

Mother's Day 2018: Glorious Unfolding

Robin - May 13, 2018

Main Idea: You are designed for a purpose.

Main Text: Genesis 37-49 The Story of Joseph

Supporting Text: Ephesians 2:10

Reflection/Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever felt like there was a special purpose that you were living out? A reason you are "here"? If so, when? If not, have there been times when you have felt used in special ways - like being in "the right place at the right time"?
2. How would you describe the purpose that God has given you in your life? When did you discover it and/or are you still discovering it? What are you doing to fulfill it?
3. When you think about metamorphosis, what seasons of your own life come to mind? What had to die and then be reformed?
4. Which part of Joseph's journey (Genesis 37-49) most inspires you? Is hardest to relate to? Connects with your own journey?
5. What experiences in your life (both good and bad) has God used to shape you into the person he desires you to be? What is he using now?

Mother's Day 2018: Glorious Unfolding

Robin - May 13, 2018

Main Idea: You are designed for a purpose.

Robin in a chair (stage right) and it is slanted toward a couch with 3 kids (

Kids:

9AM- Jax, Bella, Alyssa

11AM- Nikao, Calli, Jayden

1PM - Grace, Gabe, Graham

Questions for kids:

MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION PART: Praises to moms

What is your favorite thing about your mom?

What is the funniest thing your mom has ever done?

Do you think your mom likes to cook or clean the most?

If I didn't know your mom - can you describe her to me?

What do you think your mom likes most about you?

Why do you think God made Moms?

(give kids a bouquet when they leave to give their moms)

Kids are awesome, aren't they? To be called a mother, we often think that you have to have birthed a child. But that is not necessarily true. We had a young lady live with us for for all of 2017. She calls me "mom". Not because I birthed her, but because I love her. Whether you birthed a child or championed one, nurtured one or nursed one, adopted one or accepted or affirmed one - there is one thing we all hold in common - as a child yourself, you had one. Whether you are on this planet by a mother's choice or in spite of a mother's neglect. Whether you started in a heart or a petri dish From the beginning, every one of us holds in common 4 foundational truths - you exited out of a mother's womb, you began life as a child, you are child of God. And most importantly, as a child of God - **You are designed for a purpose**

Mother's Day 2018: Glorious Unfolding

Robin - May 13, 2018

Today, I would like to tell you my personal story and how, over time, I have found my purpose. I tell you this not because my story is unique, but because I think you will find similarities to your story and to the story God is writing in your life. Like any story, it is always best to start at the beginning.

I was born with a lazy eye. There are additional complications along with it, but for the life of me, I can never remember the name of them. The diagnosis however, never mattered to me - only how it affected my life, especially my childhood. Before I get into that though - here are some fun facts: While I can see out of it, my eyes operate independently - like a chameleon's. There are certain advantages that come along with that - I have 1 eye that sees better in the daylight and 1 that adjusts more quickly to the dark. If you are walking into a dark movie theater (or our services after the worship starts) - good to have me along - I can find a seat faster. When I was a kid, I could use 1 eye to read what the teacher was writing on the chalkboard and 1 to make sure I was writing in straight lines, without moving my head - super handy for note taking. I could look at 2 different people sitting in 2 different directions. (But no, for those of you wondering...I cannot read 2 different pages at the same time - that would be insane!) While all of this was helpful, it didn't do much to help me win friends.

Those were some of the upsides...but primarily, my life as a child consisted of the downsides of my birth defect. Perhaps the biggest downside was that as a child, the other kids continuously pointed out my eye and how it made me different. Kids are amazing, often innocent and guileless, but we also know that kids (and frankly any of us) also have the capacity to be cruel. While I have had several surgeries as a teen and as an adult, when I was a kid, my eye looked closed most of the time. Often kids would yell "here comes the one-eyed monster", or in 4th grade, studying Greek Mythology - there was the Cyclops. And while my parents always told me that God made me special (they were right), and that others were worse off than me (so very true), I didn't really enjoy my childhood. But God used it.

