

**FINDING
YOUR
PURPOSE**
HOW TO KNOW WHY YOU ARE HERE.

BY REGI CAMPBELL

Finding (your) Purpose

...how to know why you're here!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Chapter 1 Why “why” matters	5
Chapter 2 Everybody’s on (some) purpose.....	9
Chapter 3 Your third word.....	11
Chapter 4 Utility vs. futility.....	16
Chapter 5 Connecting to your calling.....	18
About Us	27

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INTRODUCTION

Who am I and why am I here?

The first and ultimate question in Philosophy 101 and at the end of the Ph.D.

The question men have pondered since the beginning.

Turns out there are two kinds of people. One that noodles on this kind of question, and another who says “Hand me another beer!” and moves on.

Down deep in all of us, there’s this curiosity. If the world didn’t ‘just happen’...if it wasn’t ‘from goo to you via the zoo’...if the ‘big bang’ started with a ‘big banger’, then why? Why would God create this unique species called ‘man’ and make him so different from all the others? Why is my ability to reason, create, fly and build so far beyond any other living thing?

More specifically...why would God create *me*?

I don’t have the intellect or energy to think about the ‘big picture’ stuff very long. When people move into “where did God come from?”, I go where ignorance meets apathy...where “I don’t know” meets “I don’t care”. I know God is real. That He saved me from a life of selfishness and destructive behavior. I know He’s there with me and for me every day. I’m more like the man born blind than Aristotle. “He replied, whether he is a sinner or not, I don’t know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!” (John 9:25)

...but now what?

Do I float around singing hymns all day? Do I become a monk and meditate for hours and days on end? Do I have to quit my job and become a minister or preacher to be “all in” all the time?

Well that’s not me. I want to be “all in, all the time”, but I’m not a preacher. I’m not a monk. And I don’t sing so good.

If I am unique, if I'm "fearfully and wonderfully made", if God is my Perfect Father, then there's a unique role for me to play. A unique purpose for me in this world. "To everything, there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven" (Eccl. 3:1)

So this short book is to help you down a path that leads to your unique purpose in this world. There's no "magic bullet". This is a path to travel in constant collaboration with your Heavenly Father. It's hard work and it'll require lots of starts and restarts. But I believe it's worth it.

CHAPTER 1

Why “Why” Matters

A ‘felt need’ to know why

When *The Purpose Driven Life* came out in 2002, it became the largest selling non-fiction book in history (other than the Bible). It wasn't because it revealed some new insight, or posed some question nobody had ever asked before. It was because it struck a nerve. We all want to know why we're here and what we're supposed to do

The first four words in chapter 1...

“It's not about you”.

For 319 pages, Rick Warren presses us to realize true living is living for God and not ourselves. He's right.

But what do *I* do? How do I personalize “glorify God” and turn it into an actionable, purpose *for me*?

This is personal

I was just past my 34th birthday and a four-month-old Christ-follower. Friends had come in from out-of-town and we had decided to visit First Baptist Church of Atlanta. None of us had ever been there. It was downtown, hard to get to, hard to find a parking place, and easy to watch on t.v. without all the hassle. But we got it together and were ushered into seats just behind a television camera. They'd have been “Restricted View” tickets if we were paying. But they were free.

I opened up the bulletin and Charles Stanley's name wasn't there. The “Guest Speaker” was Ronald Blue, CPA. I thought “I didn't go through all this to hear a bean-counter drone through some boring talk about money. I came to hear “the man”. Dr. Stanley. The motivator. I came to be inspired. Not guilty about giving.”

But there was no way out. We sang, we prayed, they passed the plate. And then Ron Blue walked to the podium and asked a question that changed my life. I don't know what he said after this. Have no idea about his three points or call to action. All I remember is when he asked this question...

“If your life is a dollar, what are you spending it for?”

I was stunned. Embarrassed. Knocked off balance.

Thirty-four years old. Never thought about why I’m here or what I was doing with my life.

He continued...

“My purpose in life is to glorify God by using my financial knowledge, skills and experience to help people become better stewards of the resources God has given them.”

Wow!

Here was the first person I ever heard ask and answer that question. If I’d written down my answer to his question, it would have said...

“My purpose in life is to glorify Regi Campbell by going as far as I can as fast as I can within AT&T.”

Pretty lame, huh?

