

**ORIGINAL  
DESIGN**

FOR WE ARE GOD'S MASTERPIECE. HE HAS CREATED US ANEW IN CHRIST JESUS, SO THAT WE CAN DO THE GOOD THINGS HE PLANNED FOR US LONG AGO.

*\_EPHESIANS 2:10 (NLT)*

FROM ONE MAN HE MADE EVERY NATION OF MEN, THAT THEY SHOULD INHABIT THE WHOLE EARTH; AND HE DETERMINED THE TIMES SET FOR THEM AND THE EXACT PLACES WHERE THEY SHOULD LIVE. *\_ACTS 17:26 (NIV)*

FOR YOU FORMED MY INWARD PARTS; YOU WOVE ME IN MY MOTHER'S WOMB.

*\_PSALM 139:13 (NASB)*

FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU, DECLARES THE LORD, PLANS FOR WHOLENESS AND NOT FOR EVIL, TO GIVE YOU A FUTURE AND A HOPE.

*\_JEREMIAH 29:11 (ESV)*

FOR THOSE WHOM HE FOREKNEW HE ALSO PREDESTINED TO BE CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON . . . AND THOSE WHOM HE PREDESTINED HE ALSO CALLED, AND THOSE WHOM HE CALLED HE ALSO JUSTIFIED, AND THOSE WHOM HE JUSTIFIED HE ALSO GLORIFIED.

*\_ROMANS 8:29-30 (ESV)*

**IT IS CRITICAL THAT WE UNDERSTAND THAT WE HAVE BEEN CREATED WITH A GREAT PURPOSE.** OUR PERSONALITIES AND ABILITIES HAVE BEEN UNIQUELY DEVELOPED BY GOD HIMSELF. WE ARE LIKE AN EXQUISITELY DESIGNED RACE CAR THAT IS MISSING THE FUEL. AT SALVATION, JESUS FILLS US UP WITH HIS POWER, WHICH IGNITES OUR TRUE PURPOSE AND DESIGN.

The Bible is clear that even before we were born, or even the world was made, God had a plan for our lives. It is mind-blowing to think that before the beginning of time, God knew our names. He loves us with an intimacy we will never understand, and that love started long before our first breath. It is easy to forget that God is limitless, has no beginning, and is unhindered by space and time.

BEFORE THE MOUNTAINS WERE BORN OR YOU GAVE BIRTH TO THE EARTH AND THE WORLD, EVEN FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING, YOU ARE GOD.

*\_PSALM 90:2 (NASB)*

In a world that is often chaotic and random, God is an exquisite designer. Your purpose is not random because God is not random. God is perfect, He cannot do anything haphazardly. To put it bluntly, "God doesn't make junk." His plans are the plans of a proud father, who wishes to put His sons and daughters on display.

## SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLES

The theme of individual destiny and purpose is found throughout Scripture. It seems that God takes great delight in announcing what He has planned for His children. We are His sons and daughters, this we must never forget. Every good earthly father speaks hopes and dreams over his children, so how much more does the living God. He is a father who is forever good, forever just, and who does not just dream or hope, but declares!

### ABRAHAM –

THEN THE LORD SAID, "SHALL I HIDE FROM ABRAHAM WHAT I AM ABOUT TO DO? ABRAHAM WILL SURELY BECOME A GREAT AND POWERFUL NATION, AND ALL NATIONS ON EARTH WILL BE BLESSED THROUGH HIM. FOR I HAVE CHOSEN HIM, SO THAT HE WILL DIRECT HIS CHILDREN AND HIS HOUSEHOLD AFTER HIM TO KEEP THE WAY OF THE LORD BY DOING WHAT IS RIGHT AND JUST, SO THAT THE LORD WILL BRING ABOUT FOR ABRAHAM WHAT HE HAS PROMISED HIM."

*\_GENESIS 18:17-19 (NIV)*

### SAMSON –

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED TO HER AND SAID, "YOU ARE STERILE AND CHILDLESS, BUT YOU ARE GOING TO CONCEIVE AND HAVE A SON. NOW SEE TO IT THAT YOU DRINK NO WINE OR OTHER FERMENTED DRINK AND THAT YOU DO NOT EAT ANYTHING UNCLEAN, BECAUSE YOU WILL CONCEIVE AND GIVE BIRTH TO A SON. NO RAZOR MAY

BE USED ON HIS HEAD, BECAUSE THE BOY IS TO BE A NAZIRITE, SET APART TO GOD FROM BIRTH, AND HE WILL BEGIN THE DELIVERANCE OF ISRAEL FROM THE HANDS OF THE PHILISTINES."

