



live life on purpose

Reflection Questions

The Journey

Chapter 1 – The Journey

[excerpt reflection]

“Before we can begin looking into God’s purpose for our lives we must stop and ask some tough questions. If God were to reveal what He wants us to do, very specifically, would we want to do it? Are you sure that you really want to know? It is one thing to lean back and say, “Well God hasn’t given me a peace about that,” or “I’m not sure what His will for my life is.” But it’s totally different to know very clearly what it is that He requires of you and face the option of choosing His will or your own. Ignorance can be bliss for a season, but in the end of life it is torment. The people that God reveals Himself to have no such hiding place. What God calls a blessing some would receive as a curse—because it’s an interruption to their life and their agenda.

Before you can know what God’s will is for your life, you must know what God’s will is. You must have a God-centered North Star for your life. What “picture” is God putting together? God is on a mission to redeem people from all nations. In Revelation 7:9 we find people in Heaven from every tribe, tongue, nation and people worshipping before the throne. That “picture” is the completion of God’s work from the very beginning. God has created us not only to have a purpose but to know it. I am going to compare Revelation 7:9 to the North Star that guides us—it’s the big picture work of God.”

1. In your own words, how would you define your journey?
2. What are some ways people get distracted into good, even Christian busyness?
3. Have you ever thought of yourself as part of God’s unique puzzle, why or why not?
4. Why is it important to begin with God’s purpose before determining ours?
5. What would it look like for God’s purpose to interrupt yours?

Memory Verse: Revelation 7:9

Application:



Chapter 2 – Direction not Directions

The Journey

[excerpt reflection]

“The final destination of our labor for the building and completing of His worldwide kingdom, we can be sure of. The rest of the answers for our journey are waiting for us down the trail. They are only given to those who trust in the word of the guide and follow His revealed clues one step at a time. Only the traveler gets the in-depth maps from God. He may not give you the details until you move forward, but all believers can start with the compass, the overarching purpose of God for His glory. We find His compass in His revealed word. It reveals the clear and true north for us to live toward.”

1. What does it mean that “God gives us direction, not directions?”
2. Can you think of some biblical examples where people were given a destination but not directions?
3. Why is it important for you to find God’s direction for your life?
4. How does God provide us with a compass toward fulfilling his will?

Memory Verse: Romans 15:20

Application:



Chapter 3 – The Map is a Trap

The Journey

[excerpt reflection]

“My Christian life almost took the same wrong turn. I realized that I was getting some great maps for my life, but I was locked in on a wrong destination. I got on all the right tracks—college, degree, career, and I clung to them because I trusted the map. But I had planned my life around the things that God was silent about instead of what He was clear about in His word. I was on the wrong path, not because the path was bad, but because God had designed me for another greater journey. I resolved that to walk a “good” path, but not God’s, was in the end a wasted life.

To trust the compass is to navigate the unknown. There is much of the God’s purpose that remains undone because of Christians who are clinging to old maps. For this journey, we must be willing to set down our maps and allow God the permission to give us a new one. We may have a great map, but if it is the wrong destination, we lose in the end.”

1. Have you ever literally followed a wrong path? What was it like and where did it take you?
2. What is the difference in the map and the compass the way the author describes them?
3. Have you ever felt trapped in your map, explain?
4. What are the competing North Stars that others live their lives for?
5. What is the North Star that has determined what you are doing in this season of life? How exactly does it align with God’s? Explain.

Memory Verse: Acts 20:24

Application:



Chapter 4 – Lift the Thread

God's Purpose

[excerpt reflection]

“The Bible is one book. To see the journey in the Bible of God’s purpose from beginning to end you must begin to see the one theme that is woven throughout it. I used to think that the Bible was 66 individual books, with common ideas, and written by people who had a common belief. But they seemed more like Aesop’s Fables, with no theme, and no central purpose going on, just nice stories with simple life lessons to learn from each one. The stories of the Bible were like pearls, priceless in themselves. I was missing the big picture; the central story. When we lift out the thread of God’s North Star in scripture we will see that the pearls are connected like one necklace, with a familiar, important, God–designed purpose strung through each one. Only from the view of the whole story can we see how central the missional purpose of God is in all He does.”

