

NO
FILTER

**DISCOVER WHO YOU REALLY ARE
BEYOND THE NOISE**

DR. SOMTO IGBOANUGO

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Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, unless otherwise stated.

Bible versions referenced include KJV, NIV, ESV, and AMP.

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To the One who knows me without filters, God Almighty. You are the reason I can write about authenticity, because You call me to live it daily. Without You, this book would not exist.

To my beloved wife, Amazing Igboanugo your love, prayers, and unwavering belief in me have been my anchor.

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To the incredible team behind the scenes, editors, proofreaders, and designers. Thank you for shaping this vision into something lasting.

And to you, dear reader: may this book help you strip away the noise, silence the lies, and step boldly into the freedom of knowing who you truly are.



Before You Begin

Friend, I don't believe it's by chance that you're holding this book. I believe it's part of a divine appointment. For over five years, I've been teaching on the subject of identity to young people, in churches, conferences and different settings. And every single time, something remarkable happens: the message gets sharper, hearts gain clearer insight, and people step closer to who they truly are in Christ.

The more I teach on the subject, the more I realize just how urgent and relevant it is in today's world. There is so much noise: society's opinions, social media comparisons, peer pressure, fear, even our own emotions. The noise is relentless. And if we're not careful, it drowns out the most important voice of all: the voice of God who calls us His own.

This book is my way of helping you silence that noise and rediscover the real you, the you God designed before the world ever labelled you. I don't want you to just read words on a page; I want you to experience a renewed mind and a lighter heart.

Scripture says:

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“As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.” (Proverbs 23:7, para.)

Your thoughts shape your life. That’s why I encourage you, as you read, to allow the truths in this book to transform your thinking. Don’t skim. Take your time. Pause. Reflect. Let God speak to you through the stories, scriptures, and principles you’re about to encounter.

Here’s how to make the most of this journey:

Pause often. Don’t rush. Let the truth sink deep.

Engage with honesty. Be willing to face what you’ve been hiding behind.

Invite God in. Whisper a prayer before each chapter: “Lord, show me who You say I am.”

This book is not just about information, it’s about transformation. It’s about stripping away false labels, quieting the noise, and stepping boldly into your real future.

So, are you ready? The journey begins now.

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Chapter 1: Who Am I, Really?

The Question of Questions

There are questions in life that shape everything else. Some questions are small, like what do I eat today? Which job should I take? Should I travel or stay home? They matter, but they're not defining.

Then there are deeper questions. Questions that touch the core of who we are:

- Who am I? The question of identity.
- Why am I here? The question of purpose and destiny.
- What can I do? The question of potential.

Who Am I, Really?

All three questions are powerful. They hold the keys to living a fulfilled life on earth. But make no mistake: the first question *Who am I?* is the foundation of them all. If you get the first question wrong, the other two will never make sense.

If I mistake a tablet PC for a wall clock, I'll never use it correctly. I won't understand its design or maximize its features. The same is true of us. If I don't know who I am, how can I possibly live out my purpose or unlock my potential?

Biblical Foundation: Created in His Image

The first book of the Bible doesn't leave us guessing. Genesis 1:27 tells us plainly:

“So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” (Genesis 1:27, NIV)

That's the origin of our identity. Not our careers. Not our possessions. Not the opinions of others. Your identity begins with this: **you are made in the image of God.** *The image* here isn't just physical resemblance. It means moral likeness and spiritual personality. You are God-stamped.

And this is what Satan attacks most, not first your money, not your job, not even your health. He attacks your identity. Because if he can confuse who you think you are, he can derail everything else.

The First Identity Crisis: Adam and Eve

Let's rewind to the beginning of time. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were living in perfect harmony with God, completely secure in who they were. Genesis 1:27 tells us they were made "in God's image", carrying His moral likeness and spiritual personality. They knew exactly who they were.

But notice what Satan attacked. He didn't go after their purpose. He didn't target their resources. He went straight for their identity with one simple lie:

"Eat this fruit, and you will be like God" (Genesis 3:5para).

But Eve was already like God! She and Adam were created in His image. The lie was not in the fruit; the lie was in the suggestion that they were lacking.

That's how the enemy works. He whispers:

- **Do this, and you'll finally be somebody.**
- **Dress like this, and they'll accept you.**
- **Buy this, and you'll feel worthy.**
- **Achieve this, so you'll finally prove you matter.**

Before long, life becomes a performance for others instead of an expression of who God made you to be.

When Jesus Faced the Identity Test

Fast-forward thousands of years to another pivotal moment. Jesus had just been baptized, and God the Father's voice thundered from heaven:

*“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased”
(Matthew 3:17 ESV).*

Clear. Definitive. Unshakable.

But then came the test. Satan approached Jesus in the wilderness and began his attack with these telling words:

“If you are the Son of God...” (Matthew 4:3 ESV).

Notice the strategy? Satan didn't deny Jesus' identity, he made Him question it.

“If you're really the Son of God, then prove it. Turn these stones into bread. Show me what you've got.”

But Jesus didn't take the bait. He didn't need to prove who He was because He was secure in who His Father said He was.

This is the same battle you face every single day. The voices around you - social media, peer pressure, society's standards, even your own thoughts - are constantly whispering:

“If you're really valuable, then prove it. If you're really worthy, then earn it.”

But what if you didn't have to prove anything? What if you could live *from* approval instead of living *for* approval?

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When you know who you are in God, you don't need to prove it to anyone else.

The Trap of Proving Yourself

Think about it. How many times have you felt the pressure to prove yourself?

- **Maybe I'm not good enough; I need to work harder to show them.**
- **Maybe I'm not really blessed; I need to post something online to look successful.**
- **Maybe I'm not really loved; I need to dress a certain way so I'll be accepted.**

This is the same temptation repackaged. The devil wants you to doubt who you already are, so you'll spend your life trying to become what God has already declared.

Clarity of Theme: Who You Think You Are Shapes Your Life

Here's a life-changing principle: Who you think you are will control your life. You'll never do anything beyond the capacity of who you believe yourself to be.

- **If you believe you're worthless, you'll live beneath your calling.**
- **If you believe you're ordinary, you'll never attempt the extraordinary.**

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- **If you believe you're unloved, you'll settle for unhealthy relationships.**

You'll never live beyond the level of your identity.

The first Adam lost the battle of identity. The last Adam won it, so you could walk in victory.

Let me give you an example. I live in the United Kingdom. As a British citizen, I am entitled to certain rights like NHS healthcare and access to public funds. Do I have to beg for these? No. I don't need to "earn" them by trying to look more British. They are mine by citizenship.

In the same way, when you know you're a citizen of heaven, you stop striving for what is already yours. You don't have to prove your worth; you only need to walk in it.

Let this truth sink deep into your heart:

I am not what I've done.

I am not what I have.

I am not what others say I am.

I am who God says I am.

Losing Identity, Losing Faith

When Identity is Stolen, Everything Else Follows

Here's why getting your identity right is so crucial: When Satan steals your identity, he steals everything else.

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If he's stolen your peace, he first tampered with your identity making you question whether God really loves you.

If he's stolen your confidence, he first tampered with your identity making you doubt whether you're truly equipped for what God has called you to do.

If he's stolen your joy, he first tampered with your identity making you forget that you're chosen, beloved, and delighted in by the Creator of the universe.