How ‘bout writing yours down right now? If you’re dead-level honest, you might be shocked at the similarity. (I’m not accusing, “I’m jus’ sayin’....)

Challenged to get after it

The next morning, I was on the phone to Ron Blue’s office. I was going to track this man down and force him to help me figure out *my* purpose. If he’d done it for himself, surely he could do it for me!

I got nowhere.

So I started working at it on my own. Scratching out ideas. Starting over. And over.

Ron had financial skills and experience. I was a sales guy. Ron had his own accounting firm where he regularly intersected with clients. I was with AT&T Information Systems. I intersected with computers, phones, switches, networks, modems and channel banks.

CHAPTER 1

Why “Why” Matters

I finally landed on something that (kinda’) made sense. Remember, I was a brand-new, very zealous, immature but passionate Christ-follower. I wrote...

“My purpose is to glorify God by teaching and modeling Christian principles in the sales and marketing workplace”.

It was amazing how much clarity that purpose statement gave me, even though it was all about work and not connected to current reality. AT&T was a huge company and I’d just been moved to a staff job with just a couple of employees and no customers. How could I teach or model anything in that job? Almost immediately, the wheels started turning for me to leave the company and start my own consultancy. My calls to Ron Blue’s office had yielded a new friendship with a well-known Christian consultant named Pat MacMillan. Together, we crafted a process where I could get in front of senior sales and marketing executives and help them take a hard look at their management practices. I could then offer up new ones that might make God a little happier. Within a few months, I was out of AT&T, building my own business, pursuing my purpose....every day.

Did I mention I didn’t have any money? Or that Pat didn’t either? That I left a six-figure job with amazing benefits for a desk, chair and an overhead allocation that was more than my assistant’s salary back at AT&T? It was crazy. Illogical. Maybe even irresponsible. But being “on purpose” for God’s glory can do that. Can take you places you never thought you’d go. Put you on your knees in fervent prayer. And give you exhilaration in life you never thought possible.

There’s a lot more to my story...more than you have time or patience to endure. And don’t get me wrong...I still don’t have it all figured out. My purpose statement has been revised, expanded, and honed. Even within the last six months, I’ve realized God wants me to look at life a little differently and I’m working to tweak my purpose statement yet again.

So here’s the question..

Don’t you want to know why you’re here?

If your life is a dollar, what are you spending it for?

CHAPTER 1

Why “Why” Matters

I'd like to invite you on a journey to find your answer to those questions. Your unique God-given reason for being on this earth. In these few short pages, I will share the process I used to figure out my life purpose. This isn't a formula...when you're finished, you'll only have begun. But it's worth the effort. I promise.

Imagine how easy it would be to make decisions if you knew your unique purpose for living. Your role in God's bigger story. Your specific gig. What you bring to the party. Your art. Your destiny. Your gift to the world and the future.

Imagine.

CHAPTER 2

Everybody's on (Some) Purpose

Goal achieving or tension relieving?

At the root, everything we do has purpose. We do stuff to make ourselves look good. To relieve physical or sexual pressure. To rid ourselves of guilt. Or just feel better. It's been said that everything we do is either goal achieving or tension relieving. On a "here and now" basis, that's hard to argue.

But extend the time horizon from minutes to hours to days, weeks and months, our purpose can look a lot different. I know people who'll spend the rest of their lives avoiding pain and the risk of discomfort. They save. They preserve. Protect. Insure. And they hide.

I know people who are consumed with making themselves look successful. Or beautiful. Or creative. Or athletic. Or popular. They live their lives around what "they" think, never even asking who "they" are. It would kill them to know others see them all wrapped up in managing their image. They so want it to look like it's natural.

Some of us will eventually move beyond all this posing. All this self-focused mask-wearing. Having our radio tuned exclusively to "W I I F M" (what's in it for me). As we mature, we get a sense we're a part of something bigger than ourselves. We want to fit in AND make a difference. We want to matter. And we want to connect with people who think like us. So we take up a cause or embrace a philosophy and that becomes our purpose. Here are a few examples of people and purpose...

Secular Humanist - "My purpose is to help people"

Environmentalist - "My purpose is to save the planet"

Scientologist - "My purpose is to resolve life's common problems of existence and achieve greater spiritual awareness"

Hedonist - "My purpose is to feel good and 'experience it all'"

American - "My purpose is just to have the good life (whatever that is)"

Nihilist - "My purpose is to have no purpose"

CHAPTER 2

Everybody's on (Some) Purpose

But what about us Christians

If you're reading this, odds are you're a Christian or someday will be. Purpose is something Jews will agree with Christians on. Made by God. Made for God. The One True God.

