

# ***PURPOSE***

***'But what about you?' Jesus asked.'***  
(Matthew 16:15)

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I dedicate this book to you, the reader. It is my prayer that the words of this book are left behind you, when you leave it, and any truth that is in it becomes '*spirit and life*' in you, through Jesus Christ.

***'We live by faith and not by sight.'***

(2 Corinthians 5:7)

***'Jesus said, 'My words are spirit and they are life.'*** (John 6:63)

## Introduction

'Purpose' is a deep and spiritual thing. It has a general reach for all people, and it has specific callings for each individual. But it does have one, coherent path, and we all must be on that path to discover its full range of expression, and journey its true course.

In this book I share about God's purpose in our lives, as revealed through the Scriptures and by his Holy Spirit. Sometimes 'purpose' can be intentional, a hand to the plough of a vision and calling. At other times it is simply a 'holding on' to what is true, in the face of limited vision and a storm.

Jesus said his words were '***spirit and life***'. (John 6:63) God also called us to call on him, and he would answer and tell us '***deep and hidden things that we do not know.***' (Jeremiah 33:3) This book has 'sections' around the treasure, adventure and journey of God's purposes. God's purposes are bound up in God himself, so there is no set equation, or code to be cracked. His

purposes are bound up in his own Holy Spirit, like a flowing river to your soul and from your soul.

***‘Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me... rivers of living water will flow from within them.’ (John 7:37-38)***

## The Doorway to Purpose

***‘Jesus said, ‘I am the door, and anyone who enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out and find pasture.’ (John 10:9)***

In this short book we look at, even take hold of, God’s purpose in this life, and in your personal life. It’s deep, it’s wide, it’s Spirit.

However, my friend, we can only step into the purposes of God, by stepping into the Spirit and person of God himself. His purposes are not separate to himself. They do not even come ‘after’ knowing God. No, the purposes of God are *in* God.

Have you answered the call of Jesus to you? Have you stepped through Jesus as the door to God and all truth?

***‘Jesus said, ‘Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they***

***with me.***” (Revelation 3:19-20)

*And, no, it's not too late!* Maybe you knew Christ and walked with him once, but have walked astray. This happens. It's real. We see this happen all through Scripture, beginning to end. Now, note this: Some of those who wandered from the truth they knew, repented, and came back. Others did not. If you feel that you have a past that is now broken, once knew Christ but walked away, well, come home! The message to you today is the same as the message to one who had never heard: repent of your sin; believe in Jesus; follow Jesus. His mercies are new every morning, and he makes red-stained sin, white as snow. In Christ today you have a fresh start, a new heart, a new chapter.<sup>1</sup>

The purposes of God, are in God. We're actually told that the key purpose of our life is to ***'reach out for God and find him.'*** (Acts 17:27)

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<sup>1</sup> Lamentations 3:23; Isaiah 1:18; Ezekiel 36:26

If you long for purpose in this life, you must come through the door that God has provided – Jesus Christ. You come through this door by coming to Jesus – in spirit and truth – and repenting of your sin. Is there sin in your life that you must turn away from? This is repentance. True belief in Jesus, true coming to Christ, is a turning away from the darkness and sin in our life. Come to Christ now, in prayer and faith, and repent of your sin.

***‘Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old has gone, and the new has come.’*** (2 Corinthians 5:17)

If this is your first time coming to and through the door of Jesus Christ, or if you need to ponder this ‘first step’ further, please do visit the *‘First Steps’* tab at:  
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## Two or Three

Jesus – God in the flesh, and ‘*God with us*<sup>2</sup> – speaks an incredible word to you:

***‘Where two or three gather together in my name, I am there with them.’***

(Matthew 18:20)

When you meet with someone, because Jesus is in your life, Jesus is there with you. This meeting – coffee, walk, prayer or just friendship – becomes something eternal. The King of kings meets with you, walks with you. He stamps this occasion with eternal significance, and determines it to be a building block in the kingdom of God.

