

Identity and Destiny



**Who Am I?
What's My Purpose?**

Melville City Church

IN THE BEGINNING...

In the beginning, when God created humankind, He gave both the man and the woman an *identity* and a *destiny*.

DIVINE IDENTITY

Adam and Eve were created in the *image* and *likeness* of God. Genesis 1:26a – 27 declares, “**Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in our image, according to Our likeness.... So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.’**”

The Hebrew word for image is *tselem* which interestingly is a verb, not a noun. *Tselem* means “to display, to act out, to illustrate.” The Hebrew word translated “likeness” is *de mooth* which means “...to compare; to liken to.” Putting both words together we understand that **we were made by God to display, act out and illustrate His likeness and comparison to the world.**

- “For You have made him a little lower than _____ and You have crowned him with glory and honour” (Psalm 8:5).
- “So the LORD said to Moses: ‘See, I have made you as God [Elohim] to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet’ (Exodus 7:1).

To be created in the image and likeness of God necessitates sharing in the *divine glory*. Paul grants us insight into this reality when he states man was created in the image and glory of God (1 Cor. 11:7). Isaiah 43:7, further states, “**Everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory.**”

What is the glory of God? Here is a definition: ***The “glory” of God is the exhibition of His inherent excellence; it is the external manifestation of His internal majesty. Glory is the resplendent radiance of His power and His personality.***

The Glory is all of God that makes God who He is, and unlike anyone or anything else.

God created Adam and Eve to display, illustrate, and show forth His glory!

DIVINE DESTINY

Elohim’s intention for the man and women He created in His likeness and image is that they would reproduce, fill the earth, subdue it, and exercise

dominion over all of creation. **“And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Genesis 1:28).**

- “You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet” (Psalm 8:6).
- “The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's; But the earth He has given to the children of men” (Psalm 115:16).

However, sin changed everything!

RESTORING WHAT WAS LOST

Adam and Eve shared in the glory of the Lord. The authority they exercised was a result of this. Psalm 8:5 says, **“man was...made... a little lower than the angels” and was “...crowned...with glory and honour.”** The word ‘crowned’ in Hebrew means ‘encircled,’ ‘surrounded’ or encompassed. The implication is that the glory of God of was their covering, their cloak and garments. Consider the following:

While dwelling in the Garden, Adam and Eve were naked and yet they were not embarrassed. **“And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed” (Genesis 2:25).** After their transgression, they immediately became conscious of their nakedness. **“Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings” (Genesis 3:7).**

Why is it that all of a sudden this Genesis couple suddenly became conscious of their nakedness after their sin? As a result of their sin, Adam and Eve were no longer covered by the glory of God. Sin strips us of the glory. Romans 3:23 gives us the answer: **“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).**

As a result of the transgression of the man and the woman, sin entered the world and robbed them of both their identity and destiny stripped of their glory garments.

Not only did Adam and Eve experience the loss of God’s glory as a result of sin, their spiritual authority or dominion destiny was also forfeited. Hence, Satan now became the “god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4). Elsewhere we

are informed that the devil is the ruler or “prince of the world” (See John 12:31).

Relationship with God was severed resulting in loss of the glory and authority!

RECOVERING WHAT WAS LOST

The Gospel of Luke 19:10 says, “**The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.**” Note that the text states “that which was lost.”

When Jesus came to the earth, He came to restore that which was lost:

1. Reconciliation with God results in recovery of Identity.
2. Recovery of identity results in discovery of destiny.

FATHER’S FAVOURITE

“Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?” (John 21:20).

Knowledge of your Identity is deepened as a result of your communion and intimacy with God. The full realisation of one's identity as a beloved son/daughter of God will only occur as a result of cultivating a life of intimacy with Jesus. Remember it was John who leaned on Jesus' breast who had a revelation of himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

JESUS OUR FORERUNNER

Jesus walked in a clear revelation of His identity as a son of God the was deeply loved and the object of His Father’s pleasure. “**For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing**” (John 5:20). We see this demonstrated in the commencement of His ministry as He is being baptised in the river Jordan. “My beloved son.” Note: Jesus has not yet accomplished his public ministry.

The devil attacks Jesus in this area in the wilderness temptation.