When I look for something Christians agree on, *purpose* might be it. From Catholicism to Calvinism, from Joel Osteen's mega-mega church to the smallest house church, believers agree we were created to "Glorify God." All the way back to the 1640's, in the Westminster Catechism...

"Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."

We are beings created to worship God. Worshippers. That's the easy part.

When you start bringing that down to something that's understandable and relevant, it gets pretty squirrely. A big part of it comes down to how you see God. Some see God as all-powerful judge who's standard is holiness. Glorifying Him involves being pious and as holy as we can be. For those times they fail, they need to make sacrifices to appease this Holy God who is perfect and demands perfection. If you see God as the big, beautiful, benevolent, universal God who is love and is about nothing but love, glorifying Him is about loving your neighbor, loving the animals, loving the earth, loving the stars in the sky, and loving everything and everybody in between.

But if you buy into Jesus and what He taught, God is best understood and related to as our Father. He is holy, just, and full of truth, but He's also loving, forgiving and full of grace. Jesus showed us what it's like to live as one of God's sons, loving and serving people as He followed His Father's will and modeled the perfectly fulfilled, God-centric life.

CHAPTER 2

Everybody's on (Some) Purpose

The other question Jesus settled for us was about what matters to God. He stood in the awesome man-made Temple and rendered it irrelevant, declaring Himself to be the Temple. The Temple to be torn down and raised again in three days. He taught the “Kingdom of God” existing in the hearts and souls of people. Everything else, including the ‘stuff’ we accumulate will be ‘wood, hay and stubble’ when life on earth ends. He assured us that God’s Word is timeless and will go on from age to age.

Net net?

Only people and God’s Word are of eternal value to God.

The rest are ‘object lessons’ to keep us alive and busy and teach us stuff.

When Jesus was asked about the greatest commandment, He said it was the one about loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength. And then about loving others as yourself.

So how do we love God?

Pretty easy to answer “Worship Him.” “Obey His commandments.” All the obvious stuff. But Jesus made it way more complicated when He started talking about loving people. “When you’ve done it to the ‘least of these’, you’ve done it to Me” (Matt. 25:40). “Think of others better than yourself” (Phil 2:3).

The Bible makes it clear. Loving others, especially those who are somehow beneath, below, or behind you, is a universal purpose directive for Christ-followers. “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?” (I John 3:17).

So we can begin our purpose statement like this....

“I (_ fill in your name _) glorify God by loving others.”

CHAPTER 2

Everybody's on (Some) Purpose

I can't think of a single human being who claims to be a Christian who can't sign up for this. It's clean, clear and simple to say. Simple to understand. We love God by loving His children. "Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight."

We are God's lovers for others. It sort of rhymes.

Love as a verb . . . it's spelled S-E-R-V-E

The only love that's real is love that's demonstrated. Love as a concept is just that . . . a concept. World peace is a concept. Harmony. Utopia. All concepts.

But when a lover becomes a servant, love becomes real. Tangible. Palpable.

Jesus showed His love for His disciples. He taught them what He knew. He healed Peter's mother-in-law. He gave them purpose. He gave them food sometimes. But His love was still pretty conceptual . . . until He took off His coat, got down on His knees and washed their feet. Just like they say "orphan" is just a word until you hold one, God's love is pretty conceptual until someone personifies it through service. Jesus was the first and by far the most profound. Read what He says as he challenged His guys . . .

12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. 13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16 Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

- John 13

"You will be blessed if you **do** them." Love serves. Love does.

CHAPTER 2

Everybody's on (Some) Purpose

Making it simple

We've taken this huge concept of "glorifying God" from the ethereal to the practical. From everybody to us. From 'they' to 'me.' Adding "serve" to our purpose statement, we now have...

"I (_ fill in your name _) glorify God by loving and serving others."

There's one more piece to this puzzle, at least according to my process. And it's the most personal. Unique. And candidly, it's the hardest to come up with. It's your 'third word.'

CHAPTER 3

Your Third Word

Fearfully and wonderfully made

Every single one of us is different. While our DNA is 99.9% the same as any other human, there are 3,000,000 differences between every human and every other human. We're all unique.