This is why so many Christians struggle with doubt, fear, and powerlessness. It's not because God became weaker; it's because we've lost sight of who we are in Him.

The Bible puts it powerfully:

“The people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits” (Daniel 11:32, NKJV).

You don't conquer giants by studying giants. You conquer giants by knowing how big your God is and how much He loves you.

What Happens When You Discover Your Identity?

When you finally see yourself as God sees you, everything changes.

1. **You stop copying others.** You celebrate others without feeling threatened because you know you're uniquely designed. You're not trying to be the next someone else – you're becoming the first you.

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2. **You stay hopeful and joyful.** You stop magnifying flaws and start celebrating that you are *fearedly and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14)*.
3. **You strive for excellence.** Your identity isn't average. You were designed to reflect God's excellence. The devil can't always make you sin, but if he can keep you mediocre, he can limit your influence.

No one truly discovers their identity in Christ and remains ordinary.

No one discovers the power of the divine life and settles for average.

Why? Because it's a supernatural life. You're not like everyone else. You carry the DNA of heaven. You have the Spirit of the living God inside you.

Friend, hear this clearly: you are not what you've done, what you own, or what people have called you. You are who God says you are.

You are a child of God (John 1:12).

You are chosen (1 Peter 2:9).

You are loved beyond measure (Jeremiah 31:3).

You are created for good works (Ephesians 2:10).

You don't need to blend in. You don't need to prove yourself. You need only to believe God's Word and live it out.

Your Identity Declaration

Before we close this chapter, I want you to speak these words out loud. Don't just read them, declare them with confidence:

"I am God's beloved child, and He is pleased with me. I am not defined by my past mistakes, my current circumstances, or others' opinions. I am chosen, equipped, and called to make a difference in this generation. I refuse to live beneath my identity in Christ."

Reflection and Next Steps

The journey to discovering who you really are begins with settling this fundamental truth: Your identity was established before you were born, declared when you believed, and can never be taken away.

Questions for Reflection:

1. What voices have you been listening to that contradict what God says about you?
2. In what areas of your life do you find yourself trying to "prove" your worth instead of living from your worth?
3. How would your daily decisions change if you truly believed you are God's beloved child?

This Week's Challenge: Every morning, before checking your phone or social media, look in the mirror and remind yourself:

"I am who God says I am."

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Let His voice be the first voice you hear each day.

Prayer

“Father, thank You for creating me in Your image and calling me Your child. Help me to silence the voices that contradict Your truth about who I am. Give me the confidence to live from my identity in You, not from the approval of others. Show me how to walk in the fullness of who You’ve created me to be. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Remember: The world is waiting for the real you to show up. But first, you have to discover who that really is. And that journey begins with understanding whose you are.

In the next chapter, we’ll explore why pretending to be someone you’re not is not only exhausting – it’s keeping you from the life God intended for you to live.

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Who Am I, Really?

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Chapter 2: The Mask Is Heavy: Why Pretending Drains Your Soul

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

The Weight of a Mask

Have you ever worn a mask for too long - at a costume party, in a play, or even during the pandemic? At first, it feels fine. But after a while, it gets uncomfortable. Your skin itches. Your breathing feels restricted. Your face starts to ache. The longer you keep it on, the heavier it feels.

That’s exactly what happens when we live behind a mask. Pretending may look harmless at first, but over time, it drains your strength, steals your joy, and suffocates your authenticity.

The Mask Is Heavy: Why pretending drains your soul

The mask may impress others for a moment, but it will exhaust you in the long run.

The Exhausting Game of Pretend

It's 6:30 AM, and your alarm jolts you awake. But before your feet even hit the floor, the performance begins. You reach for your phone and start crafting the perfect caption for yesterday's photo, the one where you looked confident and put-together, even though you were dying inside. You scroll through comments, calculating which response will make you seem the most relatable, the most spiritual, the most... acceptable.

By the time you're dressed and ready to face the world, you're already exhausted. And the day has barely begun.

Sound familiar?

Let's be honest. Many people are tired, not because of their work, but because of the act they put on every day.

- A young man hides his struggles with depression because he wants to appear “strong.”
- A woman posts filtered selfies online, but cries herself to sleep feeling inadequate.
- A song leader mimics another singer's style, forgetting that God called her with His own unique voice.

Pretence drains the soul because it forces you to live out of alignment with who God actually made you to be.

Here's a truth that might sting at first but will ultimately set you free: The mask you're wearing to impress others is the very thing that's keeping you from the life God intended for you to live.

When Being “Cool” Costs You Your Soul

We live in a generation obsessed with being cool, being accepted, and being like everyone else. But here's what nobody tells you: **When you try to be like others, you rob the world of the original God created you to be.**

The word “Christian” came about because, despite Christ dying and being buried, there were people who looked and acted so much like Him that the world had to create a new word to describe them. They weren't trying to be cool. They weren't following trends. **They were simply being authentic reflections of the One they followed.**

But somewhere along the way, we've forgotten this truth. We've started believing that to be accepted, we must blend in. To be loved, we must be like everyone else. To matter, we must wear masks that hide who we really are.

The result? A generation of Christians who are dying of spiritual exhaustion.

Originals Are Remembered; Copies Are Forgotten

The God Who Sees Behind Every Mask

Let me remind you of something that will revolutionize how you see yourself:

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

Read that again slowly, **while we were still sinners**. While our flaws were transparent before Him. While our lives were messy, imperfect, and far from Instagram-worthy. While we were at our absolute worst, He chose to love us anyway.

He saw everything - every weakness, every fault, every problem - and still decided you were worth dying for.

So here’s the question that should silence every insecurity: If the One who created you saw all your imperfections and still called you His beloved, why are you so concerned about what everyone else thinks?

There’s no room for pretence anymore. The One who matters most already knows the real you and loves you anyway.

The Crowd Will Always Be Crowded

Here’s a principle that will change how you approach every decision: **Those who follow the crowd will be crowded in their purpose.**

Think about it. When everyone is going in the same direction, trying to be the same person, wearing the same masks, there’s no room for anyone to truly shine. It’s crowded, competitive, and exhausting.

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But when you step into your God-given authenticity, **you step into a lane that's uniquely yours.**

Some pastors try to preach like other pastors and wonder why their message feels forced. Some entrepreneurs try to build businesses exactly like successful models and wonder why they lack passion. Some Christians try to worship, pray, and serve exactly like others and wonder why their relationship with God feels mechanical.

Here's the truth: Trends will always end. Styles will fade. Crowds will move on. But authenticity lasts. Your calling in God is a journey with eternal significance, and it's best achieved if you remain authentic.

You don't follow the crowd; you follow His leading.

Lessons from Arnold Schwarzenegger: Turning Weaknesses into Strengths

Let me tell you a story that perfectly illustrates the power of refusing to wear someone else's mask.

In 1968, a young man named Arnold Schwarzenegger emigrated from Austria to America with limited English skills, little money, and a dream that seemed impossible. He wanted to make it in Hollywood - but everything about him screamed "wrong fit."

His thick accent was so heavy that people could barely understand him. His muscular physique was considered too bulky for leading man roles. His name was unpronounceable. When Hollywood casting agents met him, their advice was always the

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same: **“Lose the accent. Change your name. Conform to what we expect.”**

But Arnold made a decision that changed everything: **He decided to turn his perceived weaknesses into his greatest strengths.**

Instead of trying to sound like every other American actor, he embraced his accent. Instead of slimming down to fit Hollywood’s mold, he used his unique physique to his advantage. When *The Terminator* came along in 1984, his accent wasn’t a barrier, it was perfect for a machine from the future.

