

# Living your purpose

**Jesus ascended into heaven. We all remember that part of the story correct? He returned home to the Father – but not until He left some directions for His apostles.**

Those directions were pretty explicit. Our Lord said to them, “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” It is a pretty clear call to action right? There was nothing about being passive or inactive in those directions at all. Christ didn’t tell us to sit back and take it easy while He did all the work. No, Jesus told us exactly what He both needed and expected from us. He gave us a role to play in His plan of salvation. He gave us all a purpose. Our Lord asked us to be His hands and feet.

The problem is, the job isn’t mandatory. Well, at least not if you don’t care about going to heaven. That’s the downside of free will. We don’t have to adhere to the directions we have been given as followers of Christ. That begs the question though: If we aren’t answering the call Christ left for us, are we truly following Him? Sure, we might head to church on Sundays and attend different ministry events during the week at our parish, but have we truly, in our hearts, committed to the call of Christ? That is our purpose in this life, to get to know Him and then bring Him to others, just like Andrew did for his brother Simon. We cannot fulfill our duty if we are finding our purpose in other things than Him. And finding our purpose in other things we definitely are.

You only need to look around at our culture’s obsessions with video games and superhero movies. People are lining up for days at a time to live vicariously through the superheroes in the next big blockbuster. Grown men are spending countless hours with the next virtual reality device or video game that can whisk them off to another place where they can play the hero. I experienced this firsthand last summer when the movie “Avengers: Endgame” came out. (WARNING SPOILERS BELOW!) It was the culmination of 10 years’ worth of stories of heroes woven majestically together. The theater was packed.

We were down to the final battle of the movie and its villain Thanos had decimated everyone — everyone but Captain America, that is. Here was Cap, bloody and beaten, but not defeated. His shield, which had proven indestructible for so long, now sat next to him broken in half. He was all that stood between the world and destruction. There was no chance he could win. That fact didn’t matter though. Captain America stood up and defiantly strapped on what was left of his shield in one last heroic act. And the theater erupted. I mean it was deafening. People were cheering as loud as they could for the hero and his willingness to sacrifice it all for the others. You could almost see every man present in that theater putting themselves in Cap’s place. They wanted to answer the call. They wanted to be the hero. They were looking for purpose.

There was only one thought that came to my mind. Isn’t that exactly what Christ called us to when He said greater love have no man that this than to lay down his life for one’s friends? Yet, to this day, I have never seen a sanctuary erupt when those words were read like they did that day in the theater with Captain America. Jesus Christ is all the hero we will ever need. He stood before the bad guy and gave everything to save the ones He loved. Then He left instructions for us on how to do the same.

The cheers for the hero of the movie were nothing more than an outward sign of an inward longing every man has but doesn’t always comprehend. Deep down, we all realize that we are made for more. We have a hunger that isn’t ever fully satiated until we realize our purpose. That purpose is the same call of Christ to His apostles that day. The call to love Him, to love others and to bring them to Him. In the words of St. John Paul II, “It is Jesus who stirs in you the desire to do something great with your lives, the will to follow an ideal, the refusal to allow yourselves to be ground down by mediocrity, the courage to commit yourselves humbly and patiently to improving yourselves and society, making the world more human and more fraternal.” This is what it means to serve the Lord. This is what it means to answer the call, to be the hero. This is what it means to truly start living your purpose. †



## JUST A GUY IN THE PEW



**JOHN EDWARDS**  
is a husband and father of three who attends Holy Rosary Parish. His passion is men’s ministry, and he carries it out daily through his work at Cardinal Studios. John recently established Just a Guy in the Pew ministries, which consists of a podcast, inspirational videos, and reflections for men. He is also a member of the Holy Rosary Study Group, Fishers and Cursillo.