Jesus wants you to know how important you are to the building, the advance, of his kingdom. He said this:

***‘If anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple... that person will not lose their reward.’*** (Matthew 10:42)

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<sup>2</sup> John 1:1,14; Matthew 1:23



This cup of cold water has been given by someone, to someone, in order to honor Jesus. It is a faith gift. It is a faith act. And Jesus is saying that everyone of us, no matter how humble our faith action, is a part, even a key part, to the building and the advance of the kingdom of God.

Just prior to this verse, Jesus says that even *'receiving'* someone who is a servant of Jesus, or welcoming them, means you will receive the reward of their work. He puts it this way:

***'Whoever welcomes a prophet, will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward.'*** (Matthew 10:41)

Jesus poured out *'meaning'* and *'purpose'* on us – on you! He referred to you as *'salt'* and *'light'* in this world. (Matthew 5:14-16) You are a lampstand. Jesus in you makes you a light – a spiritual carrier of God's Spirit of truth, love and eternity.

We're going to continue to look deep into this presence and power of God in our lives, but in this first section take hold of this: When you 'gather' with even one other person in Jesus' name, Jesus himself is present with you. You have orchestrated, organized, a powerful event in the history of life and of God. You pulled together a 'moment', a meeting, that had God present. This is forever in the records. This is a building block of the eternal structure that even now rises. You did this!

***'If anyone builds... their work will be shown for what it is, for the Day will bring it to light.'*** (1 Corinthians 3:12-13)

**'The kingdom of heaven is within you.'**

Jesus said these words. (Luke 17:21)  
And he said them because someone asked him when the kingdom of God would come.

Jesus wants us to grasp the true place of his kingdom – our hearts. The individual heart is where eternity dwells, not in what you see around you.<sup>3</sup>

When Jesus comes to us, when we come to him, he takes residence in our hearts. And here in this quiet, eternal space, a new 'construct' takes form. A new King has arrived, and new kingdom begins to spread. Its foundation is Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 3:11) And in the deep and private places of your soul, you commune with God. And he rewards you for this.

Jesus said, ***'When you pray, go into your room and close the door and pray to your Father who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.'*** (Matthew 6:6)

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<sup>3</sup> *'He has set eternity in the human heart.'* (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

Deep in your own thoughts, in the darkness of a room, you pray. And here God meets with you, and builds your destiny. He hears your prayer. He rewards your faith. His Spirit in you whispers to you, through you, and even speaks for you to God. Deep, flowing purpose – building the kingdom of God – is at work simply in your quiet, whispering relationship with Jesus. Alone, perhaps, in the world, but together with Christ always. And here his kingdom builds, simply on your faith and your friendship with Jesus.

**The Holy Spirit in You:** *‘You also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance...’* (Ephesians 1:13-14)

**The Holy Spirit through You:** *‘The Holy Spirit... will teach you all things, and will remind you of everything I have said to you.’* (John 14:26)

**The Holy Spirit for You:** *'The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.'* (Romans 8:26)

## Connect the Dots

Do you remember these worksheets as a kid? Points apparently scattered, but when the dots are connected, something coherent, 'meaningful', is revealed.

Our lives in Jesus are similar. We don't see now the full picture of the 'meaning' of our walk with Jesus. Our faith actions now are like 'dots' on a page, that will one day all come together to reveal an actual building, structure, accomplishment, legacy.

Jesus said, '***Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.***' (Matthew 6:20-21)

Every step you take in faith, day after day, is like a dot on a page, all of which will be connected and consummated one day – *'that Day'*. (1 Corinthians 3:13)

It takes faith to believe this, and not lose heart. And we are admonished, '***We live***

***by faith and not by sight.***' (2 Corinthians 5:7) Here on earth we derive so much energy and inspiration from what we can actually accomplish, see, touch, note down on a resume, graph in a portfolio, park in the garage, count. We live by sight, not by faith. So much of our purpose here on earth, and our sense of security, is in what we have here and now.

