

## Divine Design

### (Personal Fulfilment)

We are continuing our study on the subject of “divine destiny”. Learning to live with a sense of destiny is life transforming. God designed you specifically for your **destiny**. God has given each one of us a destiny to fulfil. Jesus lived and fulfilled His destiny and you and I are called to live and fulfil ours. But it will take considerable trust. To many, the whole concept of destiny can be very disturbing. Why? It requires complete trust in God! Destiny refers to a course of events that are predetermined. It can be described as *a future predestined*, whether individually or generally. It is a concept founded on the belief that there is a fixed natural order to the entire universe. To “predestine” is to *decide* or *decree in advance*; to *foreordain* or *elect by divine will*. Predestination is a **divine design**!

God wants to take each of our lives and radically change them to fit His **divine design**. In other words, you are a masterpiece in the making. Like a skilled artist God is painting an incredible picture with your life. He has recreated you in Christ for a specific purpose. And, you can find out what that purpose is, and you can live in it daily. Paul’s letter to the Ephesians spells this out for us. It tells us that God knew each of us before the foundation of the world. He designed each of us the way we are for a reason. God orchestrated our salvation, and He planned an “extreme makeover” for you and me. Not only that, **Ephesians 2:10** tells us that He already has a special set of good works (deeds, actions) He wants us to perform. **“We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”**

If you would like to know the blueprint for God’s “extreme makeovers”, read **Ephesians 2:1-10** sometime. We all start off dead in our sins, captives in a dark world, and objects of God’s wrath. But because of His mercy, we were made alive with Jesus and seated with Him in heavenly realms. That has already happened, and we didn’t do anything to deserve it. It’s pure **grace** that we receive only by faith. Then, and this is a key issue that many of you don’t seem to notice, God desires to exercise His extraordinary **grace** in our lives by leading us into the works we were created for. This is ultimately about Him and not us! Therefore, our “extreme makeover” is purely a demonstration of His glory.

How does it happen? Are we like those superheroes who walk into a closet as one person and then come out completely transformed? What does *2 Corinthians 5:17* really mean when it says that we, who are in Christ, are new creatures? From both Scripture and personal experience, we know this isn’t an instant process. **“Extreme makeovers”** do take time! Paul continues in *Ephesians 2* with a description of “the house” where it all takes place. It’s called the church – not a building, but *‘the living, breathing people of God’* walking together in unity and maturity, exercising their gifts in the fullness of His Spirit. Notice, your “extreme makeover” is performed as you develop your gifts by walking out your destiny. And it all takes place in the church – where you are connected!

That’s the corporate side of it, but there’s also an individual aspect that Paul describes in *chapter 3*. We are strengthened in our inner being as Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, and then, something wonderful takes place... Together with all the saints we come to grasp the height and depth and length of the **love of Jesus**. Knowing “agape”, we can be filled (flooded) with the *“fullness of God Almighty”*. In other words, our makeover is both a community project and a personal transformation - an external facelift and an internal overhaul. Everything about us becomes ‘band-new’, both inside and out. What a makeover – it is truly extreme!

But the makeover isn’t completed just for its own sake. It all comes back to discovering the **divine design** that God has made us for. The second half of Ephesians tells us how **grace** has been apportioned to us - Jesus broke the power of sin, declared His victory, and then gave gifts to human beings. He deposited the manifold gifts of His Spirit into the church. Why? To demonstrate His awesome wisdom. The spiritual gifts that fit your **design** are given as evidence of His victory over satan, sin, and the world. Think about that... Your talents are in exact proportion to (and in harmony with) your **divine design**, and this serves to confirm that you have the victory over satan, sin and the world system.

God is painting an incredible picture with your life, but you are also a paintbrush in God’s hand. He is dipping you in multiple colours to showcase His artistry. And your **spiritual gifting** is the evidence of what He has done. The problem is that many Christians don’t even know what their primary spiritual gift is. Many of us spin our wheels for years trying to serve in areas we are not equipped to serve in. Occasionally we may have to serve wherever we are needed, of course, but as a rule we need to focus on the **divine design** God has for each of us.

Whenever you are confronted with a multitude of options, you need to know which ones you are truly gifted to do. Spiritual gifts are not choices on a menu. You can't just pick and choose which ones you want. I'm sure we've all done things in our lives that were important and quite useful, but most didn't necessarily bring joy or bear much fruit in our lives. What I found is this... God sovereignly chooses the gifts that perfectly match the assignments He has for me. That is, the 'good works' I must execute as I walk down the **path of destiny** He has already mapped out. I had to understand the multi-faceted and diverse way God equips me for service (the paintbrush He is using). You do too! Discovering your **divine design** and living according to that design will produce evidence of the life of Christ in you. Christ "in you" will be conspicuous!

God always intended to carry out an "extreme makeover" on you. He hasn't preordained just a small sampling of good works, He has given you God-sized **gifts** and **abilities** for a God-sized reason. If you discover what they are, and nurture them, you will grow into the purpose God planned just for you. They're there to be discovered and then fulfilled! I have found 7 principles for destiny discovery and fulfillment:

1. **You have a distinct God-given calling** – Life has meaning because God has made you for something great. The purpose of your life is to reach for that unique calling. Ephesians 2:10 says, ***"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."*** Notice that your destiny will require your full cooperation in making God-led choices.

2. **God designed you uniquely with your destiny in mind** – Jeremiah 1:5, ***"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."*** You were specially designed for your destiny – your task was not an afterthought by God – it springs out of your personality, gifts, and the way you are made. When you are walking in your destiny, it fits like a glove. The desires of your heart reflect God's purpose for your life. ***"Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart"*** (Psalm 37:4).

3. **Destiny is something you are, not something you do** – It is not a predetermined, etched in stone endpoint that you can miss; but a very dynamic, ever developing interplay between 'what we were born to be and what you have done with your life so far'. The more you become who you were made to be, the more you will do what you were born to do. ***"Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will"*** (Ephesians 1:4-5).

4. **Your whole life prepares you for your destiny** – Every event and circumstance has meaning, because God leverages each experience to help you accomplish His plan and purpose for your life. This refining transforms you into the image of Christ and prepares you to be part of His bride. ***"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose"*** (Romans 8:28).

5. **Your destiny is much bigger than you** – Our ultimate fulfillment comes not from pursuing happiness for ourselves, but from bringing life to others for the sake of the Kingdom. If your dream (vision) doesn't involve serving others in a way that stretches you way beyond your limits, then it is not big enough. It really is more blessed to give than to receive. ***"I have shown you in every way, by labouring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'"*** (Acts 20:35).

6. **You must die daily in order to fulfil your destiny** – While God's desire is that you live a long and abundant life, a direct pursuit of happiness can never reach it. True joy only comes through a sacrificial death to self and a fundamental realignment of your will with God's purposes. Only those who lose their life will truly find it. ***"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life"*** (John 12:24,25).

7. **Living your destiny brings productivity and true fulfillment** – When you do what you were born to do, you function with maximum effectiveness and exceptional joy in the doing. Producing fruit without joy is soul deadening and doesn't satisfy. Productivity with fulfilment is the symptom of a life aligned with destiny. ***"Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. For... just as you walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth"*** (3 John 1:1-4).