

Faith

Rick Warren: You Were Created to Dream

Despite debilitating pain, 'America's Pastor' releases first book in a decade.

BY TROY ANDERSON

PASTOR RICK WARREN, AUTHOR of the bestseller *The Purpose Driven Life* that sold more than 35 million copies and is famous for its opening line "It's not about you," has a dream to evangelize the world.

Warren, 69, retired from Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California, last year amid a battle with a rare autoimmune disorder that leaves him in nearly constant debilitating pain.

Yet he is leading a coalition of thousands of churches and organizations worldwide to finish the Great Commission: Christ's last instruction to his followers to "go and make disciples of all nations."

Warren, known as "America's Pastor," is calling on faith leaders and believers worldwide to partner together to reach this goal by 2033.

"Today, I can step out and take on the biggest goal that you can think of — the evangelization of the whole world, because for 50 years I've been taking smaller steps," Warren recently told Ed Stetzer, host of *The Stetzer Church Leaders Podcast*.

"If in 1980 I had said, 'I'm going to go take on completing the Great Commission,' why in the world would I even think that I had any background to do that?"

Now, despite a condition that makes it hard to walk and even move his



RICK WARREN

#1 New York Times Bestselling Author of *The Purpose Driven Life*

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to Dream

The 6 Phases God Uses to Grow Your Faith

PREPARING FOR FUTURE

The Bible is full of stories of people whose God-inspired dreams became reality, says Rick Warren about his new book, *Created to Dream*.

hands and fingers at times, Warren's first book in a decade has just been released — *Created to Dream: The 6 Phases God Uses to Grow Your Faith* (Zondervan Books).

"God has already prepared his dream for your life," Warren, who was once named one of *Time* magazine's 100 most influential people in

the world, said in a sermon shortly before his retirement in which he turned over the reins of his Southern California megachurch to incoming Senior Pastor Andy Wood.

In his new book, Warren notes the Bible is full of stories of people whose God-inspired dreams became reality, including Noah's dream of saving the world from the flood; Abraham's dream of being the father of a great nation; David's dream of building the temple; and Paul's dream of going to Rome.

Warren writes that every dream takes a predictable path to deliverance, allowing people to grow their faith and prepare for their future. The process involves six phases:

- Dream — God puts an exciting dream in your heart.
- Decision — You make the decision to go after the dream.
- Delays — God allows delays to get you ready for the dream.
- Difficulties — You face problems that grow your character.
- Dead Ends — Your situation becomes impossible.
- Deliverance — God miraculously fulfills the dream.

“When you read the book you go, ‘Oh, shoot. I’ve been through this many times in my life,’” Warren told Stetzer.

“Nothing happens until somebody starts dreaming. We are most like our Creator when we’re being creative.

“And when you begin to dream, God looks down and goes, ‘That’s my boy, that’s my girl. I made you. I gave you that capacity.’”

In *Created to Dream*, Warren writes God created humanity for a

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Coming on the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic and wholesale changes in society and culture, Warren says God doesn’t want people to simply resume their old ways but undertake a “total reset” of their lives.

“Everything changed and so we need to not resume our old way of doing church,” Warren says. “We need to reset and go, ‘What’s the new way of doing church?’ That starts with a new dream.

“Nothing happens until somebody starts dreaming. And so, people and churches need to get a new dream for their churches, and so that’s where it starts.”

Warren says most Christians are doing nothing for Christ outside of the four walls of their church.

“I want to help pastors and church leaders help mobilize their church to fulfill the Great Commission.”

Warren says his four decades as pastor of Saddleback Church prepared him for this new mission.

“Now that my focus is off my congregation, I can spend full time assisting pastors turning attenders into an army,” he says. □



Blood Pressure Facts You Must Know

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