



Identity And Purpose



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In order for you to really GROW as a Disciple, you need to discover and understand who God created you to be.

READ EPHESIANS 2:10 (NLT)

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.

God made you to be you and He made you to be amazing. There is not another “you!” Your brain has 100 trillion neurons that are unique and no one else has a brain that is like your brain! Your eyes are so unique that a retinal scan can distinguish you from billions of other people who are on the face of the earth. No one in all time has had your fingerprints. God has a unique plan for you that is only for you. God has given you a God-given identity and God has given you a God-given purpose. He did all of this because He loves you!

READ PSALM 139:14-18 (NLT)

¹⁴ Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. ¹⁵ You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered! ¹⁸ I can’t even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me!

What does this Psalm tell you about how God made you?

What description does David, the Psalmist, state that applies to you?

What does this passage tell you about the plan that God has for you and for your life?

John Burke in his book *Imagine Heaven* gives many accounts of people who had near-death experiences. These accounts are about people who died and were clinically dead, then they left their bodies and went to either heaven or hell.

It is intriguing and profound that Burke says the first person you will meet in heaven is you. Think about that, the first person you will meet in heaven is you!

God made you to be an amazing, incredible, unique you. And what we are seeing today is that most people don't know who they are and what their God-given identity is. With people not sure about who they are, they don't know what they are made for. As a result, there is an assault being waged where people's God-given identity is under attack and their God-given purpose is being distorted.

In the coming sections I want you to conduct a research project so that you can meet you. I want you to discover your identity and have a good idea of what God's purpose for you is so you can live it out. You also need to have a clear picture of your love language and how your family background has been used by God to make you, you.

John Burke in *Imagine Heaven* gives us an in-depth insight into why this is vital:

“‘Who defines who you are?’ This is such a critical question, but so few of us have really stopped to answer it. Who has the right to define who you are? What you're worth? What your purpose is? Whether you succeed or fail? How you define your identity is ultra-important.

What you believe about yourself is what shapes all your decisions and actions. Most of us end up believing things about our identity that are not grounded in God's reality—who God created us to be, what God created us to do. We believe lies about our identity that the evils of this world inflict on us. We constantly worry about the opinions or approval of others. We experience intense anxiety when we're not succeeding or are not recognized for our accomplishments. We feel sick inside when the stock market drops, or we don't get promoted. We find ourselves lowering our standards to new levels, then justifying it in order to prove our worth or get someone to love us. We feel the need to control our spouse or our kids because our identity has somehow gotten wrapped up in what others think or do."

YOUR GOD-GIVEN PERSONALITY

I am always amazed how the personality you have is given to you by God. It is implanted within you. Our parents don't give us our personality. As a parent your job is to discover your child's unique personality.

There are two personality tools we are suggesting for you to use to discover your God-given personality. One is called the Myers Briggs Type Sorter and the other is the Enneagram. Both will give you insight into who you are and your unique personality.

Myers Briggs Type Sorter

This gives you one of sixteen possible personality types that best fits you. This test will help you discover what your inclinations are and why you make the choices you make. This will help you to be aware of what energizes you and what drains you.

Human Metrics is based on Carl Jung's and Isabel Briggs Myers' typological approach to personality. You can find the link to take the Test at **www.CrossroadsChurch.com/growjournal**

Now that you have taken the test, write down what your personality type is.

What are the main characteristics of your type?

What characteristics do you feel are most true and which ones are you not sure are you?

What does it say your inclinations are? What are your strengths?

What jobs are recommended for people with your personality type? What is the commonality that you see in these jobs? Do these jobs sound like something you would like? What insight does this give you into the “you” God created you to be?

The Enneagram

The Enneagram is a popular personality test that is based on you being one of 9 personality types. Historically many believe this dates back to early Christian leaders coming up with an understanding of who people are based on one of the seven deadly sins (which becomes an inclination for you when you are not at your best).

You can find the Enneagram personality test options at www.CrossroadsChurch.com/growjournal

What number are you on the Enneagram? What are the main descriptors of that number? What ones are true of you? What ones are you not sure are true of you?

What are your motivations or strengths? What are your objections or fears? What is your core weakness (deadly sin) that you need to be aware of?