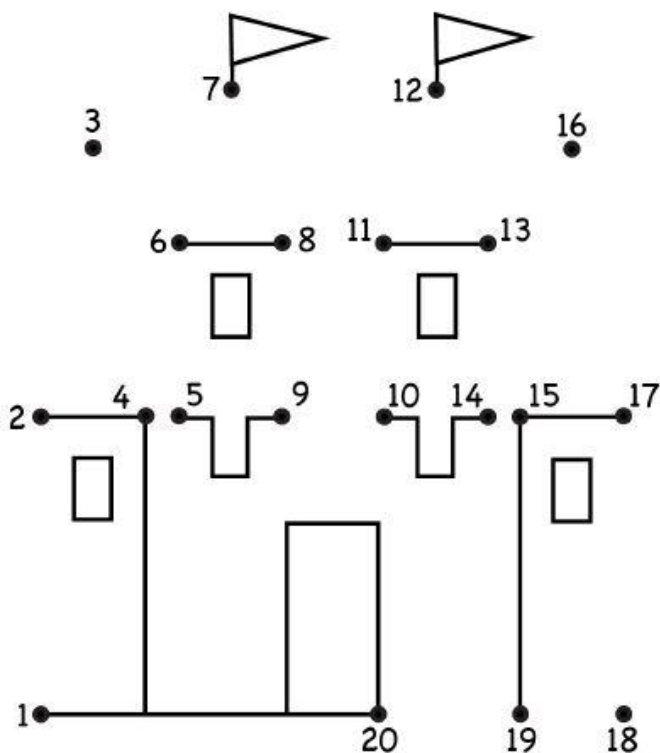
The challenge of faith, and walking with Christ, is a different Spirit. Jesus often asked people to step away from their 'security', their sense of identity and purpose, and to trust him for these things. However, his 'call' was not a one-size-fits-all. He did not ask everyone to lay down their wealth, but some who were clinging to it for salvation, for purpose. He did not ask everyone to leave their station in life and follow him, but he did ask some to do this, those who were set on their station, loving it and leaning on it more than on God. Jesus is after the heart. And he wants us to access that ***'life that is truly life.'*** (1 Timothy 6:19) Jesus will sometimes gently pry our fingers off a thing, not to deprive us, but to free us,

and to release us into a future inheritance and not lose us to a temporal one.

We trust Jesus with our souls for salvation in the future. But here and now, in the present, God also calls us to trust him for our meaning, our purpose. He calls us to live by faith, to dot the page, and trust him for the full, coherent picture and inheritance. You don't have to see the full picture of your purpose now. You need only to believe that in Christ your purpose is full even now. Just keep walking, believing, investing in faith. Jesus stores up your faith life, and one day will connect all the dots before your very eyes and give this inheritance to you.



***'Abraham was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.'*** (Hebrews 11:10)



## Good Works

There is a very short book in the Bible called, *Titus*. It is a letter that Paul wrote to Titus. It is three short chapters. In this section, I'm going to share some points from the letter, that help give us 'direction' in life.

I've titled this section, 'Good Works'. What comes through so clearly in the book of *Titus*, is a '*purpose*' for the Christian of 'good works'.

***'Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works...'*** (Titus 2:7)

Now, the Christian does not do good works simply for the sake of it, in order to feel good about themselves and about life. No, the Christian has another 'agenda' in doing good works: ***'... so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.'*** (2:10)

Let's take a closer look at this 'agenda' of good works, to 'adorn' the message of Jesus. You see, if people come to know you as a Christian, then they begin to

look at your life, your actions, your integrity, to see if this faith actually impacts your life, from the inside out. This is simply the way it is. This is why Jesus spoke often about hypocrisy, and even in this short book of the Bible, *Titus*, look at this powerful verse:

***‘They profess to know God, but deny him by their works.’ (1:16)***

Now, ‘works’ does not refer to just what we ‘do’ or what people can ‘see’. You recall from earlier in this book, that Jesus is about the heart, and specifically spoke to our ‘*secret life*’ as what the Father is most concerned about. (Matthew 6:4,6,18) The Spirit of God within us is a message and a ‘power’ from the inside out. So our ‘works’ refer first and foremost to the integrity of our relationship with Jesus in secret:

***‘The grace of God has appeared... training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in the present age.’ (2:11-12)***

Our identity as Christians is that we follow Jesus. That is who we are. We are no longer citizens of this world, but of heaven.<sup>4</sup> We treasure this identity personally, and the message of Jesus is now our ultimate goal for others. We want to ‘adorn’ this message – make it appeal to people who are lost, who look for purpose and truth – and we do this through ‘goodness’, primarily in our integrity and private lives, and as an overflow of that, to the world around us.

Have you heard of the saying, ‘*The customer is always right.*’? So you go into a store, and you may not even be a very nice customer, and yet the store representatives treat you nicely. Why? Because they are not ‘representing’ themselves in that moment, but the store. And they have an agenda in their ‘niceness’ to you, and it is this: that you buy what they are selling.

In a similar way as Christians we want to ‘adorn’ that which we believe to be true, and which we want people to take hold of,

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<sup>4</sup> ‘Our citizenship is in heaven...’ (Philippians 3:20)

to 'buy'. We want people to see and believe in Jesus, and if our lives can 'sweeten' that decision in anyway, or 'adorn' this appeal to them, well, that is something we can 'do'.

My friends, this is a deep truth, not a simple one. We are not talking about being a 'doormat' for people. We are not talking about being simply a sweet person. We're talking about living with purpose. We're talking about having mission. We're talking about representing God in our life, through our actions, and not just doing some nice stuff here and there, to be a nice guy. That's different. That does not have 'faith' in it, or a purpose of representing Christ, rather than yourself. Here we're talking about 'good works' as something deep and purposeful in order to drive home your identity as a Christ follower. Do you see the difference?

So 'good works' might mean standing up to people. You may have to call out immorality or take a stand separately to a spirit and movement or work decision that dishonors God. This is 'good'! This is that

deep, pure 'goodness' that God calls you to. He is not calling you to be a people pleaser, but a good person. And that primarily is obedience to God, and actions that come forth from 'faith', from conviction.

Now it is at those times, when your faith decisions and convictions may not be pleasing to people around you, that your life of 'good works' actually causes people to stop and consider a little more deeply, before just disregarding you, or slandering you.

For example, you are at a work or school social event. People standing around talking, laughing. Someone makes a statement of 'belief' regarding something that you feel isn't morally correct. You feel you need to gently, but clearly 'disagree'. You do so. Things tense up a little. You feel the spiritual conflict. But after a minute or two, this group dissolves, you walk away. Now people begin to talk. *'Can you believe he said that? So closed minded!'* But someone else makes this point: *'I don't actually agree with him, but I do have to say that he has been such a*

*great colleague! He is so trustworthy, never speaks bad of anyone!*

So here we see an example of where your investment of 'good works', in faith, has 'salted' a moment where you needed to stand on conviction.

Look again at verse 7 here, but also as it carries through verse 8:

***'Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.' (2:7-8)***

We are in a battle. Following Jesus is a real thing, and goes against the '*prince of this world.*' (John 16:11) Our investment in goodness honors God, but also 'adorns' his call to other people.

My friends, I have to say this again, this all means very little if not in 'faith'. All these good works, without the faith intention of honoring Jesus, don't really

stack in purpose. They do honor God, and will be rewarded, but they don't have the same 'mission' purpose as works done in the name of Jesus, in order to represent Jesus, and ultimately win people to Jesus.

Jesus calls us to himself, and through himself as a 'door'. (John 10:9) We go through that door and are on a new path – one that Jesus said was **'narrow, and few find it.'** (Matthew 7:14) It is a real path, and you are now a citizen not of this world, but of heaven. We have purpose now in our relationship with God, by his Spirit in our lives. We have purpose in building his kingdom, here on earth. We do this by believing in him, walking with him, and doing 'good works' around us, in Jesus' name.