*\_JUDGES 13:3-5 (NIV)*

### JEREMIAH –

THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME TO ME, SAYING, "BEFORE I FORMED YOU IN THE WOMB I KNEW YOU, BEFORE YOU WERE BORN I SET YOU APART; I APPOINTED YOU AS A PROPHET TO THE NATIONS."

*\_JEREMIAH 1:3-4 (NIV)*

### JOHN THE BAPTIST –

THEN AN ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED TO HIM, STANDING AT THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ALTAR OF INCENSE. WHEN ZECHARIAH SAW HIM, HE WAS STARTLED AND WAS GRIPPED WITH FEAR. BUT THE ANGEL SAID TO HIM: "DO NOT BE AFRAID, ZECHARIAH; YOUR PRAYER HAS BEEN HEARD. YOUR WIFE ELIZABETH WILL BEAR YOU A SON, AND YOU ARE TO GIVE HIM THE NAME JOHN. HE WILL BE A JOY AND DELIGHT TO YOU, AND MANY WILL REJOICE BECAUSE OF HIS BIRTH, FOR HE WILL BE GREAT IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD. HE IS NEVER TO TAKE WINE OR OTHER FERMENTED DRINK, AND HE WILL BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT EVEN FROM BIRTH. MANY OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL WILL HE BRING BACK TO THE LORD THEIR GOD. AND HE WILL GO ON BEFORE THE LORD, IN THE SPIRIT AND POWER OF ELIJAH, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS TO THEIR CHILDREN AND THE DISOBEDIENT TO THE WISDOM OF THE RIGHTEOUS—TO MAKE READY A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE LORD." *\_LUKE 1:13-17 (NIV)*

## PAUL –

FROM BIRTH AND CALLED ME BY HIS GRACE, WAS PLEASED TO REVEAL HIS SON IN ME SO THAT I MIGHT PREACH HIM AMONG THE GENTILES, I DID NOT CONSULT ANY MAN . . .

*\_GALATIANS 1:15-16 (NIV)*

## A STRATEGIC PURPOSE

It is not just Bible characters that have a radical God-given design! It is important for followers of Jesus Christ to understand and walk in their design because it is the path to a life that can change the world. God's design for each believer is not common, or "one size fits all." World-changers are not birthed from random circumstances; they are commissioned and equipped by God for His purposes. To say that there is no one like you on the face of the earth is not flattery because it is true. God is to receive glory in this; after all, He made you. Everything and everyone in the kingdom of God is strategically designed and molded, by Him for Him.

. . . WHO HAS SAVED US AND CALLED US WITH A HOLY CALLING, NOT ACCORDING TO OUR WORKS, BUT ACCORDING TO HIS OWN PURPOSE AND GRACE WHICH WAS GIVEN TO US IN CHRIST JESUS BEFORE TIME BEGAN. *\_2 TIMOTHY 1:9 (NKJV)*

THE LORD HAS MADE EVERYTHING FOR ITS OWN PURPOSE . . .

*\_PROVERBS 16:4 (NASB)*

MANY ARE THE PLANS IN THE MIND OF A MAN, BUT IT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LORD THAT WILL STAND. *\_PROVERBS 19:21 (NASB)*

IF THE WHOLE BODY WERE AN EYE, WHERE WOULD THE HEARING BE? IF THE WHOLE WERE HEARING, WHERE WOULD THE SENSE OF SMELL BE? BUT NOW GOD HAS PLACED THE MEMBERS, EACH ONE OF THEM, IN THE BODY, JUST

AS HE DESIRED. IF THEY WERE ALL ONE MEMBER, WHERE WOULD THE BODY BE?

*\_1 CORINTHIANS 12:17-19 (NASB)*

Paul taught that the Church is the "body" of Christ. Each member has its own function, as Paul describes in the 1 Corinthians verse above. If we are functioning in the body of Christ without realizing our identity and design, it is easy to become confused and despondent. We are each designed to be a strategic piece of the puzzle in the Church and in God's plan. However, we can often miss this revelation because we are looking in the wrong place. We frantically look to fill a role, all the while never realizing the identity we have in Christ.