What do these 2 assessments tell you about you?

Your Love Language

Gary Chapman opened our eyes to the fact that the God of Love has created different languages by which we experience love and express love.

There are five main love languages, and some resonate with you more than others. You need all five, but the question is, "What are your main love languages?" What love language is the one that God gave you as the way you experience love at the deepest level? Knowing this helps you understand the "you" God created you to be.

The Five Love Languages are...

- 1.** Words of Affirmation
- 2.** Acts of Service

3. Physical Touch
4. Gifts
5. Quality Time

Go to www.CrossroadsChurch.com/growjournal so that you can be directed to a test that will help you discover the love language(s) that most deeply reflect who you are.

What are your top two love languages?

What does this tell you about you?

YOUR FAMILY BACKGROUND

Another aspect of your identity is your family background. Do you come from a good family or one that suffers from a degree of dysfunction? What good traits have you developed because of your family and what baggage are you carrying because of your family?

One thing to keep in mind is that while your family may have problems (and all families have problems to one degree or another) these problems do not have to define you or have power in your life.

Joseph had a horrible family. In Genesis chapters 37-50, we see the dysfunction in Joseph's family. His father showed him blatant favoritism and his brothers were incredibly jealous of him. His brothers were often lazy and tended to be dishonest. Then his brothers abused him, rejected him, and sold him into slavery!

Note what Joseph told them later in their lives:

READ GENESIS 50:20 (NLT)

You intended to harm me, but God intended it all for good. He brought me to this position so I could save the lives of many people.

Joseph ended up being one of the Pharaoh's trusted advisers, having immense power and using it to save many people. What does this tell you about God being able to change the bad in your family and in your past to something good?

READ ISAIAH 51:1-2A (NLT)

¹ "Listen to me, all who hope for deliverance— all who seek the Lord! Consider the rock from which you were cut, the quarry from which you were mined. ² Yes, think about Abraham, your ancestor, and Sarah, who gave birth to your nation.

Here we are told that if we hope for deliverance from a corrupt world and all that comes against us that we need to look at the "rock from which you were cut." Then it says to look to your ancestors. The rock is your family and we need to look and see how our family, our ancestors and our family history has shaped who we are for the good and for the bad.

What is your family background? What kind of relationship did your parents have? What about others in your family, your grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins?

Was your family loving? Was your family fun? Was your family close?

How were disagreements and conflicts handled in your family?

Did your family show you unconditional love or did you feel like you had to earn their approval?

What did you learn or get from your family, good and/or bad?

Do you have any toxic cycles within your family spanning multiple generations? Maybe anger, lying, addictions, broken relationships, areas of physical and/or mental illnesses? These can be seen as generational curses. Abraham, a key figure in the Bible, had a generational curse of anger in his family, and we see his story in Genesis chapters 12-17.

Remember that Jesus can and will break the generational curse when we commit our lives and all that we are to Him. Look at what we are promised in the Bible:

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 (NASB)

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Are there some old things from your family or in your life that need to pass away and not be true of you or for you any longer?

Look over what you wrote about your family, what does this tell you about you?

YOUR HEART'S DESIRE(S)

Another unique aspect that is a part of your God given identity is found when you know the desires of your heart. God gives you the desires of your heart and then get ready; God gives you the desires of your heart. In other words, God puts desires in your heart that make you, you and that are a huge part of your God-given purpose. When you are seeing the desires of your heart happening then you are filled with passion and joy. You are energized and you are living the abundant life that Jesus said He wants for you to live.

READ PSALM 37:3-6 (NASB)

³ Trust in the Lord and do good; Dwell in the land and cultivate faithfulness.

⁴ Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart.

⁵ Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, and He will do it.

⁶ He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noonday.

What are we told we are to do? What are we told God promises to do?

A Heart's desire could be for...

- Adventure
- Love
- Children
- To experience Nature
- To see the World
- To build an orphanage or hospital to help those in need
- To help those who are oppressed
- To help others find healthy relationships
- And more...

What are the desires of your heart?

Reflect on all that you have researched about yourself and your God-given purpose. What stands out to you?

How can you be more the “you” God made you to be? How can you start to do more of what God made you to do?