1. Has there ever been a “big story” that you’ve wanted to live in, what was it and why?
2. How would you sum up the purpose of God from Genesis to Revelation?
3. God has a big story that we can all be a part of. What about his big picture makes you most excited about find your purpose in fulfilling it?

Memory Verse: Genesis 12:1-3

Application:



Chapter 5 – The First Step

God's Purpose

[excerpt reflection]

“Do you know where missionaries come from? They are normal people, who allow God to interrupt their lives. Do you know what the Lord is searching the earth for right now? It’s a normal person who will allow the gospel to interrupt their life and their plans. When the gospel comes to Abraham, we learn two eternally significant observations about its authority and direction. The first observation you must embrace is that the gospel has the authority to interrupt the course of your life.

Maybe they have never verbalized it this way, but many are living trapped by the fear that God cannot really be trusted to meet their needs. Therefore, they resist the idea of surrendering their life to him completely.”

1. Think of some biblical examples of people who had their lives and plans interrupted.
2. What are ways in which you sense God trying to interrupt your life to give you great purpose?
3. What are the fears we have in surrendering our life to God completely?
4. What are some reasons we should allow God to interrupt our life?

Memory Verse: 1 Peter 2:9

Application:



Chapter 6 – Momentum

God's Purpose

[excerpt reflection]

“The reason we haven’t seen the thread for ourselves is usually a matter of our man-centered approach to life—our amazing ability to see only what we get out of the stories instead of what God gets out of them. As we look closer at the stories of the Bible we see that there is not only blessing toward God’s people, but another direction of blessing that extends to the nations. As we trace the journey through the Old Testament it is as though God has left us bread crumbs along the journey. With each story there are clues that remind us of the compass of His heart.”

1. What are some Old Testament events that had an impact on the nations hearing about God?
2. Think about your gifts, passions, community, hobbies, church, friends, family, social status, state, country...How do you see God being able to use these areas of your life to glorify him among the nations?
3. What blessings have God placed in your life, how can they be used to bless others?
4. What events today might God be using to His glory?

Memory Verse: Ps 67:1-2

Application:



Chapter 7 – The Road to Glory

God's Purpose

[excerpt reflection]

“Throughout history God uses the reputation of His greatness as a trumpet, calling in the nations to Himself; a footprint, capturing our attention and leading the way to the Creator. The main way that the unreached see the glory and character of God is through the character of His people. God has made us to be the footprints of His name, displaying for the world that He can make a deep impact on our lives by turning us from the power of sin and to the holiness of God. If people associate God’s name with characteristics that are not godly, then God is misrepresented to the people He desires to redeem.”

1. Think of some famous men and women in history. What are some characteristics that are associated with their name?
2. Think back to when your relationship with God started until now. How has he revealed his character to you throughout your walk with him?
3. Why do you think God takes his glory so seriously?
4. How do you see yourself as a representative of God?

Memory Verse: Habakkuk 2:14

Application:



Chapter 8 – Fork in the Road

God's Purpose

[excerpt reflection]

"Israel drops the baton of the mission, but it lands at the feet of the Church. The missions family is the true family of Abraham's faith. Jesus is the object of blessing to the nations and the Church is the means. Jesus would provide the redemptive blessing for all the nations; the believers would provide opportunity for salvation by telling of Christ's work. Through both means, the work of the cross and the work of missions, all nations will be blessed "through" this family."

1. What is the role of Lordship in the Christian life? How does it relate to missions?
2. How do you see the living God as a missionary God when looking at the life of Christ?
3. If you are part of a missionary family, have you made bringing salvation to the unreached an ambition for your life? Why or why not?

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:19-20

Application:



Chapter 9 – True North

God's Purpose

[excerpt reflection]

“Our confidence to join God in this journey is that it cannot fail. It is based on His promise, His purchase, and most importantly, His own glory. The mission of God to redeem people from every tribe and nation is anchored by the security of the massive promises of God. That is why we can live our lives radically by the compass of what He is doing because God has promised we will reach our destination. God promises that His mission will finish. It is sure.