For the past few weeks, we have been in a series called "Lose Your Religion". During one of those weeks I remember Glen asking us to think of a time that maybe we were hurt by the church. I remember once, as a child, that the Sunday School teacher told me that my eye was the way it was because my parents had sinned. While I didn't think my parents were perfect (Duh - what kid does!), that didn't mesh with what I had been told by them - "that God loved me and created me special and would use me". So, I went home and told my mom - who promptly made an appointment with the

Mother's Day 2018: Glorious Unfolding

Robin - May 13, 2018

Pastor. When we went to meet with him he said "Well, maybe you are upset because you have sinned...." Yes, we are all sinners, but we also found a new church.

But here is the thing....in my heart, I have always had a sense that God had a plan for me. That he created me for a purpose. That he would use me in mighty ways. I wanted to change the world. I wanted to be all he created me to be. I wanted to make a difference in the world, to help show others how much God loves them. To inspire others and to help them see that God made them for a purpose and that he has great things in store for them! Funny thing is that I used to think I was unique in having a purpose like this. Like God had a special plan for MY life - things he uniquely designed and gifted ME to do - but, alas, he didn't have a special plan for your life - it was just ME. What Childish thinking!!! Every parent knows (or should know) that there is beauty and purpose and in every life God creates! Every child - EVERY child that God created has unique gifts and talents and skills - and everyone of YOU is a child of God! God doesn't make mistakes, he doesn't forget to hand out purpose. He isn't in heaven saying "I forgot to place purpose in the heart of John, and don't even get me started on Susie". **HE is THE CREATOR!! Every atom in creation serves a purpose. Every creature. Especially you and I.**

Do you believe that is true for you? Do you believe that God has something special designed for you to do for his Kingdom? That he directs your paths? That he has uniquely gifted and created you to do something special - and that he has set his purpose in you since the beginning of time? That he can use whatever comes your way for HIS GLORY and HIS PURPOSE! Or maybe you are in a season where you are doubting God's purpose for you - or have forgotten God's purpose. Turn with me to **Ephesians 2:10 - pg 799.** **10** For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. **You are designed for a purpose**

Therefore, If you were designed with a purpose, then what does that mean in regards to how you are living your life? To explore this question further, let's look at a story from the Old Testament, similar to yours and mine. Let's take a look at the life of Joseph.

Joseph is one of my favorite OT individuals. Someone I really look up to. - maybe you have heard his story - or maybe not. But I think he has something to teach all of us about the purpose God has for us. The story of Joseph can be found in Genesis chapters 37-50. This could take quite a while, so let me give you some highlights. Joseph was the first born son of Jacob and his favorite wife, Rachel (that's a story for

Mother's Day 2018: Glorious Unfolding

Robin - May 13, 2018

another day). Joseph had 11 brothers. Joseph was 17 when we first get to know him. He was a tattletail and a dreamer. All of us know one or were one. He was also his father's favorite (Side note to parents - it is a bad idea to overtly favor one child over another!) Our girls used to privately ask "Am I your favorite?" We would respond with "You are my favorite daughter I am talking to right now!" or "You are my favorite daughter wearing red!" So Jacob (also called Israel), not being as wise of a parent as Roger and I, has a special coat made of many colors for his favorite son, Joseph. This, made his brother's hate him all the more. One day, to seal the deal, he comes to his brothers in the field and shares with them about a dream he had. Let me summarize **Genesis 37:6-11 (pg. 27): 6** He said to them, "Listen to this dream I had: **7** We were binding sheaves of grain out in the field when suddenly my sheaf rose and stood upright, while your sheaves gathered around mine and bowed down to it." **8** His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over us? Will you actually rule us?" *"And his brothers greatly rejoiced because of his dominion!"* Is that not what your version says? NO, it says, "And they hated him all the more because of his dream and what he had said."

9 Then he had another dream, and he told it to his brothers. "Listen," he said, "I had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me."

10 When he told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him and said, "What is this dream you had? Will your mother and I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the ground before you?" **11** His brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

It appears that God was revealing his purpose for Joseph's life in those dreams. But how does Joseph get from God speaking to his heart about his purpose to the reality of living out that purpose? A transformation needs to take place. A transformation and period of time that was long, painful, and confusing. God's timing needs to be perfected. To help illustrate that process I want to bring to mind one of God's most unique creatures and use it as a sort of visual aid in our minds. Think about a butterfly. Hang with me on this men - or for our purposes, you can think about a frog. Same idea, when it comes to Metamorphosis...but it's Mother's Day, so we are going with the Butterfly! For Father's Day, maybe Glen can talk about frogs!

