



WALKING ON IN OUR GOD-GIVEN PURPOSE

with Ben Malcolmson

▶ FOCUS VERSES

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord.
“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
Isaiah 55:8-9

▶ DISCUSSION

- 1. Have you ever pursued something on a whim, or just to have a story to tell—as Ben did when he participated in walk-on tryouts for the USC football team—and it ended up leading to a truly great opportunity you’d never anticipated?**
 - a. Did that unexpected good fortune make you feel like you’d been chosen or put in position for something special?

- 2. Now flip things around 180 degrees: Have you ever acted on what you thought was a great idea, and put a lot of emotional investment into it—as Ben did when he left those Bibles for his teammates in the locker room—and the response was underwhelming, even negative or hostile? (See *Proverbs 3:5*.)**
 - a. What did you feel most disappointed about?

 - b. In hindsight, did you set your expectations too high?

- 3. Have you ever been in a situation like the one described in the previous question, where you didn’t get immediate payoff or gratification for an act or idea you’d placed a great deal of importance in, but realized some time later that your actions really had made a meaningful impact after all?**



- a. Were those results something you'd anticipated or hoped for originally, or were they completely unexpected?
- 4. Continuing with the previous question: Looking back, did having to wait for those results make them feel more special? (See Psalm 62:5.)**
- a. Over the course of that long wait, did you mature in ways that made you more able to appreciate why everything happened the way it did?
- 5. Do you consider yourself a patient person in general, or are you the kind of person who quickly gets frustrated when you have to wait for something longer than you feel like you should have to? (See Isaiah 40:31.)**
- 6. Talk about Ben's statement that "our truest identity as children of God doesn't change," even when we take on new roles such as husband, father, or co-worker.**
- a. Does the difference between "identity" and "role" make sense to you?
- b. Do you feel like you live out your true identity as a child of God in every aspect of your life, or are there areas in which you could make God a greater influence?
- 7. Read and discuss the "My Identity in Jesus" PDF that Ben created while he was with the Seahawks.**
- a. Which aspects of that identity (as Ben describes them) resonate with you the most?
- b. Are there any that you find hard to relate to, or that you feel don't describe you at all?
- c. What do you think is the reason for that discrepancy?
- d. What are some ways in which you might deepen your relationship with God and understand those aspects of your identity better?