Arnold didn’t succeed despite being different. He succeeded because he was different.

His accent became iconic. His physique became his trademark. His authenticity became his brand. He didn’t just become a successful actor; he became a cultural phenomenon, a successful businessman, and eventually the Governor of California.

The very things that made him “unmarketable” became the things that made him irreplaceable.

The Lesson Hidden in Hollywood

Arnold’s story teaches us something profound about God’s design: **What makes you different isn’t what disqualifies you, it’s what God wants to use to distinguish you.**

The enemy whispers, **“You’re too short. You’re too slim. Your shape is bad. Your face has a defect. You need to be like them to matter.”**

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But God says, **“I made you exactly as you are for a reason that only you can fulfil.”**

For me, this was the mask I had to get rid of after migrating to the United Kingdom. I knew God had called me to public speaking, but I thought I needed to perfect my pronunciation and everything else before stepping onto the stage.

For several months, I would record podcasts but feel ashamed to upload them, because in my own understanding, *“I had not fully perfected the British accent.”*

It wasn't until the Holy Spirit cautioned me through His Word that I took the bold step to break free and come all out. As a result of my consistent uploads and the content of my talks and portfolio, I was shortlisted to speak on the TEDx Wolverhampton stage in the UK, becoming the first and only person of African heritage to speak at the city's event that year. My talk received remarkable compliments from everyone who attended and possibly inspired the appearance of more African speakers on the stage as we had more of them shortlisted the following year.

Since then, I have never looked back on being bold to speak with full originality, while ensuring I communicate effectively.

Your accent - whether literal or metaphorical - isn't a flaw to fix. It's a fingerprint to celebrate.

When Authenticity Becomes Revolutionary

In our filtered, curated, perfectly posed world, **authenticity has become a revolutionary act.** Every mask you wear comes with a cost. It's heavy. And sooner or later, it cracks.

Let me tell you about Naomie Pilula, a 37-year-old Zambian lawyer whose story is shaking the internet-not because she followed the crowd, but because she refused to.

After posting a simple, unfiltered selfie, Naomie was hit with over 530,000 cruel comments attacking her appearance. The internet mob told her she was “ugly.” They tried to shame her into hiding, conforming, or disappearing.

But Naomie made a choice that changed everything. Instead of putting on a mask, instead of editing her photos, instead of trying to be someone else, she stood tall in faith and declared:

“If God made me, then what can people say?”

Her courage turned pain into purpose. Her authenticity turned criticism into celebration. Her following grew from 1,000 to over 100,000-not because of filters, not **because of plastic surgery, but because she chose radical self-acceptance.**

Today, her story is a beacon of hope, proving that sometimes **the most revolutionary act is simply refusing to agree with your bullies.**

She discovered what Arnold discovered: **When you embrace who God made you to be, the world has no choice but to take notice.**

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Look at many Christian influencers and artists today. The ones making a lasting impact are not those who copy trends. They're the ones who embrace originality.

- Some sing with raw voices, not polished perfection, and people connect with their sincerity.
- Some share unfiltered testimonies, not staged performances, and people find hope in their honesty.
- Some preach with their unique style, not trying to sound like their favourite preacher, and their authenticity draws people closer to God.

Relevance in God isn't about being everywhere - it's about being where He has sent you.

The Heavy Cost of Light Masks

Here's what nobody tells you about wearing masks: They might seem light at first, but they get heavier with every passing day.

When you pretend to be someone you're not:

- You exhaust yourself trying to maintain an image that isn't real.
- You attract people who love the mask, not the person underneath.
- You start to lose track of who you really are.
- You rob others of the blessing of knowing the real you.
- You miss out on the relationships, opportunities, and purposes that were meant for the authentic you.

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Wearing a mask isn't just tiring - it's tragic. Because while you're pretending to be someone else, the world is missing out on the person God created you to be.

Jesus hated hypocrisy. In Matthew 23, He confronted the Pharisees for putting on religious masks, looking righteous on the outside but hiding corruption inside.

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.” (Matthew 23:27, NIV)

Strong words. But why? Because masks misrepresent God. When we pretend, we deny the grace that says we're loved as we are.

What Happens When You Take Off the Mask?

I know what you're thinking: **“But what if they don't like the real me? What if I'm rejected? What if I'm not enough?”**

Here's what I've learned from watching countless people step into authenticity: **When you stop trying to be everything to everyone, you become exactly what someone needs.**

When you take off the mask:

- You attract people who genuinely connect with who you are.
- You discover energy you never knew you had because you're no longer exhausting yourself with pretence.

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- You step into opportunities that are perfectly suited for your authentic gifts.
- You experience the joy of being loved for who you truly are, not who you're pretending to be.
- You become a magnet for God's best because you're finally positioned in truth.

Everyone Is Called to Be an Original

Here's a truth that should silence every comparison: **Everyone is called to be an original, but most people choose to be copies.**

God didn't mass-produce humanity. He handcrafted each person with unique gifts, perspectives, and purposes. **You are not a generic brand of someone else's success; you are a limited edition of God's creativity.**

The world doesn't need another copy of someone else. The world needs the first you.

Your Authenticity Is Your Authority

In a world full of copies, authenticity becomes your greatest authority.

When you stop trying to sound like every other Christian and start speaking from your genuine experience with God, people listen.

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When you stop trying to look like every other influencer and start sharing your real story, people connect.

When you stop trying to lead like every other leader and start leading from your authentic gifts, people follow.

Your authenticity isn't just refreshing, it's anointed. Because when you're being who God created you to be, His power flows through you naturally.

The Freedom of Being Found Out

One of the greatest fears we face is being “found out”, having people discover that we're not as perfect, polished, or put-together as we appear.

But here's a liberating truth: **The person who has nothing to hide has nothing to fear.**

When you live authentically, when you're genuine about your struggles and victories, when you're honest about your journey, you experience a freedom that masked people can only dream of.

You're no longer afraid of being exposed because you've already chosen to be transparent.

Breaking Free from the Mask

So how do you begin the journey from pretence to authenticity? Here are some practical steps:

1. **Start With God's Word**

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Before you look at social media, look at Scripture. Let God's Word tell you who you are before the world tries to tell you who you should be.

2. Practice Small Authenticity

You don't have to remove every mask at once. Start small. Share one real struggle. Admit one imperfection. Let one person see the real you.

3. Remember Your Why

You weren't created to be impressive, you were created to be impactful. And impact comes from authenticity, not from masks.

4. Celebrate Your Uniqueness

Make a list of the things that make you different. Instead of seeing them as flaws to fix, see them as gifts to steward.

An Invitation to Authenticity

God is inviting you to lay down the exhausting burden of pretence and step into the refreshing reality of authenticity. **He's not asking you to be perfect, He's asking you to be real.**

Your scars can become your testimony. Your struggles can become your strength. Your authenticity can become your authority.

The mask is heavy, friend. But you don't have to carry it anymore.

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The world is waiting for the real you to show up. And when you do, you'll discover that the person you've been hiding is exactly the person the world needs to see.