The caterpillar (tadpole!) emerges with all the DNA he or she will need to become all that God created it to be. It does what God designs it to do - eat/grow/eat/grow...until it is time to make the chrysalis (Cocoon for those of you my age and older) and begin its transformation. That too is designed by God. The caterpillar must die to its old self to be the new creation God intended it to be. Inside the chrysalis, the caterpillar's body completely breaks down - becoming almost like a soup, before it begins being reformed

Mother's Day 2018: Glorious Unfolding

Robin - May 13, 2018

and transformed. Only the God of all creation could design something so amazing. We are no less amazing!

I would imagine that the process of coming out of the cocoon is painful (looks like it anyway). Painful or not, it most certainly is VERY HARD WORK! The same is true for us as we emerge, and grow and form into all God created us to be.

The butterfly emerges ONLY when its God-ordained time has come. Joseph gets the dream that he was going to be a ruler...but he wasn't ready yet. He needed to be shaped. He needed to grow. The same is true for each of us. God uses the experiences placed before us, the gifts and skills he has given us, EVERYTHING (both the good and the bad), to shape us into all he has designed us to be. This was certainly true for me. Like Joseph, I had some growing up to do. I remember that as I entered HS I said to myself "I don't care anymore what people think!! I am tired of letting their opinions dictate my life! I am going to just get out there and be involved and try out and go for it and live to the fullest!!!" I decided to stop letting people dictate how I felt about myself (easier said than done). You see, when I entered HS, I decided to set out and discover my purpose. As a result, where I had not enjoyed school before, I really LOVED HS...but for the longest time, as I set out to prove myself to my peers (to myself?) that I could prove worthy of value, and tried to discover how God had gifted me - there was new pain - growth pain. Because growing is painful isn't it?? I had to discover (and still do) that the purpose God has given me is HIS BUSINESS...it is not what others determine for me.

During this growth season of life, I began to experiment with this influence I seemed to have over others. One day, my youth Pastor, Dave Sapp pulled me aside and said to me - "When you have the gift of leadership, you have to be careful how you lead others." I don't remember anything else I learned in that youth group, but I will never forget that moment. It was the first time I realized that I had the gift of leadership - the first time that I had really thought of myself as a leader. Maturity didn't happen overnight (dang it!) - nor am I done learning and growing my gifts to honor Christ more. But it was during those high school years that my metamorphosis began.

As I grew and went to college and entered the workforce, I began to discover the different ways God has gifted me. I began to see my purpose unfold. With that in mind, let's return again to Joseph. Joseph had much to learn. God had a purpose for Joseph, he just wasn't ready to reveal that purpose yet. Joseph had much to learn. **His purpose wasn't clear yet - but it was there...waiting for God's perfect timing.** After saying "By the way, I am going to rule over all of you and oh, did I

Mother's Day 2018: Glorious Unfolding

Robin - May 13, 2018

mention my new coat!" to his brothers, their hatred grew even more and they sold him into slavery to a caravan of people headed to Egypt. Next, they told their father that he had been killed by wild animals (they brought a bloody coat back as proof). Jacob, his father is devastated. Let's look at Genesis, Chapter 39. Turn with me to page 29.

Look at 39:2 (pg 29): 2 The Lord was with Joseph so that he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. **3** When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, **4** Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. **5** From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. Things seem to be looking up....but still the time wasn't right for God to reveal his purpose....there was more growth to occur, more metamorphosis to take place! More character to build in Joseph. The dream fulfillment was still on its way.

Potiphar's wife makes some moves on Joseph and I love how Joseph's growth is becoming more evident - one of my favorite lines in his story is in Genesis 39:9: **9** He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Joseph runs from the house - leaving his garment behind. (If only we ran from temptation as quickly as Joseph!) Sadly, Potiphar comes home, his wife lies about what happened and Joseph finds himself in prison. So far, Joseph's life is not turning out anything like he planned. (**Remember the dream? Remember his father's favor? Easy for us to see that skimming through the months and years in a few chapters - but what about Joseph - the question is - DOES HE REMEMBER THAT GOD HAS A PURPOSE FOR HIS LIFE??**) What about us? Do we remember God's timing for us? Do we remain faithful even when things don't seem to be going towards the purpose we think we have? For Joseph we see that he does remain faithful. In fact, while in prison, he is so trusted and so faithful that the keeper of the prison puts him in charge of everything and everyone in the prison! Whatever Joseph did, the Lord made it succeed. I often wonder what Joseph thought during this time in prison. How was God growing him? What gifts was he developing? What stirrings for more were in his heart? Was he wondering about his purpose? We aren't sure exactly how long he was there - but Chapter 40 starts with "After some time..." more things happen in prison. Then the words, "after some time" appear again and we are told about a dream each of them has. Joseph interprets the dream...and then waits *another 2 years!*

Mother's Day 2018: Glorious Unfolding

Robin - May 13, 2018

Maybe you can relate? Maybe early in life you felt God's leading towards a purpose or a calling. You had big plans to change the world and live out loud - And now, years have passed and instead of living out some glorious purpose, you are stuck in the midst of confusion, depression, or you are simply lost. Maybe you wonder if you misinterpreted, or missed God's purpose. Maybe. But what if this time is just the "prison" God is using? What if it is just a desert or a season? What if it is your time of transformation in the Chrysalis - being completely broken down so that you can be gloriously transformed. What if it is not a distraction, but preparation? Just because you can't see your purpose, doesn't mean it is not there!!

And then, FINALLY it happens -God's perfect timing arrives. After 2 years, Pharaoh has a couple dreams, and the cupbearer remembers his promise from 2 years ago and Joseph is called out from prison to interpret the dreams. God helps Joseph interpret the dreams which speak of a horrible famine. God gives Joseph wisdom and Pharaoh likes what he hears. Turn with me to **Chapter 41:39 (pg. 30) :39** Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one so discerning and wise as you. **40** You shall be in charge of my palace, and all my people are to submit to your orders. Only with respect to the throne will I be greater than you." The ESV version reads "A man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God.

One minute Joseph is in prison - for well over 2 years - all but forgotten; the next minute he is 2nd in command of Egypt, riding in a chariot, wearing Pharaoh's ring with a wife on his arm! From prison to palace in minutes - now That is a metamorphosis that no one saw coming - not even Joseph!! Joseph was 17 when he was sold into slavery. Historians think that from the time Joseph was sold into slavery until the time he was put 2nd in command of all of Egypt, 13 years passed. 13 incredibly long and hard years....and yet, these are crucial years of development, preparation and metamorphosis. ALL this comes to pass - so that Joseph can BEGIN to see his purpose!

Let's fast forward through several chapters of his life: There are years of plenty, just like God revealed to Joseph through Pharaoh's dreams, and then the years of famine start. Verse 57 says: **57** Moreover, all the earth came to Egypt to Joseph to buy grain, because the famine was severe over all the earth. All of the earth includes Jacob, Joseph's father, and all his brothers, who are still alive. In the 2nd year of the famine, 9 years after Joseph is put in charge, Jacob sends some of the brothers to buy grain and bring it back to Canaan. Joseph recognizes them and puts together a plan to reveal himself to his brothers. Let's turn to **Chapter 45:4-7 (pg. 33)** and pick it up at verse:**4** Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come close to me." When they had done so, he said, "I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt! **5** And now, do not be

Mother's Day 2018: Glorious Unfolding

Robin - May 13, 2018

distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you. **6** For two years now there has been famine in the land, and for the next five years there will be no plowing and reaping. **7** But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance.[a

Talk about a purpose!!!! Talk about a purpose worth waiting for...worth seeking. Think about it - How many years did Joseph wait to discover his purpose? 13 years before he was put in command. Another 9 years before he sees his brothers for the first time. Did Joseph wonder about his purpose, his early dreams? Nearly give up on what he thought they revealed? We don't know how close he may have come to giving up or losing hope, *but we do know that in the end, Joseph understood that God used the events in his life so that God's greater purpose - to save all of Egypt - including his family - could unfold.* The same is true of each of us! When I was younger I used to ask God - "Do you know what could I have done if I didn't have this birth defect?" But now my heart tells me, "Do you know what you have been able to do BECAUSE of this birth defect? How it formed you and shaped you as you slowly gave it back to me?" Would I have a heart for the oppressed and the outcast if I didn't experience what I did as a child? Would I understand what unconditional love is to the extent that I do? Would I have relied on God? Would I have given my life to him? Would I have the compassion and faith that I do? I may never know the answers to these questions...but God does. He has used every negative and every positive experience in my life to further his purpose for my life! BUT - I had to be open handed with the things that have happened. I have had to both receive them - and give them back to him. I am not going to lie...it is hard work. There are MANY times when I ask God why? When I question him "are you sure that you weren't looking the other way when this happened God?" BUT, I believe there is a God. I believe that he has put his purpose for my life in my heart and I believe that as I continue to seek and follow him, he will reveal that purpose in HIS TIME.

You and I have a purpose that we are given by Almighty God. BELIEVE IT! LIVE IT! It might not be to save a Nation - but it is no less important, no less God-given, no less needed. Another way to define purpose is a calling that God has put on your life. I was in a shop the other day and saw a sign: "The beach is calling....and I must go!" THIS IS NOT the calling that I mean of course. For some, your calling or purpose might look like a heart on fire, can't get to sleep, jump out of bed in the morning, can't sit still calling. But for others, it might be a still small voice that leads you to remote corners of your world where seeds are planted and lives are changed and encouraged one by one in God's ordained time.

Mother's Day 2018: Glorious Unfolding

Robin - May 13, 2018

We all have seasons of growth, of discovering our purpose, of waiting as God reveals steps for us to take. For some, your purpose may be revealed all at once. For others, like me, it is more of an "unfolding" or maybe it comes out in seasons of life. It may be lived out in your work life, your personal life or family life or maybe both. So let me ask you this: if you are not sure of your purpose - how do you find it? If you aren't living out your purpose, where do you start? The answer to both of these is GOD. When we seek God, follow God, acknowledge God, He WILL make himself known. He might speak through trusted advisors, friends or family, your pastor, his word. He is not a God of secrets. But purpose is revealed on HIS TIMELINE - in HIS way...through the way he specifically created you. Your purpose, not someone else's purpose for you! While we wait and seek our goal is to be faithful and Joseph and seek him.

Let me ask you a few more questions. What needs to unfold more in your life to be who you were created to be? Where are you stuck? What is holding you back? What is your attitude during this season? What needs to happen for you to start living as you were created to live? If you are in figurative "Prison" like Joseph - how is God preparing you? Using you where you are? You know God has a purpose, but it isn't clear yet. Things are cloudy, but your heart is on fire...knowing that there is something! No matter where we are in this "unfolding of purpose", we need to remember that God doesn't waste an experience when we give it to him. This may be your time in the chrysalis - your time of being taken apart. Whatever you are going through - God may not have caused the experience - he he may have allowed it - BUT most certainly HE CAN USE IT!

Last week, I was on stage with Pastor Glen as he announced that I was wrapping up my 13 ½ years as a Pastor on staff at Pantano. If you weren't in service - "surprise" I am stepping out in faith. You see, God has been preparing my heart for a transition for over 2 years. He has placed a Holy Restlessness in my heart. A feeling of release from my work here. A yearning for something that I can't place my finger on, but that I know that he is in the process of revealing for me. I don't know what exactly it is - though I know it will use the passions and gifts he has given me. I am passionate about mobilizing people for God's work. About multiplying the work of God's Kingdom in a broader sense. While I am actively looking and searching, I know that I will continue to be restless until his timing is revealed. In the meantime, I just want to be found faithful like Joseph. And while I am waiting....I can hardly stand still for all the excitement in my heart!!

Mother's Day 2018: Glorious Unfolding

Robin - May 13, 2018

In just a minute, our band is going to share a song with us. You are welcome to stand or sit, to sing or reflect. Today's message was a bit about my story, a bit about Joseph's story - but most importantly, it is about YOUR STORY - about you living out your purpose!

I read a quote this week from author John Bevere: "In regard to your calling, you'll not be judged according to what you DID, but rather, according to what you were called to do!" Your job is to be faithful; to seek God and to remember: **You are designed for a purpose**

Song: Beautiful Things

**God makes beautiful things - out of us - through us and in us! All in his time!
Thank you for joining us today. If you are new today, we invite you to visit**

- **Starting Point**
- **If you need prayer....we have prayer partners, so come forward.**
-
- **Since it is Mother's Day = As you leave we have some special gifts for our moms:**
- **A butterfly magnet as you exit.**
- **Cheesecake bites served by our KidZone Leadership Group on the outside court along with photo booths!**
- **And Eegees for all!**