Paul finishes this letter to Titus in these words: **'Let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful.'** (3:14)



## Walk the Walk

When I was a teen I was not following the Lord. I had grown up in a Christian family, and knew the teaching. The truth is, if I had been asked straight if I believed in God, in Jesus, I would have said I did. And I actually did. But I was not living it. This belief was a conviction regarding truth, but it had not hit my heart, so to speak.

And in my case it was not that I was just 'inactive' as a Christian. I was living immorally, sinfully. I would go to church on Sunday with my parents and siblings, but Monday – Saturday I was living for myself in every respect – cussing, smoking, drinking... In my actual 'actions' and relationships I was a force for the enemy.

Look what James, the brother of Jesus, says about a 'belief' in God that has no 'action' or lifestyle in it:

***'You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that...'***  
(James 2:19)

So what differentiates my belief in God from the demons' belief in God? Well, the actual *outworking* of my belief – my life, my choices, my words, my worship, my integrity. In other words, my 'walk' and my 'works'. James puts it in this powerful way, saying that ***'faith is made complete by actions.'*** (2:22)

We consider people the *'real deal'* when they back up words with action, or, honestly, when they 'act' in truth without even speaking the words. It is as simple as that. Words are free and flow easily. They can come pouring forth from pride or even delusion. But actions are different. Think of the distinction between a man saying he loves a woman, and a man actually loving a woman. The former is a statement, the latter is faithfulness, sacrifice, kindness, in sickness and in health.

***'As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.'*** (James 2:26)

This section, my friends, is not a call to

action, believe it or not. It is more of a consideration of what is actually *'real'*. For example, my *'belief'* in Jesus when I was a teen, living a sinful life, was not *'real'*. It was not the belief that Jesus called for, nor the belief that he rewards. It was something I knew was true but I was not following, not walking. And it is the following, the walking – i.e. the faith works – that bring a faith alive, or show a faith to *be* alive. In this section we are simply considering God's Word and how he makes clear that he looks for belief in action, which is true faith. And where there is no *'action'*, no Spirit-living and faith works, well, there is no *real* belief. It is like a body without a spirit.

**Has your conviction that Jesus is Lord, actually reached your feet? Have you 'stepped' through his 'door' and onto his path? Or are you still on the outside of this doorway, enjoying the light that comes out from it?<sup>5</sup>**

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<sup>5</sup> *'... and you chose for a time to enjoy his light.'* (John 5:35)

## Water Skiing

Have you ever had the chance to water ski? OK, well, the truth is that it is really easy. All the speed and momentum and direction is really being done for you. All you have to do is hold on. Seriously. If you hold on to the rope, the rope pulls you up and pulls you along!

Now, the real challenge is to *hold on* to the rope when you feel the surge of power, the pull. You see, you begin by sitting, floating in the water, lining things up. You take hold of the rope and face forward, floating there. Then the boat kicks into gear, surges forward. Usually first-timers are not expecting the force of the 'pull', so the rope just snaps out of their hands. But if you *do* hold on, don't let go, well, you go with the rope! It pulls you up and out of the water, and you find yourself gliding on top of the water. It's super fun!

One aspect of our 'purpose' in God, is holding on, holding fast. To just hold on, is to succeed. To simply remain faithful without 'wavering', and go where this

'pulls' us, is to move in our destiny. We don't determine the direction, the course, the 'waves' or the outcomes; we just hold on, remain true.

***'Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.'*** (Hebrews 10:23)



## What You're Not Seeing

Sometimes your particular gifting in God, your particular work in the kingdom of God, comes clear to you by what you're *not* seeing. What do I mean by this?

I remember attending a church once, and feeling unwelcomed. The people were not mean, they just were not approaching me and making me feel welcome. It was awkward. It was a small church, and I was obviously not a regular attender, and it was as if the people just were not prepared for that. So I was left standing to the side, while they chatted among themselves. My first instinct was to not go back to this church. It lacked hospitality. My next thought – quite quick on the heels of my first impression – was that if I see this 'gap', this need, maybe I am called to meet that need in this church. They don't need another person 'not coming back'. They need some believers, family members, seeing this need and standing in the gap.