NEW CREATION

1. **We are the Righteousness of Christ:** We are the righteousness of God in Christ because of Jesus' shed blood and the power of grace alone (2 Corinthians 5:21). Religion, self-effort, philanthropy any and all attempts of men and religion to reform will never suffice in meriting a position of worthiness before God.
2. **We Have God's Nature Living in Us:** When we were born-again, we were given *new life* (Romans 6:4). We are new creations in Christ (2 Cor 5:17). When we were born again, we were born a new. That means the old is gone! In fact, 47 times in Romans 5- 7 we are told we are dead! God did not repair us when He made us new, He resurrected us! He did not mend our old nature, He mortified it! The Greek word *new* here implies, "newness in the sense of 'a new kind, unprecedented, unheard of.'"

This new life is nothing less than the very nature of God Himself abiding in us. The New Testament clearly delineates this truth. 2 Peter 1:4 states we have **become partakers or sharers of the divine nature.**

John under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is even more emphatic: **"Those who have been born into God's family do not make a practice of sinning, because God's life is in them. So they can't keep on sinning, because they are children of God"** (1 John 3:9, New Living Translation).

The traditions and teachings of men as well as an innate sense of personal unworthiness, often keep us from fully appropriating this revelation. We must let God be true and every man a liar! The truth is: you are not merely "a sinner saved by grace." On the contrary, you are a "saint empowered by glory!" You were a sinner! You are now a saint! You may choose to sin, but that is not who you are any longer!

Many religious teachers, on the pretext of keeping you humble, will attempt to dissuade you of embracing your potential in Christ as a son of God! Don't believe it for a moment!

3. **We Have the Same Spirit That Raised Jesus From the Dead In Us:**
Romans 8:11 We have been equipped and empowered to do the same.

“Those who say that they live in him must live the same way he lived” (1 John 2:6, God’s Word Translation).

The life of Christ and the nature of God Himself is our new nature. For that reason we are super-natured that is why we can live supernaturally! As such, we can live like Jesus did on the earth, overcoming sin and the powers of darkness, performing miracles, signs and wonders.

SATAN THE IDENTITY THIEF

Satan is an identity thief. He does not want you to know who you are. What happened in your past does not define you. No matter what people have told you, no matter what you have believed about yourself, the true nature of your identity is based in and discovered as you embrace the love and acceptance of the One who created you after His image and likeness and for Himself.

You are the person God says you are in his word. Kingdom Revelation leads to Kingdom identification and results in Kingdom Demonstration. The true knowledge of God will culminate in knowledge of self.

GROUP EXERCISE

Exercise: Break into groups of 4-6 people and find 5 Scriptures that describe who you are in Christ. Write your answer down and share.

Group Discussion: How does knowing your identity in Christ affect you personally? Your relationships with others? Your relationship with God?

- *You will not be insecure or jealous of others nor will you show disdain for others. No sibling rivalry as you know Father loves ALL his children the same.*

OFFERING AND VIDEO

PART TWO

DESTINY: CREATED IN CHRIST FOR GOOD WORKS

“You were not created to conform. You were not created to compare. You were not created to compete. You were not created to compromise. You were created to contribute to God’s kingdom and make a significant difference with your life. You were created to just be you!” Author Unknown

Da Vinci painted one Mona Lisa, Beethoven created one Fifth Symphony, and God made one version of you. You’re it! You’re the only you there is.

Common Traps People Fall Into

Trap #1: Comparison-Wanting to be like others

Trap #2: Projection-Wanting others to be like you

Trap #3: Rejection-Not accepting the gifts God has given you

Trap #4: Deception-Thinking you have gifts you really don't have

The Bible teaches that when God saved us He restored to us Himself in order that we may cultivate a walk of intimacy with Him, know our divine identity and also live out our destiny.

IT IS WRITTEN

- “For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago” (Eph. 2:10 New Living Translation).
- “For we are God’s own handiwork, recreated in Christ Jesus, that we may do those good works which God predestined (planned beforehand) for us [taking paths which He prepared ahead of time], that we should walk in them [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us to live]” (Ephesians 2:10, Amplified Bible).
- “You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed” (Psalm 139:16, New Living Translation).

The Blueprint for Our Lives

When it comes to God’s destiny for our lives, we recognise from the Scriptures that His plans are:

1. **Pre-determined:** God is the one that has plans the course of our lives. We are called to seek Him for the revelation of His purposes.
2. **Particular:** Our destiny is inimitable. God has specific gifts that He desires you to discover, develop and deploy in order that you may execute the specific and unique ministry assignments He has for you.
3. **Partial:** No matter how gifted and anointed one may be, at the very most what they do is a single contribution in the grand scheme of our Heavenly Father’s redemptive purpose. You are called to belong to a community of believers. You are one part of the Body.

4. **Perceived:** Knowing what it is the Lord wants you to do and in what context, can only be recognised through the Biblical process of *revelation*.