Your Declaration of Authenticity

Before we close this chapter, I want you to speak these words with conviction:

"I choose authenticity over approval. I choose being real over being perfect. I refuse to exhaust myself trying to be someone I'm not. God made me unique for a reason, and I will no longer apologize for being different. I am taking off the mask and stepping into the freedom of being genuinely me."

Reflection and Next Steps

Questions for Reflection:

1. What masks have you been wearing to gain acceptance or approval?
2. What aspects of your authentic self have you been hiding out of fear?
3. Who in your life has given you the freedom to be real, and how did that impact you?
4. What would change in your life if you stopped trying to impress people and started focusing on impacting them?

This Week's Challenge:

Choose one area where you've been wearing a mask and practice small authenticity. Share one real struggle with a trusted friend.

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Post one unfiltered photo. Have one honest conversation. Let someone see the real you.

Prayer: "Father, I'm tired of pretending. I'm exhausted from wearing masks that were never meant for me. Give me the courage to be authentic, the wisdom to know when to be vulnerable, and the confidence to believe that You love the real me. Help me to see my uniqueness as a gift, not a flaw. Show me how to use my authentic self to impact others for Your glory. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Remember: You were not created to be a copy of someone else's success. You were created to be an original expression of God's creativity.

The mask is heavy, but authenticity is light. The pretence is exhausting, but the truth is energizing.

It's time to take off the mask and let the world see the masterpiece God created you to be.

In the next chapter, we'll identify the specific "identity thieves" that have been writing your story and learn how to take back the pen.

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Chapter 3: Identity Thieves:

Who's Been Writing Your Story?

“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” – Proverbs 4:23

Who Holds the Pen?

Imagine your life as a book. Each day, a new page is written. The question is: Who is holding the pen?

Is it God, the Author of life? Or is it the noise of society, the voices of friends, the sting of past trauma, or the weight of negative thoughts?

For many people, their story has been co-written by thieves. Identity thieves don't always break into your house to steal

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valuables. They whisper into your mind, attach themselves to your...

When you let the wrong voices hold the pen, your true story remains unwritten.

The Silent Robbery in Progress

Imagine waking up one morning to discover that someone has been living in your house for months, eating your food, wearing your clothes, sleeping in your bed and you never even noticed. Sounds impossible, right?

Yet something far more sinister happens to millions of people every day. **Identity thieves move into their minds, steal their sense of self, and rewrite their stories all while they remain completely unaware of the robbery taking place.**

These aren't the kind of identity thieves that steal credit card numbers or social security information. **These are the thieves that steal something far more valuable: your understanding of who you really are.**

The question isn't whether you have identity thieves in your life. **The question is: How long have they been writing your story?**

The Noise That Drowns Out Truth

In our hyperconnected, always-on world, noise has become the greatest thief of identity. Not the kind of noise that hurts your

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ears, but the kind that drowns out the voice of truth about who you really are.

This noise comes in many forms:

- The constant comparison trap of social media
- The destructive whispers of negative thinking
- The emotional roller coaster that never seems to stop
- The pressure from friends who don't understand your calling
- The weight of past traumas that echo in the present
- The shame of sins that you thought were forgotten
- Fear of the future

Each of these creates static that makes it harder to hear God's voice about your true identity.

But here's what you need to understand: **You have more power over these thieves than you think. The pen of your story can be taken back.**

Let's look at some of these closely.

Thief #1: Negative Thinking

"As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." Proverbs 23:7

Your mind is like a transmission line carrying power from the spiritual realm to your physical reality. **What you think about consistently becomes what you bring about eventually.**

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Here's a truth that will revolutionize your life: **You will never rise beyond the quality of your thoughts.**

If you think wrong, you will believe wrong, and your life will follow.

The enemy knows this. That's why his first target is always your mind. **If he can control your thinking, he can control your reality.**

Consider the twelve spies who scouted the Promised Land in Numbers 13. Ten of them came back with a negative report:

“We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” Numbers 13:31

Two came back with faith:

“We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.” Numbers 13:30

Same land. Same obstacles. Different thinking. Completely different outcomes.

The ten spies thought like victims and lived like victims. Joshua and Caleb thought like victors and lived like victors.

Your thoughts don't just describe your reality, they create it.

The Magnet of Your Mind

Here's a principle that might shock you: **Any thought that becomes dominant in your mind turns you into a magnet. You will attract the material equivalent of that thing.**

If you constantly think:

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- “I’m not good enough.” You’ll attract experiences that reinforce inadequacy
- “I always mess up relationships.” You’ll attract relational chaos
- “I’ll never have enough money.” You’ll attract financial struggle
- “God doesn’t really love me.” You’ll attract circumstances that feel like rejection

But when you align your thoughts with God’s thoughts about you:

- **“I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”** You attract opportunities to shine
- **“I can do all things through Christ.”** You attract possibilities that seemed impossible
- **“God works all things together for my good.”** You attract divine connections and breakthrough moments

This is why Paul commanded us:

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Romans 12:2

Reprogramming Your Mental Software

Philippians 4:8 gives us the ultimate software upgrade for our minds:

“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is

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lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things.”

Notice the precision of this instruction:

- If you don't think about what is true, you'll attract the false
- If you don't think about what is pure, you'll attract the corrupt
- If you don't think about what is lovely, you'll attract the ugly
- If you don't think about what has virtue, you'll attract the flawed

This isn't positive thinking, this is God-aligned thinking. There's a difference.

Thief #2: Emotions Out of Control

Your emotions are like apps on your phone, powerful tools that can enhance your life or completely drain your battery if left unchecked.

The problem isn't having emotions; the problem is letting emotions have you.

“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.” Proverbs 4:23

Your heart - your emotional centre - is the wellspring of your life. **When it's contaminated with lies about your identity, everything downstream gets poisoned.**

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There are generally two types of people when it comes to emotions:

1. **The Emotional Desert:** Those who've shut down emotionally to avoid pain
2. **The Emotional Hurricane:** Those who are tossed around by every feeling

Neither extreme leads to healthy identity formation.

Keep These Handy Rules to Maintain Emotional Intelligence

Rule #1: Never Make Major Decisions Based on Emotions Alone

Emotions are meant to inform you, not control you.

“There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.” Proverbs 14:12

Rule #2: Guard the Gates of Your Heart

Be careful what you allow into your emotional space. The music you listen to, the shows you watch, the conversations you have, they all shape how you feel about yourself.

Rule #3: Let the Spirit Control Your Mind, Not Your Flesh

“The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.” Romans 8:6

When the Holy Spirit controls your mind, your emotions follow suit.

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Rule #4: Stop Blaming Others for Your Emotional State

“They made me feel bad” is actually “I let them affect how I feel.”

Your happiness is not someone else’s job description. Your peace is not dependent on other people’s actions.

When you give others the power to determine your emotional state, you lock yourself in a prison and hand them the key.

Thief #3: Social Media & Comparison

In our social media-saturated world, comparison has become the silent assassin of identity. We trade authenticity for filters.

Instagram & TikTok show you everyone else’s highlight reel while you’re living your behind-the-scenes reality. LinkedIn makes everyone else’s career look perfect while you’re struggling with Monday morning blues. Facebook makes everyone else’s relationships look flawless while you’re working through real issues.

Comparison is identity theft in action. It steals your contentment, your confidence, and your clarity about God’s unique plan for your life.

Here’s the truth: You were never meant to be someone else’s duplicate. You were meant to be God’s original. Originals shine; copies fade.

