rapids traffic stops, and tent encampments along the banks of the Grand River. Who cannot feel sorry for the people in these awful circumstances. To be homeless is to be uncomfortable, cold, wet, vulnerable, lonely, insecure, hungry, pitiable, unhealthy, and afraid.

But the Bible teaches us that homelessness is much closer to home than the big cities, and even Grand Rapids. It's not just something we can see on our computer screens or through our car windows. It's something we can see in the mirror. Yes, you are homeless. I am homeless. We are all spiritually homeless to one degree or another. That's not how it was meant to be. That's not how God intended it to be. This was not God's purpose for us. We feel our homelessness from time to time. So, **where is home and how do we get there?** In John 14, Jesus tells us where home is and how to get there.

BACKGROUND

- Sermon 1: God's purpose is to glorify himself in grace-and-truth filled relationships.
- Sermon 2: Our first purpose is to glorify God in grace-and-truth filled relationships.
- Sermon 3: Our second purpose is to give God pleasure.
- Sermon 4: Our third purpose is to receive and return God's love.
- Sermon 5: Our fourth purpose is to be part of God's family.
- Sermon 6: Our fifth purpose is to be like God's Son.
- Sermon 7: Our sixth purpose is to be God's servant.
- Sermon 8: Our seventh purpose is to be God's missionary
- Sermon 9: Our eighth purpose is God's home.



But I'm not homeless. I have a lovely home.



1. WE ARE HOMELESS

"Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me" (1).

Our First Home

God's created a perfect home in a perfect world for his perfect people (Genesis 1-2). Eden was the divine paradise that God designed and created for the first human beings, Adam and Eve. It was "Home Sweet Home."

Our Eviction

But our first parents rebelled against the home builder, disobeyed his rules, and were punished with eviction from God's home and God's presence (Gen. 3). They were put outside the garden, outside God's special nearness, and exposed to all the miseries of homelessness. Since then, we're all born outside of God's garden and presence.

Our Homelessness

Even if we live in a big beautiful home with a big beautiful family, we are spiritually homeless. We are outside of God's family, God's home, God's presence, God's love, God's protection. We are spiritually uncomfortable, cold, wet, vulnerable, lonely, insecure, hungry, pitiable, unhealthy, and afraid.

Thankfully God has made a way back to him and his home. In the Old Testament, he provided a Tabernacle and a Temple for the spiritually homeless to find a home with him and nearness to him by visiting his home with a sacrifice. In the New Testament, God has provided an even better way home and even greater nearness to him by providing the sacrifice of Jesus and the fellowship of his family in his church.

But even those of us who come home to God through Jesus's sacrifice and Christian fellowship, still feel homeless at times. It's like we're in a halfway house. Being a Christian is better than being totally homeless and outside. We get special times of closeness and nearness to God and his family through Christ. But we still feel like pilgrims and strangers at times. God can feel distant, our enemies can feel close, our sufferings are long and deep. We sense that there must be somewhere better, somewhere that is really home.

That's where the disciples were at in John 14. In the previous chapter, Jesus's words about his departure through death had left them feeling alone, insecure, anxious, and disturbed. He saw their perplexity and, in John 14, he begins to comfort them with the prospect of a far better home and a far better family in the future.

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

Do you feel at home here? If you feel at home in this world, you have never been more homeless. You are homeless and you don't even realize it. It's like a homeless person living in a tent thinking that he's living his best life. Ask God to show you your homelessness.

Do you feel homeless here? That's good! Praise God for helping you to feel how bad that experience is. It's the first step on the way home. Jesus tells you how to get home in John 14:1, 6. If you are not a Christian, you should be thankful that God has helped you to feel homeless and given you times of feeling at home with Jesus and his people. But that isn't constant, is it? Like the disciples we long for more.

THE FIRST STEP HOME
IS HAVING NO HOME



Where and when will we ever feel "at home"?



2. OUR FATHER PROVIDES A HOME FOR US

"In my Father's house are many rooms" (2).

Heaven is home

Over the past seven sermons on purpose we've learned that there are a number of tracks to our purpose in life. But, all of them have one great aim and destination. Home! Our greatest, ultimate, primary purpose is to get home. As Tim Keller said in some of his last words to his family (remember, this was a man who had fulfilled so much of God's purpose on earth). But listen to his final words to his family: "He expressed many times through prayer his desire to go home to be with Jesus. His family is very sad because we all wanted more time, but we know he has very little at this point. In prayer, he said two nights ago, "I'm thankful for all the people who've prayed for me over the years. I'm thankful for my family, that loves me. I'm thankful for the time God has given me, but I'm ready to see Jesus. I can't wait to see Jesus. Send me home." Randy Van Dyk and his family have expressed similar words in recent weeks. However much Randy wishes he had more time, and his family wish they had more time, they all realize that this life is all about getting home. That's our greatest purpose. We must get home.

