



WEEK TWO: CREATED TO BE ALL IN

Question of the week:

What is the meaning of life? How do you live that out?

Share:

Has anyone had a chance to take part in the Pathway to Life (initiate, invest, invite, and re-invest) with someone this week? Describe your experience.

Pray:

Before you get into reading and discussing God's Word, take a moment to pray for those who had a chance to take part in the Pathway to Life, and for more opportunities to display and declare the gospel as a group.

Introduction:

Last week we talked about God's great pursuit of us and the ways that God showed He was ALL IN for the redemption of His creation. Today we are setting our sites on the implications of being made in God's image.

Early on in Genesis we learn that human beings are distinct from the rest of creation in that we are made in the image of God:

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

*So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.*

God is *for* us from the beginning. He attributes great worth and purpose to our existence by indicating that we are made in His image.

- What does it mean to be created in the image and likeness of God?
- How does knowing that we are made in God's image shape our purpose in life?

From the beginning, God created people with great worth and purpose. Ultimately we were created to be ALL IN for God's glory. Everything we have — life, relationships, time, possessions — are gifts from God that were given to us for the purpose of making God known and worshiped in the world.

However, like everything else of creation, our understanding of identity and purpose was broken when human beings chose to rebel against God at the Fall. The struggle with identity and purpose has plagued humanity ever since. Our entire view of life is now warped. People began searching for identity and worth in possessions, income, work, relationships, and other objects of creation instead of in the Creator.

- What are the things in your life that compete with God for your identity and purpose? How so?

God is rich in mercy, and because of His great love showed us He was ALL IN for our redemption through the cross of Jesus Christ. And when Jesus rose from the dead to conquer suffering, sin and death, our identity and purpose was restored!¹

Through Christ we can participate in the mission for which we were created — to display and declare the glory of God throughout all of creation.

- Once we are restored back to God, what does it mean for us to be ALL IN for God's glory as an individual? As a Small Group? As a church?

At Pathway we long to be a church filled with people who are ALL IN for God's glory. If we are to do that it is going to take ongoing prayer and intentionality in seeking God's will for our lives.

- What are some of the barriers that stop us from being ALL IN?
- In what ways can you and your Small Group break through those barriers and live into your calling to display and declare the gospel?

Extend the Discussion:

- What is the difference between being an owner and a steward?

Read through *Making it Count* on the following page and consider the scope of our calling to be stewards.

¹ Ephesians 2:4-10

Making it Count...

If you were offered \$86,400 per day for an undetermined amount of days would you accept it?

Of course you would! You would be crazy not to — what a gift! Imagine what you would do with that money. How would you spend the money on the first day? How would your life change after the first week? What priorities or influences would help you decide where to spend the money? Do you get excited thinking about it? Do you think you'd ever get tired of spending the money?

But what if you were told that you would get \$86,400 per day for an undisclosed amount of days but when it ended you would never get paid again. You had to use all the money every day. Whatever you did not use would be thrown in a fire and, thereby, couldn't be used later. You can spend it, you can invest it, but you cannot hold onto it.

When the time was up and the money stopped, what would your life be characterized by? How would you have spent or invested the daily value entrusted to you? Would your house look different? Would you have more things? How might your relationships have changed? Would your community, or the world, be affected by your riches? If so, how?

As nice as it may sound, it is unlikely that the above mentioned scenario will ever happen. However, there *are* 86,400 seconds in a day. That is 86,400 moments at your disposal to use. How will you capitalize on them? How will you steward them? What priorities are conveyed through your calendar? Where are you investing your life?

There will be a day when each of us is out of moments. The 86,400 moments is a gift from God that will end someday. The

Bible says everything we give, everything we do, everything we have invested in, everything we build our lives on will be tested by fire (1 Cor 3:10-15). And anything we invest in, anything we build our lives on, apart from Christ will be lost, burnt up like ashes. Whereas, when Christ returns once and for all, everything that was built on Him will be rewarded (1 Cor 3:14).

Where is your life being spent? What will your story be marked by when your moments are up?

We tend to think of stewardship in terms of money, but in reality God has entrusted us with time, money, possessions, talents, abilities, and relationships, and He has invited us to invest, to be ALL IN, on something that will last — His eternal kingdom. If you are here it's not too late. How are you stewarding what you have? To what ends are you investing? Make it count!

Heaven, not earth, is our home. Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt. 6:21). Do you wish you cared more about eternal things? Then reallocate some of your money, maybe *most* of your money from temporal things to eternal things. Watch what happens.

For us to be ALL IN for the glory of God, it is critical that we keep our eyes fixed on God!

- What does it mean to use what you have in this life to invest in eternity?
- Are there new ways God stirring in your heart to be ALL IN for His kingdom purposes? Write some of your ideas down. Share them with your spouse or an accountability partner.

Ways that I can be ALL IN:

Close with Prayer

Take time to thank God for showing us His great love in that that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Pray together that God would stir your affections to invest in His eternal kingdom and that our desire to give would be fueled by the love of God.

By telling us that our hearts follow our treasure, Jesus is saying, “Show me your checkbook, your VISA statement, and your receipts and I’ll show you where your heart is.” — Randy Alcorn, from The Treasure Principle