Thief #4: Toxic Friendships and Peer Pressure

“Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.” (Proverbs 13:20)

Peer pressure is one of the oldest identity thieves.

The people closest to you are either identity builders or identity destroyers. There’s rarely a neutral middle ground.

Some friends will say:

- “Do this so you’ll be like everyone else.”
- “Dress this way so you’ll fit in.”
- “Why are you being so different? Just be normal.”

But real friends will say:

- “Be yourself, that’s why we love you.”
- “Don’t change to fit in; the right people will appreciate who you are.”
- “Your uniqueness is your strength, not your weakness.”

When your identity is constantly questioned by those around you, your ability to fulfil your purpose gets questioned too.

“Until you discover who you are, it makes sense to continue being another person’s copy.”

The problem with peer pressure isn’t just that it makes you do things you don’t want to do, **it makes you forget who God created you to be.** Choose mentors who shape you by

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principles, not by personality. True leadership doesn't clone, it cultivates.

Thief #5: Sin, Guilt, Past Traumas, and Present Fears

Sometimes the loudest thief of identity isn't external, it's internal voices echoing in present moments.

Sin whispers: You're too dirty for God to use.

Guilt says: Remember your mistakes; they define you.

Trauma whispers lies like:

- "You're damaged goods."
- "You'll never be whole again."
- "God can't use broken people."
- "Your past disqualifies you from your future."

Fear adds its own distortions:

- "You'll probably fail."
- "Others are better suited for this."
- "Stay small and stay safe."

Many believers live forgiven but not free. They carry the weight of shame even though Jesus carried it to the cross. This robs them of their identity as beloved sons and daughters.

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But God specializes in using cracked vessels to carry His light. Your scars don't disqualify you, they often become the very thing that qualifies you to help others.

*Your past may explain you, but it doesn't define you.
Christ does.*

The Prodigal Son: A Story of Stolen and Restored Identity

Let me tell you about a famous case of identity theft in the Bible, not because someone stole it, but because someone gave it away.

In Luke 15, Jesus tells the story of a young man who decided that being his father's son wasn't enough. He wanted his inheritance now, his freedom now, his identity defined by what he could do rather than whose he was.

He traded his identity as “beloved son” for the temporary thrill of being “independent rebel.”

The result? He ended up feeding pigs about as far from his true identity as a Jewish young man could get. But here's where the story gets beautiful:

*“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father.’”
(Luke 15:17-18 NIV)*

Notice the phrase: **“When he came to his senses.”** Identity restoration begins when we stop listening to the lies and start remembering the truth.

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When he returned home, his father didn't say, "You used to be my son." He said:

"This son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" (Luke 15:24 NIV)

Your identity isn't based on your performance, it's based on your position as God's beloved child.

No matter how far you've wandered, no matter what mistakes you've made, no matter which identity thieves have been writing your story, your Father is watching for your return.

Taking Back Your Story

Here's how to evict the identity thieves and reclaim your narrative:

1. Identify the Thieves

What voices have been louder than God's voice in defining who you are? Name them. Write them down. Expose them to the light.

2. Replace the Lies with Truth

For every lie an identity thief has told you, find a corresponding truth in God's Word. Write it down. Speak it out loud. Meditate on it until it becomes louder than the lie.

3. Guard the Gates

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Be intentional about what you allow into your mind and heart. *Philippians 4:8 isn't a suggestion; it's a prescription for mental and emotional health.*

4. Surround Yourself with Truth-Speakers

Find people who see you the way God sees you and remind you of your true identity when the thieves get loud.

5. Practice Identity Declarations

Regularly declare who you are in Christ. Don't wait until you feel it; start speaking it and let your feelings catch up to your faith.

Your Identity is Not Up for Negotiation

Here's what I want you to remember: Your identity in Christ is not a democracy where everyone gets a vote. It's a monarchy where God alone has the final say.

People's opinions about you are just that - opinions. But God's opinion about you is true, and it never changes.

You are chosen (1 Peter 2:9). You are loved with an everlasting love (Jeremiah 31:3). You are more than a conqueror (Romans 8:37). You are His masterpiece (Ephesians 2:10).

These aren't just nice Bible verses, they're your identity credentials. They're non-negotiable truths about who you are.

The Moment Everything Changes

There comes a moment in every person's life when they have to decide: **Am I going to let others write my story, or am I going to take back the pen?**

That moment might be right now as you're reading this chapter.

The identity thieves have had their turn. Now it's time for the Author of your story to have His.

Your Declaration of Independence from Identity Thieves

Stand up (seriously, stand up right now) and declare:

"I am taking back my story. I refuse to let negative thinking, toxic emotions, false comparisons, unhealthy relationships, past traumas, or present fears define who I am. I am who God says I am. I can do what God says I can do. I will have what God says I can have. The identity thieves are evicted, and the truth is moving in."

Reflection and Next Steps

Questions for Deep Reflection:

1. Which identity thief has been the loudest voice in your life?
2. What lies about yourself have you been believing that contradict God's Word?
3. Who in your life consistently affirms your God-given identity versus who consistently undermines it?

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4. What would you attempt if you truly believed you are who God says you are?

This Week's Identity Recovery Plan:

- Day 1–2: Identify and write down the specific lies you've been believing about yourself.
- Day 3–4: Find Bible verses that directly contradict each lie and write them on cards.
- Day 5–6: Begin each day by reading your identity cards and declaring truth over your life.
- Day 7: Share your identity breakthrough with someone who will celebrate and affirm it.

Prayer for Identity Restoration

“Father, I confess that I’ve let voices other than Yours define who I am. I’ve given identity thieves access to my mind and heart, and I’m ready to evict them. Help me to see myself as You see me. Let Your voice become the loudest voice in my life. Restore my sense of identity as Your beloved child. Give me the courage to live from who You say I am, not from who others say I am. In Jesus’ powerful name, Amen.”

Remember: You were not created to be a rough draft of someone else’s story. You were created to be the masterpiece of your own unique narrative, written by the hand of God.

The thieves have been exposed. The lies have been identified. Now it’s time to step into the truth of who you really are.

No Filter: Discover Who You Really Are Beyond the Noise

In the next chapter, we'll begin the beautiful journey of rediscovering God's original blueprint for your life, the person you were created to be before the world told you who you should be.

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Chapter 4

The Blueprint of Your Design:

Rediscovering Who You Were Made to Be

“Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” Jeremiah 1:5

Built From a Blueprint

Every masterpiece begins with a plan. Architects don’t start with bricks; they start with a blueprint. Car designers don’t begin on the factory floor; they begin with a prototype. If the plan is wrong, the build will be wrong, no matter how expensive the materials.

Your life also has a blueprint.

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You were not mass-produced, guessed into existence, or rushed onto the earth. Before anyone knew your name, God knew you before a teacher graded your work, before a boss reviewed your performance, before social media measured your “likes,” a loving Father designed your life with intention, compassion, and purpose.

You are not an accident on earth; you are an assignment from heaven.

The Master Architect’s Masterpiece

Picture this: You’re walking through a construction site and you see workers frantically trying to build without blueprints. One worker is laying bricks randomly. Another is installing windows wherever they feel like it. A third is putting up walls that don’t connect to anything. The result? Chaos, confusion, and a structure that will never stand.

This is exactly what happens when we try to build our lives without understanding God’s original blueprint for who we are.