Heaven is homey

What makes heaven such a wonderful house is that it's our Father's house. It's not where it is or what it is but whose it is that fills us with longing and desire. If he's there, love is there, peace is there, power is there, beauty is there, wisdom is there, provision is there, delight is there, friendship is there, family is there.

Think of the relief of getting home when we've been away for a long time, or if we've had a hospital stay, or if we've been serving in mission or in the military. That feeling of relief and joy as we walk into our home, is a fraction of the relief and joy we will experience when we get to our final home. However comfortable we've had it down here, however happy, getting to heaven will feel like getting home after fighting in a long brutal war.

Heaven is huge

Sometimes when we go to book a hotel room, we are told, "Sold out" or "No rooms available." That will never happen in heaven. There are many, many, many rooms. The kind of homes the disciples would have in mind when they heard this was the common Middle Eastern design of a large central garden courtyard where everyone gathered with multiple rooms built around it.

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

Get home. Getting home is our greatest purpose. Nothing else matters. You must get home or you will become eternally homeless, eternally outside, eternally lonely. Start every day with "I must get home."

Help home. If we know how wonderful heaven is, how homey, surely we want to do everything in our power to help others get there too. When people tell us, it's not for them, assure them of the many rooms. There's still room. There will always be room until the very end. As long as there is time, there's room.

MAKE YOUR HOME
ABOUT GETTING HOME



That sounds amazing.
But how do I get home?



3. OUR SAVIOR PREPARES A HOME FOR US

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (2-3).

Jesus prepares our home

When Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you" he was referring firstly to clearing the road home. The greatest home is useless if the access road is blocked. Jesus went to clear the access to God and open the door of heaven by dying on the cross to remove the barriers between us and God. Secondly, he was referring to our experience of heaven when we get there. He prepared earthly rooms as a carpenter and now prepares heavenly rooms as the Savior. He's preparing a unique place for each of his unique people so that each will have a unique experience of home.

Jesus takes us home

When our kids are away from home for a while, we miss them and long for them to return home. Perhaps they are at college or working in another state. But then the date for their return comes and you are so anxious to see them that you don't wait for them to come home, but go and get them yourself. Jesus has that same longing to see each of his people and at the set time, he goes to get each one at just the right time and in just the right way.

Jesus welcomes us home

Jesus does not just take us home but welcomes us home and enjoys us at home. He takes us to himself and wants us to be with himself, literally "face to face" with himself. He'll show us around and introduce us to the rest of the family. "Look at this and this! Look at her! Look at him!" He'll take us to our room and show us around with delight. He'll remind us that there's no night there, no death, no sorrow, no crying, no pain, no sin, no Satan, no worry, no depression, no disease, no evil. There's no place like home.

CHANGING OUR STORIES WITH GOD'S STORY

Praise the Preparer. He's done so much, is still doing so much, and will yet do so much to make your home, to take you home, and to make you feel at home.

Trust the Taker. Jesus has designed our taking so that it's best for us and the best way to get others ready for home too. Our arrival and departure times are on God's timetable. He's designed the road and the transport. It can be a long and rough journey, but remember where you are going and who's taking you there.

Anticipate the welcome. We cannot imagine how welcoming Jesus will be to us and for us. "I'm so glad to have you home" he'll say, because his prayer has been answered: "Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS



Hear God's Story > Change your story > Tell the story > Change others' stories



SUMMARY



A NEW CHAPTER

Unbelievers: You must prioritize securing a heavenly home over your earthly home. Nothing matters more than this. You cannot get there apart from Christ (John 14:6)

Believers: While thankful for finding a home with God and with his people, while thankful for moments of joy and belonging, yet we still have times when we realize we are not yet fully home. It reminds us that here we have no continuing city but seek one to come (Heb. 13:14). Every day, remind yourself, "I must get home. I must prepare for going home as Christ is preparing my home for me."

Prayer: Home builder and home preparer, we thank you for not only providing a heavenly home, but preparing it for us so that we can be eternally at home with you and so fulfill our greatest purpose.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does spiritual homelessness feel like?
2. What makes a Christian feel homeless in this world?
3. How did this sermon change the way you view the church, this world, death, heaven?
4. How can you help others get home?
5. What are the parallels/differences between your earthly home and your heavenly home?
6. If "getting home" is our greatest purpose, what difference does that make to our lives?

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