Exercise: Read the following Scriptures. (Gal 1:1; 11-12; 16 and Gal 2:7-8). What did Paul learn re: His personal calling and destiny via revelation?

4. **Ministry:** Apostle: Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead),
5. **Message:** Christ, revealed to Him by race not law. But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.
6. **Mission:** The Gentiles: But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles.

KINGDOM PURPOSE ASSESSMENT

Where are you today, right now, at the beginning of your adventure with God? The list below will help you mark the spot. Read each statement and indicate your current status by circling the appropriate number: 3 = yes, 2 = somewhat, 1 = no. When you have finished, add the numbers for your score.

1. My unique God-given purpose in life is clear. 3 2 1
2. My spiritual gifts are being expressed. 3 2 1
3. My passions are being utilised for God. 3 2 1
4. My natural abilities are being used to serve others. 3 2 1
5. My personality is helping me serve others. 3 2 1
6. My purpose capitalises on many of my experiences. 3 2 1
7. My life is completely surrendered to God. 3 2 1
8. My attitude and actions reflect a servant heart. 3 2 1
9. My schedule shows how I'm investing in others. 3 2 1
10. My plan to fulfil my purpose from God is set. 3 2 1

A Focused Kingdom Purpose (22+ points) — Based on your answers, your God-given strengths seem clear and your specific purpose from God is concise. Your life is in balance and providing lasting fulfilment. You strive to live surrendered so you can find freedom in your role as a servant. Your master plan is on target for maximising your God-given strengths. You feel you truly are living the life you were meant to live.

A Fragmented Kingdom Purpose (12 – 22 points) — Based on your answers, your divine purpose seems cluttered. Your strengths are somewhat confused due to the fact that you are overextended in many areas of your life — something we can all relate to. There are times when you feel you are using your gifts for God’s glory, but there also are issues, emotions, and desires in your life that you still need to surrender to God in order to live the life he has in store for you. You desire to invest in others, but have not committed the time. You have a few goals in place, but no master plan to ensure your purpose for God is completed.

The result is intermittent fulfilment. You occasionally feel you are living the life you were created for, but you long for greater clarity. If you find yourself here, this book will help bring greater clarity to your God-given strengths and the specific purpose for which God made you.

A Frustrated Kingdom Purpose (Less than 12 points) — Based on your answers, you are confused about your specific purpose in life for God. You lack a clear idea of who you are and you have few clues about what God made you to do. Your specific God-given strengths are unknown. Surrender and servanthood are not themes you have engaged at this stage of your journey with God. You don’t feel safe making yourself accountable to others. Investing in others is not currently a priority of your life.

Now that you know where you are today, the next question is, Where would you like to be by this time next year? What is the one thing you long for God to do in your life as you spend time with him?

SPIRITUAL GIFT ASSESSMENT

What spiritual gifts have operated in your life in the past?

What spiritual gifts are operating in your life presently?

PURPOSE TALK & EXERCISE

1. The Bible says if we delight ourselves in the Lord, He will give us the desires of our heart (Psalm 37:4).

Scripture actually teaches that God gives us His desires: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws” (Ezekiel 36:26-27, New International Version).

For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him” (Philippians 2:13, NLT).

How has your identity in Christ changed the desires of your heart? What do you delight in now that you did not want to do before you knew Christ?

2. Is there something in your life, a desire, a dream, that you have/are struggling letting go of and releasing it to the Lord? If so, write it down.

3. The qualities of character I most admire and desire for God to shape into my life are _____. Why?

4. At the end of my life, I'd love to be able to look back and know that I made a significant impact. What would you like that to be?

5. If I were to mention your name to your friends or a group of people, what would they say you were interested in or passionate about?

6. What topic would keep you up late, talking into the night?

7. What are non-negotiable convictions you hold to?

8. Though I have dismissed the thought many times for various reasons, at times I have felt I really should be doing.

9. If you were to write the next chapter of your life it would include . . .

PERSONAL LIFE MISSION STATEMENT

Complete at home if needed!

Write a personal mission statement that describes what you are sensing God has called you to do. When crafting your statement, use the following questions to shape the content: What am I called to do? Whom am I called to serve? How will I do it? Your personal life mission statement when created in response to the work of God in your life, will give you focus and clarify your purpose. It becomes your filter for decision making so you can live by design, not by default.

Personal Life Mission Statement: Glenn Bleakney

I bring a commitment to and a conviction for authentic Christian community where lives are transformed by the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit resulting in the multiplication of disciples, leaders, and churches.