

‘DON’T LET THE TIMES, ECLIPSE YOUR MISSION’

FROM THE SERIES, “TIMELESS TRUTHS FOR TROUBLING TIMES”

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As a disciple, I am intentionally putting myself in a position of (or submitting to become) a student with the intent of following the authority, instruction and missionary assignment of The Master and Teacher.

So, as a disciple on mission, I take ownership of both the **response to** and **responsibility of** knowing that my life is not my own, this world is not my home and time will soon be gone. I have a *limited* time to do what I was fashioned and purposed to accomplish. I must maintain an *awareness* of the opportunities that God gives me to live *like* and *for* The Lord Jesus Christ. I am *obligated* as a disciple to replicate the character and nature of my teacher. ***I’m on a mission!***

- “For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. **God sent** his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him. (John 3:16-17 NLT)
- Jesus said, “My food is to do what the one who **sent me** wants me to do. My food is to finish the work that he gave me to do. (John 4:34 ERV)
- For I have come down from heaven to do the will of God who **sent me**, not to do my own will. (John 6:38 NLT)
- So Jesus said, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man on the cross, then you will understand that I AM he. I do nothing on my own but say only what the Father taught me. And **the one who sent me** is with me—he has not deserted me. For I always do what pleases him.” (John 8:28-29 NLT)
- But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the **work assigned me** by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God. (Acts of the Apostles 20:24 NLT)

MANY people today say they are trying to find themselves. These people are running around, trying to find themselves. This search is meaningless. If you don’t know who you are, how do you know what to look for? And how do you know when you have found it, since you don’t know what you are looking for?

TOASTERS don’t find themselves. Refrigerators don’t find themselves.

Appliances don't find themselves because their purpose has been assigned by another. A toaster doesn't have to find its reason for being; it's just got to do what the manufacturer had in mind. Christians don't have to look for themselves. God has already consigned to us a divine reason for being. Our purpose is to fulfill it. If we are not fulfilling His purposes, days, weeks, and months go by as we watch more television, hook up with more friends, and try to get better jobs—and our lives still feel empty because we are disconnected from the purposes of God.

The purpose of this study is to remind disciples of the timeless truth of their calling and aim in the context of a potentially distracting seasons, a troubling time, so that we remember our purpose and grow passionate about the goal of living all out for The King of Kings.

I. I AM MADE WITH INTENTION. -PURPOSE

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)

*Now God has us where he wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to **join him in the work he does**, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, **work we had better be doing.** (Ephesians 2:7-10 MSG)*

A. CREATED BY GOD (EPH.2:10)

1. God's intentions for every believer have even the most minuscule of details in mind when created you.
2. He has known you before He **formed** you. *"Before I shaped you in the womb, I knew all about you. Before you saw the light of day, I had holy plans for you: A prophet to the nations—that's what I had in mind for you."* (Jer. 1:5 MSG)
3. He has known what you have been **fashioned** for. He knows this even when we disagree.

4. *“Listen, far-flung islands, pay attention, faraway people: **GOD put me to work from the day I was born.** The moment I entered the world he named me. He gave me speech that would cut and penetrate. He kept his hand on me to protect me.” (Is 49:1 MSG)*
5. *... “GOD says, this God who **took me in hand from the moment of birth** to be his servant,” Is 49:5.*
6. Consider the implications. I have been created and fashioned by the hands of God. My life has divine artistry. My makeup and everything about it is aimed at an end and a purpose that is bigger than me and transcends even what I may have in mind.
7. God placed me on planet earth, at this time, in this context, in this nation, with this ethnic group, with this mental inclination, for a work that He had in mind before. “He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to **join him in the work he does**, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, **work we had better be doing.**” (Eph. 2:10MSG)
8. What I’m supposed to be doing is enhanced by what He has gifted me to do.

B. COMPELLED BY GIFTS (JER.20:9)

1. But if I say I’ll never mention the LORD or speak in his name, his word burns in my heart like a fire. It’s like a fire in my bones! I am worn out trying to hold it in! I can’t do it! (Jeremiah 20:9 NLT)
2. ***Your gifts ought to be clawing their way out of you to find some door to get loose in this world.*** Your gifts are recognizable by the things that you are exceptionally good at doing.
3. You can also recognize your gifts by the fact that they add value to other people. When you have exercised your gift and the things around you are made better as a result of it that is affirmation that you have that gift. And it doesn’t matter what the gift is! (**helps, service, leadership, giving, hospitality, encouragement, discernment, wisdom, teaching, art, music, prophecy, faith, shepherding, language, craftsmanship**)

4. Also, you know your gifts when others affirm your giftedness!

C. COMPLETED BY GAIN (PHIL.3)

1. The best kind of gain is the progress made when purpose and giftedness come together and are manifest in your life.
2. This is what it means to prosper for God. This is what Paul had in mind when he talked about having “real gain”.
3. Paul would make a point to establish the nothing else in life really mattered if you did not accomplish what God had both fashioned, formed, and fixed him on this earth to accomplish. In fact, Jesus would say the antithesis, **“if I gain the whole world and lose my only soul what have I actually gained?”**
4. But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the **work assigned me** by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God. (Acts of the Apostles 20:24 NLT)
5. Real progress in this world is only made when the disciples of Christ recognizes they live to accomplish a mission that they have been made for! Anything else is a delusion. Anything else is a distraction. Anything else is a distorted way of seeing what God has had in mind before the foundation of the world.
6. I would challenge is to recognize that we have been created, complemented with gifts, and we must complete our assignments!
7. We really do not live for our own desire, because we are up to be living according to our design!

II. I AM MOVING WITH INTENSITY, - PASSION

A. LIMITED AMOUNT OF TIME-

1. Jesus said, "while its day" (Jn.9:4)
2. Paul said, "redeeming the time" (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5; Gal. 6:10)
 - ***Make the most of every chance you get.*** These are desperate times! Eph 5:16.
 - Use your heads as you live and work among outsiders.

Don't miss a trick. ***Make the most of every opportunity.***
(Col 4:5 MSG)

- So let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don't give up, or quit. Right now, therefore, ***every time we get the chance,*** let us work for the benefit of all, starting with the people closest to us in the community of faith.
(Gal. 6:9-10MSG)

3. **Practically** speaking... You don't have much time... The songwriter is absolutely correct. Time is filled with swift transition. And because you don't get to make more time, or take more time, you must make the most of the time that you have.
4. **Psychologically** considering... You don't want to waste what little you have.
5. **Post-paradigmatically** thinking... You've wasted enough to time. (1Pt.4; Rom.6 "what fruit did you have?")
 - You've already put in your time in that God-ignorant way of life, partying night after night, a drunken and profligate life. Now it's time to be done with it for good. Of course, your old friends don't understand why you don't join in with the old gang anymore. But you don't have to give an account to them. They're the ones who will be called on the carpet—and before God himself.
(1Pt. 4: 3-5MSG)
 - I'm using this freedom language because it's easy to picture. You can readily recall, can't you, how at one time the more you did just what you felt like doing—not caring about others, not caring about God—the worse your life became and the less freedom you had? And how much different is it now as you live in God's freedom, your lives healed and expansive in holiness? (Rom. 6:19MSG)

B. LIMITED OPPORTUNITY-

1. You only got one shot to catch the chariot. – Like Phillip/Eunuch
2. You only have one time to see Elijah ascend. – Like Elisha

3. You only have one Red Sea crossing. – Like Moses
4. You only have one meeting at the well. – Like Jesus & Samaritan
5. You will only see Zacchaeus in the tree one time. - Jesus
6. You only have one time reach a passing messiah. – The woman with the issue, Lk. 8
7. You only have one Pentecost moment. -Peter
8. You only have one chance to teach Nicodemus. -Jesus
9. You only have one time to walk on water. – Peter
10. You only have one time to meet pharaoh and tell him what God said. -Moses
11. You only have one time to take the loaves and fish and feed thousands.
12. You only have one shot to make your pitch to get the grant to build the walls of Jerusalem. - Like Nehemiah

C. YOU MAY ONLY HAVE ONE SHOT SO YOU MUST!

1. **Remember** you're on assignment,
2. **Ready** yourself for service
3. **Respond** in faith to opportunity
4. **Reflect** on the power of God to use you like has so many just like you!