For three chapters, we’ve been talking about the noise, the masks, and the thieves that have been writing your story. But now it’s time to discover the truth: **Before the world told you who you should be, God already knew who you were meant to be.**

You are not an accident. You are not a mistake. You are not a random collection of cells that happened to come together. **You are a masterpiece, intentionally crafted by the Master Architect of the universe.**

The Blueprint of Your Design

Listen to God's voice to Jeremiah:

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.” Jeremiah 1:5

Before you were formed, before personality tests, school reports, victories, or failures, God knew you. He didn't simply know about you; He knew you, set you apart, and appointed you for a purpose. This means identity is not discovered by staring at culture; it is received by listening to the Creator.

Paul echoes this truth:

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

“Those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son.” (Romans 8:29)

“We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.” (Ephesians 2:10)

God didn't improvise your life; He authored it.

The Question That Defines Everything

Let me ask you one of the most important questions you'll ever answer: **Who are you?**

Are you what you do? A teacher, a doctor, a student?

Are you what you've achieved? An honour student, an MVP, a winner?

Are you defined by the things you've done right?

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Or are you defined by the things you've done wrong?

Are you a saint? A sinner?

Are you what others think of you?

Are you some of these things, or all of these things?

Here's a truth that will revolutionize your life: **How you identify yourself determines how you approach everything.**

- If you believe you are what you do, you'll always need to do more and achieve more to feel valuable.
- If you believe you are what others say, you'll spend your life trying to please people instead of your heavenly Father.
- But if you listen to who God says you are, you'll find the freedom to live out everything He has planned for you.

What God Says About You

Before we go any further, let me tell you what the Creator of the universe says about you:

God calls you His child (1 John 3:1)

He says you are wise and restored (Colossians 2:3)

You are a brand new creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17)

*You are chosen, holy, and blameless before God
(Ephesians 1:4)*

He calls you His masterpiece (Ephesians 2:10)

You are loved unconditionally by God (Romans 8:38-39)

The Blueprint of Your Design

This is not wishful thinking. This is not positive self-talk. This is the unchanging truth of who you are in Christ.

The New Creation Reality

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

When the Bible says you are a “new creation,” it’s not talking about a minor improvement or a personality upgrade. It’s talking about a complete spiritual transformation; you’ve become an entirely new species with God’s own nature.

You may look the same on the outside, but you are not the same on the inside. **You have to believe it, accept it, declare it, and live from that truth.**

The Radical Claim

Jesus made a statement that was so radical, so shocking, that people wanted to stone Him for it:

“I and the Father are one.” John 10:30 NIV

The religious leaders thought He was crazy. They couldn’t fathom how this carpenter’s son could claim to be equal to God. But then Jesus said something that should blow your mind:

“Is it not written in your Law, ‘I have said you are “gods”?’” John 10:34 (quoting Psalm 82:6)

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In other words, Jesus was saying: If your Father is God, then you carry His nature. You can't be a child of God and have a nature that is less than divine.

Now, before you think I'm promoting some New Age philosophy, let me be clear: **We are not God, but we are His children, and children bear the nature of their Father.**

When you have nothing in your pocket and you declare, "*I am blessed,*" the world thinks you're crazy.

When you're feeling weak and you say, "*I am strong,*" people think you've lost your mind.

But you're simply calling things that be not as though they were (Romans 4:17), just like your heavenly Father does.

Confession isn't creating fantasy; it is agreeing with God's reality.

The Prototype Principle

"For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters." Romans 8:29

NIV

In manufacturing, there's something called a prototype, the first model that shows what all the others should look like. Jesus is God's prototype for humanity. He's the picture of what we're all being shaped to become.

The Blueprint of Your Design

When you watch baby chicks, they all look like their mother. When God looks at His children, His goal is that we all begin to look like Jesus.

Your destiny is not just to be saved; your destiny is to be like Him.

“As he is, so are we in this world.” 1 John 4:17 (NKJV)

The Relationship Dynamic

Let me give you an illustration that will change how you see your relationship with God.

Before a woman gets married, she has multiple options. She might go on dates, have many friends, and keep her options open. But when she says “I do,” everything changes. That relationship becomes paramount. It requires commitment, loyalty, and exclusive devotion.

God has given you His all - His love, His Son, His Spirit, His promises, His future. The question is: *Are you willing to give Him your all in return?*

He’s not asking for perfection, He’s asking for commitment. He’s not demanding sinlessness, He’s requesting surrender.

The Gold in the Broken Pieces

Maybe you’re thinking, *“But you don’t know my story. You don’t know what I’ve done, where I’ve been, how broken I am.”*

Let me tell you about a man named Jacob, a deceiver, a manipulator, a man who cheated his own brother. By any worldly

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standard, Jacob was damaged goods. But God didn't give up on him because He saw what Jacob could become, not just what he had been.

God changed his name from Jacob (deceiver) to Israel (prince with God). In every Jacob, there's an Israel waiting to emerge.

In every Saul (the murderer), there's a Paul (the apostle) ready to be revealed.

In every Simon (the unstable), there's a Peter (the rock) waiting to be established.

Jesus told Simon:

“You are Simon, but you will be Peter.”

It's not about who you are now; it's about who you can become.

No matter where you are, no matter what you've done, it has not changed your spiritual DNA. *Your DNA is in God.*

Your Identity as Salt

Jesus made an incredible statement about your identity:

“You are the salt of the earth.” Matthew 5:13

Think about salt for a moment:

- **Salt preserves;** You bring preservation to your environment.
- **Salt enhances flavour;** You make life better for those around you.

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- **Salt is valuable.** In ancient times, salt was so precious that soldiers were paid with it.
- **Salt is essential.** Without salt, food is bland and life is unsustainable.

When Jesus called you salt, He was saying: *You are not a burden, you are a blessing. You are not a problem; you are a solution. You are not worthless, you are invaluable.*

Most medications have a salt base. **The world needs you to bring healing.**

Food without salt is tasteless. **The world needs you to bring flavour.**

Bodies without salt cannot survive. **The world needs you to bring life.**

This should rule your thinking: *“I’m not a burden, I’m a blessing.”*

The Value-Addition Mentality

When you truly understand your identity as salt, you develop a value-addition mentality. You arrive at any place looking for what you can add, not what you can take. You’re driven by what you can give, not what you can get.

You become solution-oriented, not problem-focused.

The Spiritual and Personal Connection

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Now let me answer another crucial question: *What's the relationship between your spiritual identity and your personal identity?*

Your spiritual identity is who you are in Christ: chosen, loved, forgiven, and empowered.

Your personal identity is how you live that out: your personality, gifts, calling, and purpose.

Your spiritual identity is the foundation; your personal identity is the expression.

Think of it like this: Your spiritual identity is like the foundation of a house, solid, unchanging, permanent. Your personal identity is like the rooms in the house, unique, functional, and designed for specific purposes.

Without the foundation, the house collapses. Without the rooms, the house has no function.

What It Means to Have an Identity Rooted in Christ, and Why It Matters

To have an identity rooted in Christ means you anchor your value and truth in who Jesus is and what Jesus has done, not in what you do or what others say.

1. **Your worth is not negotiable.**

It's not based on performance, approval, or achievement.
It's based on God's love, which is unchanging.

2. **Your value is not variable.**

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It doesn't go up and down with your successes and failures. It's constant because it's rooted in Christ's finished work.

3. **Your purpose is not random.**

It's not an accident waiting to be discovered. It's an assignment waiting to be accepted.

4. **Your future is not uncertain.**

It's not dependent on circumstances. It's secured in God's promises.

Why This Matters

An identity rooted in Christ is important because:

- It gives you unshakeable confidence. When you know whose you are, you know what you're capable of.
- It protects you from identity theft. When your identity is anchored in truth, lies lose their power.
- It empowers authentic living. When you're secure in who you are, you don't need to pretend to be someone else.
- It unleashes your unique purpose. When you understand how God made you, you can fulfill why He made you.

The Permission to Shine

Here's something that will set you free: *No one should make you feel inferior without your permission.*

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There is certainly something God sees in you that you're not seeing in yourself. You need to start seeing yourself through His eyes.

Eleanor Roosevelt said it perfectly:

“No one can make you feel inferior without your consent.”

Don't give that consent.

Your Blueprint Declaration

Stand up and declare these truths over your life:

“I am not an accident, I am an assignment. I am not random, I am rare. I am not ordinary, I am original. I am not what I've done, I am who God says I am. I am not my past, I am His future. I am chosen, loved, equipped, and empowered. I am the salt of the earth, and the world needs what God has placed in me.”

Living From Your Blueprint

Now that you know who you are, how do you live from this truth?

1. **Start your day with identity, not activity.**

Before you check your phone, remind yourself whose you are.

2. **Make decisions from your worth, not for your worth.**

You don't need to prove you're valuable; you need to live like you're valuable.

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3. **Speak your identity, don't just think it.**

“Let the weak say, ‘I am strong.’” Joel 3:10

Your confession creates your reality.

4. **Serve from overflow, not emptiness.**

When you're filled with the knowledge of who you are, you give from abundance, not from need.

The Time to Shine

This is your time to come up higher and shine like gold. Your past does not disqualify your future. Your mistakes do not define your destiny. Your brokenness does not diminish your blueprint.

God is ready to work with your broken pieces and put them together into something beautiful. He specializes in turning messes into messages and pain into purpose.

Reflection and Next Steps

Questions for Reflection:

1. How has understanding your spiritual identity changed how you see your personal identity?
2. What lies about your worth do you need to replace with God's truth?
3. How would your daily decisions change if you truly believed you are God's masterpiece?

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4. In what ways can you be “salt” in your current environment?

This Week’s Challenge:

Every morning, before you get dressed for the world, “*dress yourself*” in your true identity. Speak the truths about who you are in Christ. **Let your identity inform your activity, not the other way around.**

Prayer: *“Father, thank You for having a blueprint for my life before I was even born. Help me to see myself the way You see me. Give me the courage to live from my identity in Christ, not from the world’s standards. Show me how to be salt and light in my generation. Let Your nature in me shine brighter than any darkness around me. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

Remember: You are not a rough draft, you are a finished masterpiece. You are not a work in progress; you are a completed creation, being revealed one day at a time.

The blueprint is not a suggestion, it’s a declaration. *You are who God says you are.*

In the next chapter, we’ll learn how to see yourself through God’s eyes and silence the critical voices that have been distorting your view of yourself.

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Chapter 5: Mirror Check:

Seeing Yourself Through God's Eyes

“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.”

Psalm 119:105 NIV

The Mirror That Changed Everything

On an early winter morning, I began getting ready for work and tried to see myself in the mirror when the Holy Spirit dropped a profound truth into my spirit that would change how I see identity forever.

“The way you see yourself is determined by two things: what mirror you use and how much light is in the room.”

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Think about it. If you're in a room without light, you won't see anything clearly, no matter how good the mirror is. And if there's plenty of light but the mirror is cracked or distorted, you'll still get a warped image of yourself.

Most people are using broken mirrors in dark rooms and wondering why they can't see themselves clearly.

The Two Essential Elements

Let me break down the mirror principle that changed my perspective:

Element #1: The Light in the Room (What Illuminates You).

If the room is dark, a perfect mirror still won't help. Light speaks of revelation-knowledge, wisdom, godly influence. Light represents the knowledge and truth you have access to.

Your network influences your light. The people you surround yourself with either add illumination to your life or keep you in darkness. I was talking with a friend recently, and that 30-minute conversation unlocked new projects I hadn't even considered. **Your network doesn't define who you are, but it influences who you become. Choose a company that clarifies, not a company that confuses.**

God's Word is the ultimate light source.

“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.”

Psalm 119:105

Mirror Check

The Bible doesn't just give you light; it gives you the right kind of light that never dims or misleads.

Element #2: The Mirror You Use (What Reflects You Back to You).

The mirror you choose determines what image you see of yourself.

Some people use the mirror of comments (“**What do they think of me?**”). Unfortunately, people tend to give you feedback based on their feelings, their limited perspective, and their own insecurities. Trusting people to define you is always wrong; they can only define you based on how you define yourself.

Some people use the mirror of their environment. They look around at their circumstances and conclude, “**This is who I am.**” But here's the truth: Your identity is self-made, but your environment gives it expression.

I had a modest upbringing in a neighbourhood where some of my childhood friends became bus attendants, others became thieves, and some of the young women became prostitutes. If I had used the mirror of my environment, I would have been lost to those same destructive paths.

But my parents were indeed wise. They constantly reminded us that although we lived in that location, we were not destined to stay there. **They introduced us to the most important mirror of all: God's Word, the Perfect Mirror.**

Other Mirrors People Commonly Use (and Why They Fail)

- **The Mirror of Public Opinion:** It changes daily. You'll end up shape-shifting to please crowds.

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- **The Mirror of Past Mistakes:** It freezes you in an old frame God has already forgiven (*Romans 8:1*)
- **The Mirror of Emotion:** Feelings are real, but they aren't rulers. Emotions should be gauges, not guides.
- **The Mirror of Achievement:** When you "win," you feel worthy; when you "lose," you feel lost. That's a rollercoaster.

The Mirror of the Word:

Stable. True. Redemptive. It names you beloved.

Jeremiah 31:3

...new creation.

2 Corinthians 5:17

...co-heir.

Romans 8:16–17

...God's workmanship.

Ephesians 2:10

Capture this also: God's Word is **both a mirror and light**. It's **flawless, unchanging, and always shows you the truth about who you are**.

When James talks about looking into God's Word, he says:

"Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and,

Mirror Check

after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.” James 1:23-24

The tragedy is not that people don't look in God's mirror, it's that they look and then immediately forget what they see.

Jesus & Peter: Revelation of Christ, Revelation of Self

Something powerful happened in Matthew 16 that illustrates another principle perfectly.

Jesus asked His disciples:

“Who do people say the Son of Man is?” Matthew 16:13

They gave Him various answers, John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.

Then Jesus made it personal:

“But what about you? Who do you say I am?”

Matthew 16:15

Peter answered:

“You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Matthew 16:16

And here's where it gets interesting. Jesus replied:

“Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church.” Matthew 16:17-18

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The moment Peter got a revelation of who Jesus was, he received a revelation of who he was.

Prior to this, he thought he was just Simon, unstable, shaking like a reed in the wind. But when he saw Jesus clearly, Jesus revealed his true identity: Peter, the rock.

Here's the principle: To have a full revelation of who you are, you need a revelation of who Jesus is. When you truly know who He is, you'll truly know who you are.