And that's just what we're born with. Add the unique influence of parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, teachers, ministers, counselors & friends and we become even more different from each other. Pour each life over years of "one of a kind" experiences and you see why every single person becomes so unique and different.

Our omniscient Heavenly Father isn't the least bit surprised by the person you've become. In fact, He had a huge role in shaping your journey, creating some of the opportunities you've had, and redeeming some you tried to make for yourself.

So we're now going to expand our purpose statement template again...

**"I (_ fill in your name _) glorify God by loving and serving others,
and by _____ them..."**

What will you put in the blank? What is this 'third word' for you? If we're all made to love and serve, what are you uniquely wired to do?

We're talking about verbs here. Things you do that excite you, come naturally and you're good at.

A light just came on for a few of you. You've known for a long time...just never put words to it. You're known for this. People have been blessed because you do this and you're so good at it. You're the 'go-to guy' when it comes to this particular thing. Let me give you some examples.

My friend Greg's 'third word' is **encourage**. He "gives people courage." Morning to night, inside his business and out, Greg has this uncanny unctioin to say just the right thing at just the right time to encourage people. And it's not just me. It's hundreds of people. It's not flattery. And it's not 'rose-colored glasses' puffery. He can 'go negative' with the best of them. But his unique "gift to the world" is encouragement.

CHAPTER 3

Your Third Word

Pete's third word is "**connecting**." He's the most passionate, natural networking person I've ever met. He's constantly linking people with ideas, people with books, and people with people. God is using his connecting skills to build 'bands of brothers' all around.

Scavenger hunt

The first place to look for your third word might be in what have people said about you. How do they describe you to others? What are you known for? Are you a problem solver? Are you the guy who always does a great job organizing things? Maybe you're the person everyone goes to when they need wisdom in their relationships. Don't build your 'third word' on a random comment, or even two or three random compliments. I'm talking about what you're famous for. Trends. Distinguishing characteristics demonstrated over a long period of time.

If your 'third word' hasn't jumped out at you by now, you're going to have to work at it. I found this list of 'third words' to be a great place to start. I found it in Laurie Beth Jones' book, *The Path*. While this isn't an exact fit to our "purpose" exercise, it might be helpful.

Here's the drill. Pick out 4 verbs from each of the 5 lists you will find on the next page...pick the words that most excite you. Then from that list, select three. These are the action words that describe what you do naturally. They'll shape your future activities too. Go.

CHAPTER 3

Your Third Word

Accomplish	Create	Franchise	Move	Respect
Acquire	Decide	Further	Negotiate	Restore
Adopt	Defend	Gather	Nurture	Return
Advance	Delight	Generate	Open	Revise
Affect	Deliver	Give	Organize	Sacrifice
Affirm	Demonstrate	Grant	Participate	Safeguard
Alleviate	Devise	Heal	Pass	Satisfy
Amplify	Direct	Hold	Perform	Save
Appreciate	Discover	Host	Persuade	Sell
Ascend	Discuss	Identify	Play	Serve
Associate	Distribute	Illuminate	Possess	Share
Believe	Draft	Implement	Practice	Speak
Bestow	Dream	Improve	Praise	Stand
Brighten	Drive	Improvise	Prepare	Summon
Build	Educate	Inspire	Present	Support
Call	Elect	Integrate	Produce	Surrender
Cause	Embrace	Involve	Progress	Sustain
Choose	Encourage	Keep	Promise	Take
Claim	Endow	Know	Promote	Tap
Collect	Engage	Labor	Provide	Team
Combine	Engineer	Launch	Pursue	Touch
Command	Enhance	Lead	Realize	Trade
Communicate	Enlighten	Light	Receive	Translate
Compel	Enlist	Live	Reclaim	Travel
Compete	Enliven	Love	Reduce	Understand
Complete	Entertain	Make	Refine	Use
Compliment	Enthuse	Manifest	Reflect	Utilize
Compose	Evaluate	Master	Reform	Validate
Conceive	Excite	Mature	Regards, Relate	Value
Confirm	Explore	Measure	Relax	Venture
Connect	Express	Mediate	Release	Verbalize
Consider	Extent	Model	Rely	Volunteer
Construct	Facilitate	Mold	Remember	Work
Contact	Finance	Motivate	Renew	Worship
Continue	Forgive		Resonate	Write
Counsel	Foster			Yield

CHAPTER 3

Your Third Word

So now you've narrowed this huge list of words down to three words that describe you, inspire you and give clues as to your unique purpose.