## INTIMACY = EXPLOITS

BUT THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW THEIR GOD SHALL BE STRONG, AND CARRY OUT GREAT EXPLOITS. *\_DANIEL 11:32 (NKJV)*

Believers are often busy trying to please God, all the while missing out on the most important detail—knowing Him. In order for our design to be released as God has planned, our focus must be Christ. Most of us have heard the expression that "being is more important than doing," though few of us can live daily in this peace. Many times, we grit our teeth in life and determine to try harder. God is not looking for a man or woman who will work harder; He is looking for a man or woman who will believe in Him, who will share His burdens, one who will love Him.

JESUS ANSWERED, "THE WORK OF GOD IS THIS: TO BELIEVE IN THE ONE HE HAS SENT." *\_JOHN 6:29 (NIV)*

"THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE," ANSWERED JESUS, "IS THIS: 'HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE. LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH. *\_MARK 12:29-30 (NIV)*

It takes the pressure off us to know that our identity is not found in what we can accomplish. Just as we do not receive salvation based on the good things we do, so we are not chosen for our works, our skill, our good looks, or anything else. As followers of Christ, we were chosen because God, in His grace, wanted to. There is a mystery to this that we can rejoice in. So in the knowledge of God and His favor we can move forward in our design. Just as Daniel 11 states, when we know God then we will do mighty things in His kingdom—in that order.

## HOW DO YOU KNOW YOUR DESIGN?

After all this discussion, you may be curious about how God personally designed you. It is time for a bit of application! **When looking to answer this question, there are three main ways: The Bible, seeking the Lord yourself, and seeking the Lord within the Church.**

### 1. THE BIBLE.

AND SO WE HAVE THE PROPHETIC WORD CONFIRMED, WHICH YOU DO WELL TO HEED . . . NO PROPHECY OF SCRIPTURE IS OF ANY PRIVATE INTERPRETATION, FOR PROPHECY NEVER CAME BY THE WILL OF MAN, BUT HOLY MEN OF GOD SPOKE AS THEY WERE MOVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.  
*\_2 PETER 1:19-21 (NKJV)*

Many times, people are excited about getting prophetic revelation about their design and strongholds. However, you do not need spontaneous prophetic revelation to know your identity in Christ! The Bible is thorough in revealing your design, and it is the only word of prophecy that is certain. Everything that you receive from others, or in prayer should be tested by the Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16).

Your thoughts and focus in seeking to know your design should first and foremost be built on scriptural truth. The Bible has numerous verses that speak to your design and identity as a follower of Jesus Christ.

### It says you are:

- A child of God (1 John 3:1).
- A royal heir (Colossians 1:12, Ephesians 1:18).
- An ambassador of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20).
- A saint (Ephesians 1:1, Colossians 1:2).
- Fully righteous in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- An enemy of the devil (1 Peter 5:8).
- And the list could go on and on . . .

In the resource section of this book we have included what we call “The Christian’s Birthright” which gives an overview of our identity in Christ. It is also essential to search the Scriptures on your own to learn about who you are, and who you can become!

Returning to your original design is about becoming more like Jesus. Paul called it “conforming to the image” of Christ (Romans 8:29). You were created in the image of God, and through Christ you become more aligned with His attributes. Learning about your original design is not about inflating your ego; rather the purpose is for Christ to reveal Himself to you. You have a mission while on this earth! It is not about you, but the glory of Christ and the gospel being unleashed through you. The right question to ask is, “Am I lining up with what the Bible says about who I am and what I can become?”

### 2. SEEK THE LORD YOURSELF.

IF ANY OF YOU LACKS WISDOM, HE SHOULD ASK GOD, WHO GIVES GENEROUSLY TO ALL WITHOUT FINDING FAULT, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO HIM.

*\_JAMES 1:5 (NIV)*

CALL TO ME, AND I WILL ANSWER YOU, AND SHOW YOU GREAT AND MIGHTY THINGS, WHICH YOU DO NOT KNOW.

*\_JEREMIAH 33:3 (NKJV)*

God desires that we inquire of Him on a regular basis. This can be applied to our daily lives in the decisions that we make and the way we pray—in expectation that God wants to speak. It is no different when it comes to personally seeking the Lord in your private prayer times for Him to help you understand your original design. This is all about intimacy with Christ. We need

real-time personal revelation of biblical principles. It breaks us out of the mindset that God is far away when He shows up and speaks! Personal revelation from the Lord gives us specific insight into his heart for us and endears us to Him.

