

Revitalize: Purpose for the Summer Slump

There are two times of the year when I look round my home and my life and evaluate, re-evaluate and make lists of things to do. The first time is around the New Year. The second comes around the beginning of the new school year. All of the new notebooks, pens, organizers seem to inspire me to start something new! Our church fiscal/business calendar year also reboots around the start of the school year as well. End of the year reports and looking back at what we've done also are an inspiration for changing, rearranging or implementing something new, at work and in my personal life.

A verse I recently read also put me in this evaluative mood. Proverbs 20:5 says: "The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out". I wrote about the five purposes that Pastor Rick Warren puts forth in 'The Purpose Driven Life'. Those are worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry/service and evangelism. So according to Proverbs 20:5 you know that these purposes are within you. You just need the insight and understanding to draw them out. So let's evaluate.

During the summer the mindset of vacation, break from the routine is really enticing. We do take off for more weekend getaways. We do have different activities that are available just because of the weather and length of days. Kids have summer sports that they participate in and so do some adults. We have visitors from out of town and we travel more as well. All of this wonderful summer activity means we sometimes sink parts of our purpose in God into the deeper parts of the well.

Have you sunk worship? Are you staying up late on the weekends and sleeping in late? Are you golfing on Sunday mornings? Have you decided that you just can't stand to be in a stuffy old church on such a beautiful day? Are you telling yourself that being in nature is how you want to worship? Draw out your purpose of worship and evaluate if you are really honoring God—giving Him worth. Sometimes my family will camp over a Sunday. We don't do a formal worship service, but we all make sure that we spend time in God's word. And when we are camping I feel truly grateful for really feeling I can experience a day of rest.

In our church, worship and fellowship often go together. So if you are missing worship you might be missing fellowship. Hebrews 10:25, "Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Take a look into your well; are you distancing yourself from your church? From other believers? With all that has gone on in our country in the last few weeks, with all that is happening don't you feel the need for encouragement or to be encouraging?

The kids may be out of school and taking a break, but God has set up the ultimate Continuing Education Program. We call it discipleship. "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." Proverbs 27:17. Discipleship is best done in a group of at least two people. We often try some different kinds of classes on Sunday mornings in the summer, but we still have classes. We still have Bible studies,

prayer groups and other learning opportunities. Some take breaks and others don't. But don't stop learning.

Summer is a great time to draw into your well and pull out some ministry/service purpose. There are some different opportunities for service. There are things to do with the kids, the youth, in the church yard or garden or at fun summer events. Summer is a great time to try doing some new things. And in the summer you can help people out with different needs. There are always opportunities for service in the summer.

Finally we come to the last purpose; Sharing God's Word. In some ways it is the final purpose, but it is also our first purpose. Just because its summer doesn't mean you sink this purpose to the bottom of the well until vacation is over. Some people embrace this purpose for the summer. I've know some amazing people that have done this. At least you should pull this one out of the well and try it on for an event.

Don't sink God's purpose for your life just because it's summer. Keep drawing from the well inside you. God doesn't take a summer break from you. Don't take a summer break from Him.

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