If that didn't work, print out the list and start striking words that AREN'T exciting to you. Use the process of elimination until you get down to three words that describe what you do that's uniquely you and fires you up!

Now ask around

Armed with these three word choices, sit down with your wife, your best friend, your small group, your parents...heck, even with your boss. Put the words in front of them and ask "Do these words describe me?" "Which one is best?" Ask why. Ask for examples....things they've seen you do to validate their opinion. A friend once bantered around this quote..."If two people tell you you're drunk, lay down!" Another friend quotes an Amish poem... "If a brother calls thee an arse, rebuke him and send him away. If two brothers calls thee an arse, buy thee a saddle!"

If those who know you best...who've known you for a long time...have seen you thrive and strive... if those people pick a word that "is" you, they're likely right.

Now look up...

Hopefully, you've 'congealed' around one word by now. Your 'third word.' This will become the unique word in your purpose statement. If you haven't done it yet, it's time to get low and go big. To get down on your knees and put all this on the altar of our Creator God. He's been with you on this journey toward purpose long before you knew you were on it. He's been giving you experiences, exposing you to people & situations, directing you to schools, seminars, retreats, specific courses. He's been putting books in your hands and sermons in your ears...all to prepare you for the moment you're ready to grasp His unique purpose for you. Don't hold anything back. Humble yourself. "Speak Lord, your servant is listening." "Almighty God. I'm all in. Show me the uniqueness you've put in me. Remove my unbelief so I won't limit what You want to do in and through me." "Go big God." "Go big!"

The Bible tells us about people whose purpose 'went big.' God spoke and they were off. The ultimate? Jesus: "I have come that they might have life and have it to the full." Jesus... to Peter: "Upon this 'rock,' I will build my church." Adam, Abraham, Moses. The Old Testament prophets. They seem to have had their purpose handed to them directly. But for reasons only our perfect Father knows, He's left most of us to sort out our purpose in a less direct way.

CHAPTER 3

Your Third Word

Don't stand there, do something

Okay, so waiting for confirmation isn't an option. Take your best shot at your purpose statement and get going. You can correct, refine, tweak or even start over at any time.

Remember back in Chapter 1 when I shared my first life purpose statement?

“My purpose is to glorify God by teaching and modeling Christian principles in the sales and marketing workplace.”

I set out to fulfill that purpose. I ‘lived with’ it for a while and it helped me. But I figured out my purpose statement only covered one aspect of my life. It was about my work. My profession. It was silent about my family, my marriage, my church, and my neighbors. It was good, but incomplete. I needed more.

Someone turned me on to a book written by Kevin McCarthy called *The On-Purpose Person*. McCarthy unpacks some cool ideas in this little allegory. I've probably given away a hundred copies. Through those exercises, conversations with thoughtful people and a few fits and starts, I came up with an improved version. Here it is...my current life purpose statement, including my ‘third word’....

“My purpose in life is to glorify God by loving and serving others, and by challenging them”

My third word is ‘challenge.’ It fits me like a glove! (My wife says I *am* a challenge!) As long as I can remember in my adult life, it's been completely natural and comfortable for me to ask people tough, challenging questions. I ask them of CEO's whose businesses I invest in. I ask them of ministry people who're starting new things. I ask them of church leaders, elders, and pastors. Whenever I think I can help someone or some situation by asking a tough question, I ask it. In a sense, I may be holding up a mirror to someone whose lost perspective. I may get invited in when there's a crisis and someone needs a ‘filter’ to process their thoughts & plans with. Amazingly, people remain friends even after I pelt them with questions. Most of them even invite me back to ask more questions later on. It's just what I do. I'm good at it. And God seems to use my challenges. Are you reading this right now? Point proven.

Are you feelin' it? Do you ‘get’ this idea of figuring out your unique ‘thing’...that ‘thing’ you do that's like swimming downstream?

CHAPTER 4

Utility vs. Futility

So what good is it?

So what's critical about a purpose statement? What difference does having a life purpose statement make day in and day out? Here are some ways to use it...

