



# Some Thoughts on This Rick Warren/TED Talk

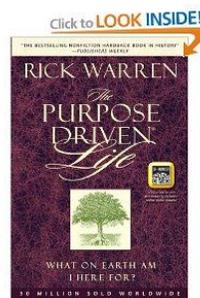
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[http://www.ted.com/talks/rick\\_warren\\_on\\_a\\_life\\_of\\_purpose.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/rick_warren_on_a_life_of_purpose.html)

Please view this short talk first. I will use this to facilitate a discussion in class.

In background, the TED series works to bring influential, free thinkers together to exchange both useful ideas and challenge limited thoughts.



## Books Philosophical Essence

You were planned for God's pleasure  
You were formed for God's family  
You were created to become like Christ  
You were shaped for serving God  
You were made for a mission

"What on earth am I here for?"

[http://www.amazon.com/Purpose-Driven-Life-Code-Enhanced/dp/0310334195/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1351193457&sr=1-1&keywords=purpose+driven+life](http://www.amazon.com/Purpose-Driven-Life-Code-Enhanced/dp/0310334195/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1351193457&sr=1-1&keywords=purpose+driven+life)

## Synopsis of TED Talk

Rick Warren provides an approach to life in his TED talk that is very much in the Christian tradition of stewardship and service. He uses his own (and wife's) life decisions as a means of putting into practice this philosophy.

Blessed with wealth derived from the publishing of his book "The Purpose Driven Life" (see above) he advocates to his "flock" (primarily middle class and wealthy individuals) that service to others is what gives life purpose. The acquisition of wealth alone is "meaningless" unless coupled to helping the lives of "others".

He presupposes God's existence (he is a pastor after all) and notes that God has a plan for you. However, he also notes that one has the free will to choose what to do with one's life. One can choose affluence or influence... Warren seeks to increase the application of influence over transitory affluence. Warren proposes that we have a limited time on earth (he used 80 years) and using that time in the service of others (humankind and the planet we live on) leads to personal fulfillment. Thus, one's worldview determines behavior and behavior in-acted determines one's life.

Interestingly, Warren is most effective when he asks questions that demand answers.

Question:

1. What is in your hand? For Moses it was his shepherds staff.
2. What does a shepherd identify as his/her source of income? Sheep.
3. What do sheep represent? A source of influence that can be guided by "hook or crook"
4. What is the purpose of life? To speak up for others whose lives increasingly seem to have no purpose (widows, orphans, the hopeless of society)...a very Christian tradition that reminds me of the admonitions of St. Francis of Assisi.

5. What are you “pre-wired” to do? Teach, Paint, Doctor, etc...(God’s plan for you). ***Finding out what that purpose is becomes the key to understanding Warren’s message.***

Warren notes that when you understand and act upon what you are predestined to do, then God is smiling upon you. Therefore, making the world better is dependent on questioning your own beliefs and asking yourself why you hold them. Acting on those beliefs fulfills God’s Plan for you. Interestingly, you do not have to a believer to appreciate the message. When you detach the message from God and evaluate it on its merits alone Warren’s message makes great sense.

Finally, compare and contrast Rick Warren’s observations with the values espoused by St. Francis provided in the next page. The differences between Warren and Francis seem few. To me the messages of each are essentially the same. The behaviors of 12<sup>th</sup> Century Italians and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Moderns, indeed humans throughout recorded history are also the same. Affluence and influence; the “meaning of life”, have been with us forever.

*In summary both Francis and Warren, preach that achieving a “Purpose Driven Life” is achieved by constantly asking what that purpose is. A wonderful message that, in the world of self-centered individualism and greed, needs to be critically examined and appropriately acted upon!*

# Franciscan Values

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## **Creating a Caring Community**

- Respecting each person's dignity
- Offering hospitality, courtesy, kindness, and friendship
- Fostering loving relationships

## **Showing Compassion**

- Serving and caring for the poor and oppressed
- Working for justice
- Taking responsibility
- Offering unselfish service

## **Reverencing All of Creation**

- Fostering a simple lifestyle and responsible stewardship
- Preserving the environment
- Respecting all creatures

## **Making Peace**

- Forgiving others
- Healing and reconciling
- Resolving conflicts
- Promoting non-violence