God is not wringing His hands in Heaven hoping that you will choose to live your life by the compass. You can walk the journey or waste your life in your own pursuits. Either way His purpose will finish. We are privileged that God has invited us to be the means to the end. The only thing connecting the promise to Abraham in the beginning and its fulfillment in Revelation is our obedience to join God in His mission in the world. We see that the destination is sure, the promises are our fuel, and His purchase has paved the way. We only need to align our lives with the current of God's movement. We are the bridge between the beginning of God's story and the end. The conclusion of the story is written, but God is filling in the final pages and inviting us to play a part.”

1. How does a defined end help us in completion of a project?
2. Explain how Revelation 7:9 / Revelation 5:9 can be a “North Star” for our lives and for God's purposes.
3. Do you currently find yourself living your life with mindset that you are making a difference in God's kingdom? Why or why not?
4. How would you like this to change?

Memory Verse: Revelation 5:9

Application:



The Path Ahead

Chapter 10 – Uncharted Land

[excerpt reflection]

“If God has asked us and designed us to join Him in pushing back the kingdom of darkness and rescuing millions from eternal death; and if God has given us a task in history that moves toward this well-defined end, then we, by all our means, must be about one thing—the finishing of this mission. The only thing connecting the beginning of the journey with the end is people who will not look at the paths that have already been traveled, but will turn from the maps and follow the compass toward God’s heart. There are no maps for the uncharted areas where the gospel has never been—it takes a person that will find a way: or in this case—make one.”

1. How does Jesus glorify God in John 17:4? How does this relate to us?
2. Explain the 10/40 Window.
3. Where does the author put the blame for lack of workers in the 10/40 window?
4. In your own words, what will it take for every nation, tribe, people and language to give glory to God?

Memory Verse: John 17:4

Application:



The Path Ahead

Chapter 11 – Stopping Short

[excerpt reflection]

“There was a point when people thought the Great Commission had been finished because there was a missionary in China, one in Africa and a few in India. We had only sent people to the different continents first, then the political nation states, but even within those there were thousands of hidden peoples, people groups that had their own language, culture, religions and regions that left them cut-off from the gospel. That is what is meant by the term “unreached peoples.” The harvest is plentiful and those that will travel the journey to the end are most needed and most rare.”

1. After your reading, how would you define an unreached people group?
2. How has your perspective on mission work changed after reading that God is not only concerned with reaching more and more people, but with reaching as many as possible from every people group?
3. Why should the number of people groups and number of unreached be a concern for us?
4. Explain how the mission of God is finishable.

Memory Verse: Matthew 28:19-20

Application:



The Path Ahead

Chapter 12 – Perils on the Journey

[excerpt reflection]

“Life is full of hurdles. Theodore Roosevelt seemed to have this view of life when he expressed the now famous quote, “Far better it is to dare mighty things to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much, because they live in the gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat.” If we are going to join God in the journey, we must anticipate the hurdles and perils ahead of us. The first hurdles you have to jump are the ones in your mind.

Not all of the obstacles to the world-Christian journey are sin. Some of the hindrances are just part of life. Hebrews warns us, “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us” (Hebrews 12:1). It seems like the command is to throw off sin, of course, but also “everything that hinders” as well. “

1. Explain what we are to throw off in Hebrews 12:1.
2. What are some excuses that people have for not being involved in God’s mission?
3. What hurdles are in your life that keep you from joining God in his work?
4. The author says that most rabbit trails are not worldly things, but Christian ones. What Christian rabbit trails can you identify in your life?

Memory Verse: Hebrews 12:1

Application:



The Path Ahead

Chapter 13 – Running with Your Head Down

[excerpt reflection]

“His triumph will not be a pathetic few from every nation, but a vast army of worshippers, a “great multitude” made up of every people group—if we seize our moment in the journey. The time to begin the journey is today. In order to rise to the occasion of our generation, we must lift up our eyes off of ourselves. No more running with our heads down focused on ourselves. We must lift up our eyes, as Jesus said, to see the harvest. It is not many more months until the harvest is ready. The fields are ripe for the harvest right now. (John 4:35)”

1. Why is the mission of God urgent as well as important?
2. Why don't more people give to missions and give more?
3. Is there anyone discipling you right now? How are you making disciples?
4. What is a proper understanding of worship?
5. Which of these apply to your life and what is the consequence of them?