Better decisions – If I know what my purpose *is*, it's easier for me to see what *isn't* aligned with my purpose. I have more bandwidth to apply to things I care about and I'm good at. Conversely, I'm better prepared to say 'no' to things that connect with someone else's purpose but not mine. I can say 'no' and feel no guilt.

More meaning – When I get involved in things that connect with my purpose, my life has more meaning. My time is valuable. It matters what I do with it. I'm more proud of my contributions because they have purpose beyond myself. I have a lot more than memories....I matter.

Less wasteful – When I know my purpose, less is wasted. Less time. Less money. Less effort. If it's all about motive and the "why" I do things, nothing I do is wasted. I offer myself up, do the best I can, and trust God with the outcome.

Feel better about myself – We feel good about ourselves when we do the right thing. When I engage in things that are "on purpose" for me... things that leverage what I'm good at... what I was put here to do, my confidence soars, my performance improves, and my heart overflows with gratitude that God let me be involved.

Iterate. Iterate. Iterate.

As you're working through this purpose stuff, cut yourself some slack. It's pretty "heady" and it's not likely you'll nail it on your first try. Don't be afraid to start over if you charge off into a purpose and find out you missed it. Sometimes we confuse the 'idea of something' with the 'something.' We start living out a purpose statement and find nothings' working. You have no peace. People around you think you're a 'fish out of water.' That's o.k. Pull back. Pray. Rethink. Rework and try again.

Just don't give up. You'll get out of this process what you put into it. Over time, you'll begin to get clarity and know you've found your niche.

CHAPTER 4

Utility vs. Futility

A tension to manage

Finally, remember that finding your purpose isn't a problem you're trying to solve. There's no 'final answer' like a math problem. There's a tension around purpose that will always be there. A tension between being on purpose and being practical. A tension between long-term vision and short-term practicality. A tension between your personality (i.e. who you are) and what you do.

God made you unique. He doesn't want to lose you in what you do. He'll tug at your heart from time to time to remind you there are people in your life who matter...people who have different purposes from you. People he wants you to love and serve. These people include your spouse, your kids, your parents, your siblings, and your close friends. God doesn't need you to do anything. He invites you to find your purpose and join him in what He's doing. But He will do what He's going to do with or without you. Don't take yourself too seriously. Leverage your purpose, but don't let it leverage you. Only He can do that.

...in the 'zone' with someone else

Aside from the unique intimacy of walking with my Heavenly Father and the unique intimacy of marriage, being 'on purpose' with others on a Kingdom mission is unrivaled. It brings incomparable joy. John Eldredge began his ministry with his best friend Brent. Brent died in an accident shortly after they started Ransomed Hearts.

In describing his friend who shared his purpose, he says....

"Brent's heart saw what mine saw. Our friendship was a shared journey, a mutual quest for the secret to our souls...into the desperate battle raging all around for the hearts of others as well."

There's nothing quite like being on a mission with others in a close-knit group united by shared purpose and Godly calling. But never forget that God is the author of the story. We play our roles. Just because the Author writes a character out of the story doesn't mean the story is over. It means God has other plans. Other characters. Other plot lines. Eldredge's ministry (www.ransomedheart.com) has gone on to change the hearts of thousands of men. Brent didn't get to play a role, but God has done amazing things through the ministry he visualized through Brent's pursuit of his God-given purpose.

CHAPTER 5

Connecting to Your Calling

Putting the wheels on the car

Maybe you've settled some of life's biggest questions here. You know why God made you. You've bought into the idea that life is about people, since God made people in His own image and loved them enough to die on a cross for them. Through Jesus' life and teachings, we know we're here to worship God and to love and serve others.

We've settled the "why" question. We've taken our best shot at personalizing God's purpose. (for me, it's to 'love, serve and challenge'). Now we have to decide the "who," "what" and "where." At least we have to start. We pursue our calling within our purpose.

I've had hundreds of conversations about calling. I'm not sure anyone understands it. Andy Stanley's one of the most successful preachers in the universe and he can't tell you when or how or even if we was "called." I've seen lots of preachers "called" to larger churches with higher salaries. Not so many "called" to smaller churches and less money. Most of the conversations I had been a part of left me confused and cynical about calling.

Until...a friend said this.

"Calling is connected to design."

When God designs something, He always gets it right. It's us humans trying to bend it, rationalize it, stratify it, and formalize it that screws things up. As Bronnie Ware said, speaking of people at the end of life "They regret spending their lives fulfilling other people's visions instead of pursuing their own dreams." In his secular but insightful book *The War of Art*, Stephen Pressfield says "This idea that 'you can be anything you want' is crap. We were each designed to do one thing. Find out what that is and go do your work." Popular blogger Seth Godin says "Your work is your art. You are the irreplaceable unique person who can do this."

I know all this sounds like self-actualization gobbledegook, but it's true to a large degree. If we've been designed by God, if we set out to love & serve people and to do so through the skills, talents, experience, passion and interests He's placed in us, we can't miss.

CHAPTER 5

Connecting to Your Calling

So what 'chu gonna' do?

Purpose is about *why* you exist and what God designed for you to bring to His Kingdom. Calling is about *what to do*, not why you're doing it. He purposed me to 'love, serve and challenge' and I've lived out that purpose as a business guy. I could have lived it out the same way if I'd been 'called' to be a lawyer, a teacher, or a programmer. He didn't make everyone apostles, or teachers, or doctors, or Walmart greeters. Nor did he make everyone challengers, encouragers or connectors. He's more brilliant and creative than that. Purpose is bigger than calling. It's broader. More transportable from one calling to another. Some people have a single calling in life. Others have several. As I said, I don't understand too much about calling. I just know that some people seem to have a destiny... a job to do... a task to throw themselves into. I believe purpose trumps calling.

Just as you have a unique fingerprint and a unique DNA pattern, I believe you have a unique purpose. I've found great fulfillment in life as I added these two phrases to my purpose statement...

**“My purpose in life is to glorify God by loving and serving others, and by challenging them...
to be all they can be and to give all of themselves to Jesus Christ.”**

If I'm to glorify God in this life, I have to point people to Jesus. To encourage them to go 'all in' with Him and let Christ live His life in and through them. He receives us 'just as we are,' but that doesn't mean He wants us to stay that way. I believe God wants us to fully explore our potential. Learning. Growing. Giving. Loving. He wants us to fully develop as human beings, and then 'present ourselves to Him as living sacrifices'.

CHAPTER 5

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There are two directions for our lives and our energies. Two that matter.

- 1. *Loving & serving people by ‘using our various gifts’ to help them and build them up.***
- 2. *Pointing them to a loving Heavenly Father.*** So they’ll join His team. Become Kingdom focused. And live a life of meaning and fulfillment using everything they are and all they’ve learned for people’s good and God’s glory.

I believe our ‘calling’ connects with our design but always has the end-goal of pointing people to Jesus. We can be doctors, lawyers, gardeners or cashiers. We can thrive living out our purpose doing any job. But at the end of the day, it must point back to our Savior if it’s to be meaningful, valuable, and eternal.

Godspeed as you pursue finding and living your purpose.

Feedback

It’s obvious this little ebook isn’t the ‘be all, end all’ treatise on purpose. It’s intended to be a starting point.

If you have experiences, ideas or resources to share, go to www.radicalmentoring.com and click the “Feedback” button on the left side of the landing page. We’ll leverage your input to the Radical Mentoring ‘tribe’ as we all seek to ‘glorify God’ in our lives.

About Regi Campbell and Radical Mentoring

Regi was involved in the launch of North Point Community Church, serving on the long range planning team, stewardship team, and as elder on two occasions. North Point is led by Andy Stanley and is experienced by thousands each week and is one of the largest and fastest growing churches in America.

Regi has written several books including *About My Father's Business: Taking Your Faith to Work* and *Mentor like Jesus*. His real passion, however, is mentoring younger men, which he has done informally for over 20 years and on a more formal basis for the last thirteen.

In 2007, Regi founded Next Generation Mentoring to establish mentoring programs in churches and Christian organizations. NGM has now become Radical Mentoring. RM seeks to inspire and equip older, wiser men to mentor younger, less experienced men to walk with God and make disciples the way Jesus did.

Please explore the Radical Mentoring website and discover all it has to offer. All of our materials and resources will equip you to lead a mentoring group of your own for free. We ask nothing from you in return! Learn more at: www.radicalmentoring.com/the-program

If you're not ready to register and be a mentor today, then relax. Pray. Read the posts we'll send you twice each week. And be ready when God taps you on the shoulder or gives you an unction to engage with someone to help them into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ. Then 'just say yes' and do it.

