

RISE: ABIDING IN PURPOSE (6 week series)

Week 1: Realize

Over the next six weeks we will go on a journey together to RISE as the people of God that live life on purpose. We will learn to realize and recognize our unique God-given gifts, become deeply rooted in our faith, and allow for the Holy Spirit to refine us, so that we can be released to fulfill our God given purpose in every sphere of life. Our hope is that each of us would yield our plans and embrace the fullness of God's plan.

Before we jump into week one's message, let's zoom out and take a look at what you can expect over the next six weeks. Why do I want to do this? Because I want you to get pumped with anticipation about the amazing transformational growth you can experience if you commit! As a person who has gone through many health journey plans, let me tell you one truth I've discovered: no matter what plan you are following, you don't get results unless you commit to the plan! If you want to be changed, grow, and be transformed, get committed to the RISE: Abiding in Purpose series. How?

1. **SERVICES:** Come to every weekend service and engage regardless of who the speaker is. This is training you to hear the Spirit of God not the person delivering the message. Look past your preferences and zone into God's presence!
2. **SMALL GROUP:** listen and learn from how others are processing and wrestling with truth; grow together
3. **STUDY:** personally dig into the word (daily devotions)

Mountain Map - Our Journey over the next six weeks

Week 1: **REALIZE** - everyone has a divine purpose; and although uniquely different they all ultimately should accomplish the same thing.

Week 2: **RECOGNIZE** - God has put something in you so that HE can move through you.

Week 3: **ROOTED** - importance of being deeply rooted in our faith, and I might add in community.

Week 4: **REFINED** - What needs to happen for you to truly reflect the glory of God? You need to have the master remove every impurity so all that's left is pure substance.

Week 5: RELEASED - This week we are going to journey with the Holy Spirit as He releases us to what He has in store – (Home, Workplace, Community, etc.)

Week 6: RISE - In our final week, we will be called to rise and fully embrace our God-given purpose, stepping into our roles with confidence and faith, ready to make a lasting impact for His kingdom.

So this morning, we are kicking off the foundational step to realize our God given purpose. You might be sitting here saying yeah, yeah, yeah, I know this already and can quote Jeremiah 29:11. However, I would contend that although believers intuitively know there is a God and He has a plan, many, regardless of their age, still feel so lost and confused in this life. We ponder what's the point of all this? What is the deeper meaning of life? Or what is my purpose in life. Those of you who recently graduated or will be graduating are asking what do I want to do with my life? Should I pursue higher education, do I just get a job. Those of you in your current job are asking yourself should I get a different job, or maybe you are contemplating should I get a second job. All of these questions are valid. And yet at some point we must realize, we may not be asking the most important question.

What is GOD's purpose for my life?

In asking this question, we realize that we are created for a purpose and can begin to discover this purpose. However, our self-assessment will not reveal this. Only God can reveal the reason for which we are created. In other words we must realize there is a master planner who has masterfully created your life's plan.

“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 (Ephesians 2:10 NLT).”

Turn to your neighbor and say, You are God's masterpiece, and so am I. A Master piece is a work of art, or workmanship. It is something that is created by a master. In context, this verse is directly related to our salvation. Our salvation is something only God can do. It is his powerful, creative work in us. If God considers us his masterpieces, we better not treat ourselves or others with disrespect or as inferior work. Can I get an amen?

Why can we be assured of this truth? Because the word of God clearly shows that the God of the Bible is a God of purpose. I'm not just talking about just an overarching truth or in generalities. I'm talking in the minute details and specifics. God is the ultimate long term strategic planner of the entire universe. I've never been more convicted of this than after going through The Bible Projects yearly bible reading plan.

As you read the biblical narrative you never see God doing anything randomly or haphazardly. Everything he does is intentional and has the past, present, and future realities in mind. Everything He does encompasses the ultimate destiny of His creation which includes our personal lives as well as all of humanity.

From the beginning in Genesis 1:1 he created the world in which he plans to work out His purposes. He even says this about himself in Isaiah 46:9-10

Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.' (NIV)

God displayed his divine purpose in Abraham's life by establishing his descendants and creating a special people group for Himself, the Israelites. This would be God's chosen people. Then He continues to masterfully establish his purpose through Moses. His total surrender, flaws in all, God demonstrates His power through Moses by revealing more of his divine nature to his people. Exodus 34:6,

The Lord passed in front of Moses, calling out, "Yahweh! The Lord! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness (NLT).

Again in Psalm 100:5, the psalmist speaks of the nature of this amazing God,

For the Lord is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation.

From the beginning throughout the entire Old Testament narrative we see God's love, faithfulness and His divine purpose being established in the

lives of His people. In the New Testament, we would all agree God demonstrates His divine purpose and goodness masterfully, through the death and resurrection of His only Son, Jesus, to be Savior of the world! And the continue work of the Lord through the disciples after the giving of the Holy Spirit to empower them for their good work in Jesus.

So as it is with you and I. Remember Ephesians 2:10, “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.” The greater narrative of our life’s purpose can be found long ago in the beginning. Genesis 1:27-28 (NLT) says,

So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

God created us to be an image bearer! What image are you bearing? We are called to bear the image of God. Hallelujah!!! The exciting thing about our RISE journey, is realizing how the master planner and his master plan to be His image bearer will be uniquely displayed through our lives! We come to God ensnared or in bondage to sin, but through Jesus God puts us into a lifelong process. A journey of transformation designed to conform us into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. We become a people fit to live IN His presence and live FROM His presence. This is what Paul so eloquently speaks of in Ephesians 2:1-10 (NLT).

Made Alive with Christ

2 Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. 2 You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. 3 All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God’s anger, just like everyone else.

4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, 5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) 6 For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. 7 So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.

8 God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. 10 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.

As we abide in Him we can abide in purpose. We must learn to cultivate an awareness of His presence. When we do, then even the littlest mundane things can be filled with divine purpose. This is how we find joy in the journey. We discipline ourselves to recognize Holy Spirit's leading and respond in obedience. As we live in obedience He empowers us to reveal the Father and His master plan to the world just as Jesus did. How? It is through His character and His nature being reflected through us. It is also by the power of our testimony to the goodness of God at work in our lives.

God's Spirit, working through a transformed heart, produces a good life. It will accomplish God's divine purpose of displaying His love, His faithfulness, His provision, His providence, His glory for all to see.

It starts with You! Do you want to be different? Do you want to be changed? Do you want to be set apart for His purposes and live according to the Master's plan? Or do you want to continue to craft your own plan? Do it your own way? You Choose. If you want to RISE to what God intended for you, my prayer is you would Chose the Master's Plan, because you are created to be a masterpiece! As you consider which choice you will make starting from today, may this song minister to your heart.

Special Dance "I Just Want to Be Different" written by Micah Tyler

OG Questions:

1. When you hear you are a masterpiece, how does that make you feel?
2. Currently, where are you at regarding your divine purpose?
3. In what ways do you need to adjust your life to live a life more on purpose?
4. How have you seen the Master's master plan unfold in your life?
5. In what ways can you become more aware of God's presence in your life? What are the things that keep you distracted from being God conscious?