In your life as a Christian you may begin to discern some gaps in services, so to

speak. Maybe you feel a type of message in the sermons, in general conversation among people, is missing. Has God prepared you for a particular message that is needed? Maybe you feel a 'method' in the works of Christians is missing. Has God equipped you for a particular way of doing his work? Maybe you perceive areas in life where God's message is not really being shared. Has God called you to share in those areas? Maybe you see and feel lacking spirit of mercy, wisdom, gentleness, respect.<sup>6</sup> Has God equipped and called you to fill these spaces with your gifting?

In my own life I remember feeling a hunger, a thirst to reach the world with the gospel of Jesus. I remember as I dared to really look at this desire in my soul – an overwhelming type of desire, with no clear avenue – I felt the Lord prompt me with this direction, this first step: *Share with people in your path.*

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<sup>6</sup> 2 Timothy 2:24-25; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

The game plan was simple. It was '*one at a time*'. It was situated in my world, my day-to-day. It was set before me.

It was not a formal ministry. It did not need the support or approval of other Christians or leaders. It was a step-by-step map to live out the calling on my own life. I experienced immediate confirmation from the Lord, as I began to witness, and share with people about Christ. How? By people's responses. I remember seeing and noting how people, when I shared about the Lord with them, seemed to become almost another person. Their faces lit up, they began to speak to me on a spiritual level, about God in their life, what they believed, what they had experienced. I realized that in sharing Jesus with people, I accessed the spiritual person. It was confirmation to me that I was truly on the path God had set me on and equipped me for.

Over time my 'gifting' and calling was part of my own growing. Sometimes I was too eager in my gifting, and not heeding the Spirit's lead. This led, sometimes, to tough situations, such as losing my job. I



found it hard to see the different domains of life, and also that I needed to respect my job situation as a place to 'be' a good witness, not necessarily preach the gospel to clients. These clients were not 'contacts' and relationships that I had made on my own time, but were really my employer's clients and contacts, and I was being paid to do my employer's will in these situations, not my own outreach.

What I've learned, my friends, in a nutshell, is witness on your own time and dime. You know what I mean? Now this can include sharing with colleagues and peers on your lunch hour or at a social event, but it also means you cannot use your employer's time and dime to share the gospel. Why? Because the gospel is a spiritual thing, a controversial thing, and can actually hurt your employer's business if not a Spirit-led endeavor. You know this is true, through your experiences of following Jesus in your own life and circles, around your friends and family. It can 'cost' you. So let us pay the price of our own faith, and not make other people pay a price for our faith. You see the difference?

There are powerful Scriptures about just being good workers, so that we are good examples. Separate your personal *witness* from your professional responsibilities to other people; but don't separate your personal faith and lifestyle from your professional life.

***'Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.'*** (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12)

***'Obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know the Lord will reward each one of you for whatever good they do...'*** (Ephesians 6:5-8)

So now I don't give a 'verse card' or tract to a client in my line of work for my employer. However, when I'm driving home and pay for my gas, I'll offer the cashier a verse card. My time, my dime, my contact, my witness. This will only reflect on me, and not on my boss. Also, more peace and freedom in my own life.

## Side Project

***‘Jesus said, ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers... He went out and saw people standing in the marketplace doing nothing. He asked them, ‘Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?’ ‘Because no one has hired us,’ they answered.***

***He said to them, ‘Go and work in my vineyard.’***

(Matthew 20:1-7)

Do you have a hobby? A passion? In my own life I have often had something going *‘on the side’* that keeps me inspired along the way. So I can get up and face my job, my responsibilities, because *‘on the side’* – when I get home – I have this or that I’m working on, building...