Memory Verse: Matthew 9:37-38

Application:



Chapter 14 – Living by the Compass

[excerpt reflection]

“The way to win in life and to finish the journey is to live with a vision of the end. Even though you are a great distance away you “see it.” Is there a gravitational pull on your vision to the true north of what God is doing? Do you have a clear picture of what God is doing that you can set the course of your life by? Are you “beginning with the end in mind?” This is what I mean by living life by the compass. It is living life on purpose, directing the daily decisions of your life by the true north of God’s purposes toward the world. It is the millions of small decisions not centered around God’s global purpose that produces the millions of small Christians not living for God’s global purpose.”

1. What do you hope people will say about your life?
2. Knowing what you know about God, what do you think you could do with your life that would bring his heart joy?
3. Like Homer Simpson, are there gifts you say you are doing for God, but in all reality they are for yourself—your success, your pride, your acceptance? What are these things and how can you begin to surrender them to God?
4. What does it mean to be a World Christian?

Memory Verse: John 5:19

Application:



Chapter 15 – Tools for the Journey

[excerpt reflection]

“The facts in the world demand that someone must stand in the gap. Obviously, if the journey is going to be completed, it will hinge on an army of relentless, passionate goers. In light of the command of Jesus and the need in the world, the default seems like we should be planning on going and be willing to stay if God directs you to. Instead most are willing to go, but really planning on staying. The way we find out what exactly God’s purpose is for our life is to obey and see. There is a good principle of how God leads people in missions and it is this: God clarifies in the midst of obedience. The answers to the journey lie in moving forward based on the revelation we already have. Going is the habit that sharpens us for all the others. It makes us into better welcomers because we know what it feels like to be an international in a foreign culture. It helps us in the habit of prayer because we have been there and seen the needs first-hand. It deepens our commitment to giving because we realize the money involved in going and the needs on the field.”

1. Name the five World Christian habits and explain each.
2. Why does the author make the point that these are *habits* not *roles*?
3. What are some areas of missions that are appealing to you? Explain.
4. Is there one area that you need to major in during this season of life?

Memory Verse: Romans 10:14-15

Application:



Chapter 16 – Looking Back

[excerpt reflection]

"We look back because deep down we are afraid that we are missing out on something if we decide to follow God and live for His purpose. We trust God to provide for our salvation and say we give our lives to Him, but we are not sure if He can be trusted to meet our needs. Ultimately we decide we should fend for ourselves in that area. Even the language of our church suggests that people who devote their lives to the Great Commission "sacrifice so much" for His kingdom work. The idea of sacrifice is not just about our gain or loss, but also communicates our view of the worthiness of God. A sacrifice is only as noble as the cause behind the sacrifice is worthy. If God and His glory are infinitely worthy then there is no sacrifice too great."

1. What things are you afraid you are going to miss out on in life if you follow God whole-heartedly?
2. What is the "stuff" that is taking God's place in your life? How can you begin to give them over to God in order to move forward in his plan for your future?
3. Reflecting on Isaiah 50:10, is there a particular area in your life in which God is asking you to step out into darkness and trust his voice for leading? If so, what is it and what is keeping you from obeying?

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:15

Application:



Chapter 17 – Looking Forward

[excerpt reflection]

“The Bible gives us permission to make plans and do something. “But the noble man makes noble plans; and by noble plans he stands” (Isaiah 32:8). You were created to do something—to walk the journey that God has created you for. There are far too many sidelined Christians, waiting for God to put them in the game. Everyone God calls to himself, He enlists in His work. All we have to do is begin to walk the journey. Move forward and He will guide your steps. A great life is not made up in the amount of minutes, but what is done with them. Do something great by looking forward to the reward and living life by the compass. For many of us the uncertainty of all the details will be the final leap of faith to overcome in joining God in what He is doing. But remember, the fog only clears when we walk into it, not when we stand still.”

1. What is your motivation for moving forward in missions? (may be more than one)
2. Are you in a place where you can truly say, “I desire nothing on earth, besides God.”? Why or why not? What will it take for you to get to that point?
3. How has this book changed your perspective on what it means to discover God’s purpose for your life?

Memory Verse: James 4:17

Application: