

Authentic Purpose

SESSION 2



BIG IDEA

You are not an accident. God has a greater purpose for us all.

KEY SCRIPTURE

Philippians 3:12–14 — *Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, **that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me.** Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

(NKJV, emphasis added)

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Every person carries three fundamental existential questions: *Who am I? Where do I fit in?* and *What difference do I make?* Identity in Christ resolves the first question, authentic community addresses the second, and discovering God-given purpose answers the third.

This pursuit of purpose is evident in the statistics. Even the high percentage of young people who would say they aspire to be Influencers are expressing something similar to those aiming to be nurses or doctors or teachers. They want to make a difference!

The journey to AUTHENTIC PURPOSE involves 1) **Realigning our purposes** with God's purposes for our lives, 2) **Reassigning our giftings** to His work, and 3) **Reawakening our love for serving others.**

1) REALIGN YOUR PURPOSE

None of us is here by accident. Scripture affirms that God knew each of us before we were formed (Jeremiah 1:5), and that before the foundations of the earth he preordained our lives (Ephesians 1:4–5). We all carry a divine purpose, a God-designed destiny.

God uses what you already have. Moses was a shepherd. The disciples were fishermen. God did not ask them to become something entirely different. He realigned the time, talent and treasures they already possessed toward His kingdom purposes.

Laying something down is not the same as giving it up. When God asked Moses what was in his hand, He did not tell him to discard the rod but instructed him to lay it down and then pick it up again. Surrendering your time, talent, and treasure to God's purposes does not mean abandoning them—it means releasing control so He can use them in ways you could not on your own.

2) REASSIGN YOUR GIFTINGS

Purpose is a journey, not a destination. Paul, near the end of his life, still described himself as pressing forward. If the apostle who wrote much of the New Testament did not consider himself to have arrived, we can be encouraged that our journey will involve continuing to discover and understand our greater purpose.

3) REAWAKEN YOUR LOVE FOR SERVING

Servanthood is the highest calling. In Matthew 20:25-28, Jesus tells His disciples that greatness in His kingdom looks nothing like greatness in the world. Those who desire greatness must become servants, just like Jesus came to give His life as a ransom for many.

“If serving is beneath you, then leading is beyond you.” (Bishop Dale Bronner)

ICEBREAKER

Go around the group and answer this: **When you were young, what did you want to be when you grew up? Looking back, how did that reflect what you were searching for** (e.g. success, significance, belonging, or something else)?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Two critical questions people ask today are, “Who am I?” and “What difference do I make?” **What does the verse below say about these two questions?**

Ephesians 2:10 — *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.* (NKJV)

2. In Exodus 4, God instructed Moses to **lay down** his staff, which is a shepherd's tool. This is what Moses had in his hand, representing his time, talent, and treasure. God was going to use it in the greater purpose He was calling Moses to. When he lays it down, God miraculously works, and by **picking it up** again Moses takes another step toward his greater purpose to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Below are some further examples from the Bible of people laying down their time, talent and treasure for God to use.

Person/people	Laid Down	Picked Up
The Disciples	Left their fishing nets	Becoming fishers of men
David	Leading/protecting his father's sheep	Led the nation of Israel
Esther	Her comfortable position as queen	Her unique opportunity to plead with the King to save the Israelites from genocide
Paul	Zealous for the Law	Zealous for Jesus and the Church
Nehemiah	Cup bearer for the King	Used this position of influence to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem

If we consider more modern examples, who else could be on this list? (E.g. people you know personally, high-profile people, figures from history, etc.)

What did they lay down before God and then pick up?

3. **In what ways have you already experienced fulfillment in serving?**

4. **What time, talent or treasure do you have that you can “lay down” for God to use? What purpose could you imagine God has for you to “pick up” of your time, talent and treasure for the Kingdom of God?**
5. It is human to want to serve yourself. James and John wanted to sit at the right hand of God, but Jesus told them that to be the greatest you must serve people. **Why is it so easy to want to serve yourself? What is the difference between serving yourself and self-care?**
6. **On a scale of 1-10, how much love do you have for serving right now? How might you increase your love for serving?**
7. **What barriers do you think people encounter that prevent them from serving? What are some of those barriers for you? How can we remove or push past these barriers?**

ACTIVATION

Hebrews 10:24 — *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works...* (NKJV)

As a group invite the Holy Spirit to give you words or phrases that will encourage each person in the group in their journey toward authentic purpose.

Choose one person at a time and have a few group members share what comes to mind for them in terms of affirming their greater purpose and impact.

If you already know this person well, the Lord may highlight something you already know or have observed about them. But also take this opportunity to step out to listen for a word or phrase the Holy Spirit will give you for them that you might not have naturally known already.

TAKE IT HOME

What would you say is your greater purpose? Do you feel like you know (even part of) your destiny and what God has created you for?

If your time, treasure and talent had no limits, what greater purpose would you pursue right now? Bring this to God in your personal prayer times this week and listen for His thoughts on these ideas.

Was there something that stood out for you at the Ministry Expo in terms of places to serve that you have not tried before?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Philippians 3:1–14 — Read the full context of the key passage

Jeremiah 1:4–10 — God's purpose declared over Jeremiah before his birth

Matthew 20:20–28 — Jesus redefines greatness through servanthood

Exodus 3–4 — The full account of Moses at the burning bush and the question of what was in his hand