There are seasons in life that do this for us almost naturally. For example, when you fall in love and want to get married... have a family... live somewhere quiet, peaceful... These *‘chapters’* and stages of life can be that *‘side project’*, or the

thing that is keeping you going in the more mundane aspects of life. Not many people love their job, but they might love what their job helps them accomplish – pay bills, buy food, stay warm, provide for their loved ones... The benefits ‘on the side’ keep us trucking along the way.

In this short book my deep desire was that you would know that with Jesus in your life – in the center of your heart and soul – you have eternal purpose each day here on earth. You are a light to others, bearing the Holy Spirit in your being and your presence. You are precious to God, even in the quietness and ‘secret’ of your prayers in your own room. You are a citizen of heaven, with eternal meaning and value every moment.<sup>7</sup> So be at peace. Just being a child of God, you have eternal purpose every minute of every day, now and forevermore! Rest in this!

Now, as we find ourselves here in a broken world for only a short life, we do have access to *another* ‘mission’. With

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<sup>7</sup> Matthew 5:14-16; Matthew 6:4,6,18

Christ in our lives, and with the knowledge of God's saving power, we can save other people. For me personally, this mission of God, to reach people with the name and power of Jesus Christ, has really given me a path in life. It has given me a type of project 'on the side', so to speak, that now defines my deepest passion, my deepest aim, my deepest treasure.

In your day-to-day life, do you feel called to the battle? I have no other way, really, of putting it. Do you feel hungry to see God's gospel take more ground across this dark world, and rescue the innocent and vulnerable from evil?

Do you *'grieve evil'*<sup>8</sup> and wish for a wind to cut across abusive employers, immoral men, violent leaders, vile content? Do you see on the news images of lost children, scared women, humiliated peoples, and crave a saving grace to sweep across the land?

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<sup>8</sup> Ezekiel 9:4

Here in this space, we are offered the weapon of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are told that the gospel of Jesus is **‘God’s power for salvation.’** We are told the call of God – to repentance and faith in Jesus – is a key to the **‘healing of the land.’** We’re told that if we want, we can live lives committed to building this eternal, glorious *‘kingdom of light’* – even here on earth, even now. And we can be part of the sweep of power, of living water, that will one day cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.<sup>9</sup>

Do you want to be part of this? Do you need more purpose right now – God’s purpose?

My friend, I have amazing, exciting news for you. You don’t have to build this kingdom of God as something *‘on the side’*. This mission – eternal mission – can be your full-time commitment. It can be so integral to who you are and what you live for, that the rest of life is what you do *‘on the side’*. Your job, your

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<sup>9</sup> Romans 1:16; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Colossians 1:12; Habakkuk 2:14

health, your relationships – they all become secondary to your love of God, and your mission to save people.

This path of purpose in Christ is not hidden, not hard to find. It is situated, calibrated, by a surrendered heart. This path opens up to you in a deep, quiet moment of being alone with Jesus, and answering this question:

***“But what about you?” Jesus asked, “Who do you say that I am?”***

(Matthew 16:15)

Jesus asked Peter this question. Peter had just told him what others thought, but then Jesus said, ***“What about you?”***

Peter then answered:

***‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’*** (vs.16)

Peter called him, ‘Lord’. Peter called him the Savior. Peter saw in Christ, God himself. And he acknowledged this. He spoke it out. He stopped, and stated that Christ was Lord of his life.



Jesus calls each one of us to answer this same question: ***'Who do you say that I am?'***

You see, if I answer in truth that Jesus is Lord, that he is King – not just of the world but of *my* life – this opens a path of destiny before me. There is a King of kings in my life. There is a Lord. There is a Leader. My ultimate purpose is in his lead, his way, the building and expanse of his kingdom. My purpose is his purpose.

Do you want to be clear about your 'role' in the work and kingdom of Jesus? Do you want to discover your particular giftings and area of 'work' for the Lord?