Seeking the Lord in your personal prayer time is so essential because it cultivates your trust relationship with Him. When God opens your heart and mind through revelation (through Scripture or by spontaneous revelation), you are transformed forever, because you met God. It is like an epiphany; a light bulb flips on inside your head. **It is the difference between information and transformation.** You can receive a million prayer times and encouragement from others telling you how God sees you, but until you have encountered the living God and agreed with Him, you will never move into your design. There are many champions of the faith who set out to change the world for Christ with no prodding from others. All they had was a God given passion and a call, and trusted that God would follow through on His promises.

### 3. SEEK THE LORD WITHIN THE CHURCH.

THIS CHARGE I COMMIT TO YOU,  
SON TIMOTHY, ACCORDING TO THE  
PROPHECIES PREVIOUSLY MADE  
CONCERNING YOU, THAT BY THEM YOU  
MAY WAGE THE GOOD WARFARE.

*\_1 TIMOTHY 1:18 (NKJV)*

BUT EVERYONE WHO PROPHECIES SPEAKS  
TO MEN FOR THEIR STRENGTHENING,  
ENCOURAGEMENT AND COMFORT.

*\_1 CORINTHIANS 14:3 (NIV)*

Scripture is clear that we are to eagerly desire the gift of prophecy and the greater gifts (1 Corinthians 14:1). These are for the strengthening, encouragement and comfort of the Church, and for a greater revelation of Christ (John 15:26, 16:14). It is the Lord's desire to speak to you regarding His purposes as seen in the above verses. In this passage of Scripture, Paul encourages Timothy to fight the good fight according to the prophecies that were made about him. In the same way, you can celebrate how God can speak through other

brothers and sisters in Christ to encourage you about your design.

As noted prior, we cannot depend on prophetic words to be the driving force in our lives. But at the same time, we should never despise (but rejoice in) revelation received in the Church that is in submission to church leadership and guidance. It is incredible when God speaks to you through others about things that only you and Him know. This can clarify and confirm what you have already been sensing in your heart. Seeking this type of encouragement in the Church is not focused on life direction, but on edification (building up).

## WHY IS UNDERSTANDING ORIGINAL DESIGN SO IMPORTANT TO FREEDOM?

Since God has a design for our lives, surely the enemy of our soul will want to try to hinder that plan. This pattern is seen in biblical history. It is a mystery of the Scripture, but it seems that the enemy somehow knows the potential or purpose of people as individuals. This can be seen clearly in the birth stories of Moses and Jesus. Satan sought to kill them as children through the murderous plots of Pharaoh and Herod. We are no different! Satan has come to steal, kill and destroy everything in his path—especially God's people—since we are the light of Christ on the earth.

For most of us, our God-given identity has been under attack from an early age. Rarely is this identity developed. In fact, most times it has been discouraged. Most of us were not told we were "a joy to be around." Instead, we were told what was wrong with us. Growing up, did anyone tell you that you were courageous with no limit? Or were most of the comments based on everything you had done wrong? Were critical words common, instead of words encouragement? If so, an identity has been created in you that does not reflect the truth of your original design in Christ.

Take a look at the graph on the top of the next page. It gives some practical examples of how false identities are created.

| <i>The enemy has worked (through life circumstances, people, situations, and our response to them) to create an identity that is:</i> | <i>The Lord wants to restore us to His original design, our true identity in Jesus Christ:</i> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Selfish and self-preoccupied.</i>                                                                                                  | <i>A servant and promoter of others.</i>                                                       |
| <i>Victimized and filled with self-pity.</i>                                                                                          | <i>One who gives hope and encouragement.</i>                                                   |
| <i>Hardened and numb.</i>                                                                                                             | <i>Soft-hearted and connected emotionally.</i>                                                 |
| <i>Unforgiving and bitter.</i>                                                                                                        | <i>Forgiving and filled with love.</i>                                                         |
| <i>Filled with self-hatred.</i>                                                                                                       | <i>One who knows they are approved of by God.</i>                                              |
| <i>Depressed and sorrowful.</i>                                                                                                       | <i>A person of contagious joy.</i>                                                             |
| <i>Introverted and shy.</i>                                                                                                           | <i>Outgoing and bold.</i>                                                                      |
| <i>Visionless and confused.</i>                                                                                                       | <i>Clear-minded and filled with vision and direction.</i>                                      |
| <i>Fearful and unable to trust.</i>                                                                                                   | <i>Courageous and not suspicious of others.</i>                                                |
| <i>Cautious and afraid to witness.</i>                                                                                                | <i>Bold witness with a voice that is filled with God's power.</i>                              |

## STRONGHOLDS: OPPOSITION TO OUR DESIGN

In the next chapter we will learn more about strongholds and how they are formed in the life of a believer in Christ. Strongholds are a main weapon of the enemy to make believers ineffective in life and ministry through debilitating bondage. We are in a war, but the victory is ours in Christ! Getting rid of strongholds is about removing every obstacle between us and Christ. When these obstacles are gone, we are able to draw nearer to Jesus and can enter more fully into His design for our lives.

The enemy's plan is that we would never enter fully into our design, become complacent, and give up. We see this concept play out in the history of Israel. According to the book of Deuteronomy (1:2), it took only eleven days to get from Mount Sinai to the Promised Land. But the Scripture says that it took the Israelites forty years to reach it, and only two from the multitudes that set out from Egypt lived long enough to enter. Due to their own unbelief, the people never lived up to God's design for their nation, which was to be a "light unto the nations." They did not believe what God had spoken about their purpose. Believers today can make the same mistake as the Israelites and miss God's best through disobedience. It is better to take the eleven-day route by obeying God, than the forty-year disappointment of doing things our own way!

## RECOVERING YOUR DESIGN

THE ANGEL OF THE LORD CAME AND SAT DOWN UNDER THE OAK IN OPHRAH THAT BELONGED TO JOASH THE ABIEZRITE, WHERE HIS SON GIDEON WAS THRESHING WHEAT IN A WINEPRESS TO KEEP IT FROM THE MIDIANITES. WHEN THE ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED TO GIDEON, HE SAID, "THE LORD IS WITH YOU, MIGHTY WARRIOR." "BUT SIR," GIDEON REPLIED, "IF THE LORD IS WITH US, WHY HAS ALL THIS HAPPENED TO US? WHERE ARE ALL HIS WONDERS THAT OUR FATHERS TOLD US ABOUT WHEN THEY SAID, 'DID NOT THE LORD BRING US UP OUT OF EGYPT?' BUT NOW THE LORD HAS ABANDONED US AND PUT US INTO THE HAND OF MIDIAN." THE LORD TURNED TO HIM AND SAID, "GO IN THE STRENGTH YOU HAVE AND SAVE ISRAEL OUT OF MIDIAN'S HAND. AM I NOT SENDING YOU?" "BUT LORD," GIDEON ASKED, "HOW CAN I SAVE ISRAEL? MY CLAN IS THE WEAKEST IN MANASSEH, AND I AM THE LEAST IN MY FAMILY." THE LORD ANSWERED, "I WILL BE WITH YOU, AND YOU WILL STRIKE DOWN ALL THE MIDIANITES TOGETHER."

*\_JUDGES 6:11-16 (NIV)*

If you are anything like Gideon in this story, you may have a hard time accepting what God says about you. Many times God calls His people “mighty warriors” but they look over their shoulder wondering if He is talking to someone else. “Surely not me” you say, “God, you must be looking for someone smarter, more talented, more spiritual.” Because of the circumstances in Gideon’s life and his feelings of abandonment, he had lost all hope. But you serve a God who calls a “coward” in a wine press a mighty warrior. You serve the God who calls things that are not as though they were (Romans 4:17). Are you a Gideon waiting to arise? The soothing voice of Jesus speaks out your destiny. Will you listen? The accuser speaks a word of judgement, but the blood of Christ speaks a better word (Hebrews 12:24). And His word is all that matters!

## APPLICATION

### CLOSING QUESTIONS

1. What has God said about you in the Scriptures that you have difficulty receiving or believing?
2. What are the three basic ways to know your design?
3. Why is it so important to have the Lord speak to your heart concerning your design?
4. What are some false labels that people have put on you over the years? Have you believed the lie? If so, how has this affected the way you live your life?

## GROUP PRAYER EXERCISE

***Renounce the way people have labeled you falsely.***

Now you want to deal with some of the ways that you have been labeled by others so that you can begin to discover your true identity.

***Renounce these false labels and affirm the truth of God’s Word over your life.***

If there are trained and trusted prayer people available, take time pray for everyone in the class, asking the Lord this question, “Lord, how do you see \_\_\_\_\_ right now?” or, “Lord, how did you create \_\_\_\_\_.”

## HOMework

Read the article, *What is Repentance* by Catherine Booth [pg. 140 in Freedom Manual]. This is a classic text on repentance.