There are many gifts, but one project underway. The project is to reach the world with the gospel of Jesus. The project is to advance the rule and presence of the Spirit of God across the globe – from the secret places where you pray and love the Lord, to the corners of the marketplace, to the seats of government in the land. And everything you do in faith, in Jesus' name - every

wall you paint, every smile you share -  
advances this cause.

***‘Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him... Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.’***  
(Colossians 3:17,23-24)

## Spiritual Gifts

A spiritual gift is like a special 'weapon' or tool that you have for the advance of the kingdom of God. I think of many movies, where one person is skilled with a bow and arrow, another with a sword... There are those that have a healing touch, or a sense of discernment, direction, wisdom. An army has many, many people skilled in different areas, all of which work together to advance the victory. Some build bridges so that others can cross them and fight, etc.

You might wonder what your gift is? Well, honestly, it can be anything. The Bible lists some, but not all. It speaks of gifts of mercy, of faith, of service, of teaching, preaching, healing, prophesying. But it is important to remember that a gift is given, not picked or 'gotten'. It is a gift from God. He is the Giver. You need only to be open, to be willing, to be ready to receive and use your gift. *Are you open to know your gifting, and open to serve God with it?*

Let's read this very important passage in the Bible about gifts:

***'There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.***

***Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.***

***Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.'***

(1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

There is other teaching about spiritual gifts, but in this key passage it is important to note the 'nature' of all these gifts – i.e. that they are given by God for the '*common good*', and that they are distributed differently, and that they work together as different parts of a body work together.

So the question is, when it comes to spiritual gifts, what has God given you? What has he '*determined*' to give you?

Well, pray and ask the Lord. Simply ask him: '*What are my gifts, Lord? How can I serve you?*'

Do you have a natural 'faith' for situations? Do you tend to feel mercy, and 'minister' this mercy to people? Do you have words of wisdom that come to you for others, for situations? Do you have insights that give understanding, direction, in truth? Do you naturally and

with conviction 'teach'? Do you naturally and with integrity 'preach'?

Spend quiet time with the Lord. Walk with him. Your love of God is most important to God, not even your understanding of your 'gifts'.<sup>10</sup> And the truth is, my friend, as we walk in sincere, loving and obedient relationship with Jesus, it is on *that* road we come to know our part in his work.

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<sup>10</sup> Matthew 22:36-40

## Building Inside the Walls

***'Your life is now hidden with Christ in God.'*** (Colossians 3:3)

This life is cold and hard. And there is a spiritual battle underway. Now, I say 'battle', and not 'war', because the truth is that the war has already been won.

Jesus said, ***'The prince of this world stands defeated.'*** (John 16:11)

The battles we face and live in advancing the 'gospel of peace', are more like skirmishes inside a city that has already been taken. There are pockets of resistance, but the outcome is already determined.

***'The knowledge of the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.'*** (Habakkuk 2:14)

When Jesus hung his head and died, he said, ***'It is finished.'*** (John 19:30)

My friends, don't let the 'cold' of this life discourage you. This earth, and all souls,

belong to Jesus.<sup>11</sup> It is the darkness that now trespasses here, has no right here. So the kingdom of God that we are building, well, we are really building on the inside of those kingdom walls, so to speak. The ground has been taken, it *all* belongs to Christ.

Jesus said, '**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.**'  
(Matthew 28:18)

Again, Jesus said, '**I hold the keys to death and Hades.**' (Revelation 1:18)

You might feel like the odd one out as a Christian here on earth, like the minority. And truly you are! But that does not mean you the not the rightful heir, that this earth does not belong to you!

Jesus said, '**Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.**'  
(Matthew 5:5)

You are advancing the kingdom of God as you hold out the testimony of Jesus

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<sup>11</sup> Psalm 24:1; Ezekiel 18:4



Christ, but you are not out in the cold. You are under the canopy of God's salvation, and his hand of victory over the whole earth. So be at peace. Your King is *the* King of the universe.

Onward in confidence, my brother, my sister! In Jesus' every day, every step, has eternal purpose!

***'The path of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, ever-brighter until the full light of day!'*** (Proverbs 4:18)

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