Mirror Check: Your True Identity

Mirror Check #1: Union with Christ

The New Testament constantly uses phrases like “**in Christ,**” “**with Christ,**” and “**through Christ.**” This is your core identity: you are in Him and He is in you. *John 15:4–5; Colossians 1:27*

- **When He died, you were included.** *Romans 6:6*
- **When He rose, you were raised with Him.** *Ephesians 2:6*
- **What He secured, He shares.** *Romans 8:32*

NB: *You don't fight for acceptance; you fight from acceptance.*

Mirror Check #2: Co-Heirs, Not Co-Beggars

“The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs, heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ...” Romans 8:16-17

Mirror Check

Co-heirs speak differently. They pray with confidence, steward opportunities wisely, and expect God to be faithful. This is not arrogance; it is agreement with adoption.

Mirror Check #3: Bride Beloved

Paul writes of a betrothal to Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:2

You are not tolerated; you are treasured. The cross is proof:

“He who did not spare His own Son... how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?”

Romans 8:32

NB: *If the cross didn't hold back His love, your need won't either.*

Moving From Average to Extraordinary

Don't accept an average, routine life as normal. It's never God's intention for you to live below your potential.

Think of your spiritual life like a phone battery. Most people operate at 50%, just enough to get by, constantly worried about running out of power. But God wants you to live with a full charge, operating from overflow, not from emptiness.

With God, the call is always **“come up higher.”** Living with full bars spiritually and physically means learning to let your spiritual life dominate your natural circumstances.

The Gear Shift Principle

Accessing your full potential is like driving a manual transmission car. You start in first gear, but you don't stay there. **You shift through the gears until you reach your highest capacity.**

Before a plane takes off, it starts with slow movement on the runway. But then, ZOOM! **It breaks free from the limitations of the ground and soars.**

Here's something important: **God tends to make His supernatural abilities work through your natural gifts and talents.** The more you develop your natural abilities, the easier it is for Him to work through you.

I don't know how to swim, and I have no experience with fishing. Although nothing is impossible with God, **He typically chooses to work through the gifts and talents He's already placed in you.**

The Victory Principle

It's impossible to defeat the enemy until you know who you are in Christ.

The Bible puts it this way: You are in Christ, and He is in you. When He died, you died. When He rose, you rose. Everything Jesus accomplished is credited to your account because of your faith in Him, not because of your works.

This means you don't fight for victory; you fight from victory.

Mirror Check

The Light and Mirror Inventory

Let me ask you some honest questions:

About Your Light (Sources of Truth):

- What voices do you listen to most?
- Are your friends adding light to your life or keeping you in darkness?
- How much time do you spend in God's Word compared to social media?
- What books are you reading that expand your understanding?

About Your Mirror (Source of Identity):

- Where do you go to find out who you are?
- Do you look to people's opinions or God's Word?
- Are you more influenced by your circumstances or your calling?
- Do you see yourself through past failures or future promises?

Practical Steps for a Daily Mirror Check

1. Start Your Day with God's Mirror

Before you check your phone or social media, spend time in God's Word. Let His voice be the first voice you hear about who you are.

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2. **Speak Your Identity Out Loud**

“Let the weak say, ‘I am strong!’” *Joel 3:10*

Your confession creates your reality. Speak what God says about you, not what you feel about yourself.

3. **Choose Your Network Carefully**

Surround yourself with people who see your potential, not just your problems. Your network doesn't determine your destiny, but it influences your direction.

4. **Replace Broken Mirrors**

Stop looking to social media for validation. Stop asking broken people to fix your self-image. Use the mirror that never lies - God's Word.

5. **Remember the Revelation Connection**

The clearer your revelation of Jesus becomes, the clearer your revelation of yourself becomes. Study Him to understand yourself.

Your Daily Declaration

Every morning, look in God's mirror and declare:

“I am who God says I am. I am chosen, loved, equipped, and empowered. I am not defined by my circumstances but by my calling. I am not limited by my past but launched by my potential. I am a co-creator, co-heir, and co-labourer with Christ. I see myself through God's eyes, and what I see is good.”

Mirror Check

The Mirror That Never Lies

In a world of filters, photo editing, and fake presentations, you need a mirror that always tells the truth. **God's Word is that mirror.**

It doesn't flatter you with lies or crush you with condemnation. **It shows you exactly who you are and who you're becoming.**

When you look into this mirror consistently, something amazing happens: **You start seeing yourself the way God sees you, and that changes everything.**

Your posture changes. Your conversations change. Your decisions change. Your expectations change. **Your whole life changes because your self-image has been corrected.**

The Choice is Yours

You have a choice to make every single day: **Which mirror will you use?**

Will you use the cracked mirror of public opinion?

Will you use the distorted mirror of past failures?

Will you use the dim mirror of current circumstances?

Or will you use the perfect mirror of God's Word that shows you exactly who you are and who you're becoming?

The choice is yours, but the consequences of that choice will determine the quality of your life.

Reflection and Next Steps

Questions for Reflection:

1. What mirrors have you been using to see yourself, and how have they affected your self-image?
2. How much light (truth and knowledge) are you allowing into your life daily?
3. What would change if you truly saw yourself as God sees you?
4. Who in your network adds light to your life, and who keeps you in darkness?

This Week's Challenge

Start each day with a **mirror check** using God's Word. Find three verses that describe who you are in Christ and speak them over yourself before you leave the house. Let God's mirror be the first and last one you look into each day.

Prayer

Father, I thank You for providing the perfect mirror in Your Word. Help me to see myself the way You see me. Give me the wisdom to choose the right sources of light and truth in my life. Surround me with people who reflect Your love and truth back to me. Help me to remember what I see when I look into Your Word, and give me the courage to live from that identity. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Mirror Check

Remember: You are not what the broken mirrors show you. You are not what the darkness suggests. You are exactly who God's perfect mirror reveals you to be.

The mirror check is complete. Now live from what you see.

In the next chapter, we'll learn how to remove the false labels that have been placed on you and step into the true names God has given you.

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Chapter 6: Labels Off

Breaking Free from False Names and Old Narratives

The Mirror That Lies

History is filled with moments where a single word spoken or written, had the power to shape destiny. One of the most circulated stories about Thomas Edison tells of a young boy once sent home from school with a sealed note. According to the account, his teacher had branded him “**too slow to learn.**” His mother, however, read the note aloud in a way that lifted her son instead of crushing him. While some historians debate the exact details of this story, what remains undeniable is the principle it carries: labels can limit, but vision can liberate.

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That boy was Thomas Edison. The same Thomas Edison who would later illuminate the world with over 1,000 patents, including the light bulb that brightened humanity's nights. His mother pulled him from that school, refusing to let a teacher's label become her son's identity. She saw not what the world called "*slow*" but what God had planted: brilliance waiting to bloom.

When the Sticker Won't Come Off

Have you ever bought something beautiful, only to find a stubborn sticker stuck to it? You try to peel it off, but it leaves residue. You scrape, rinse, rub, and still, a faint outline remains. That's what false labels can do to a life. Words someone spoke over you at thirteen. A comment thread that went viral for the wrong reasons. A mistake that earned you a nickname. Over time, those stickers can feel permanent.

But labels don't have to be your legacy. **God's hand is stronger than any sticker.**

What people stick on you can't compete with what God has spoken over you.

Here's the truth that will revolutionize your life: The labels others stick on you don't have to stick to you.

Every single day, you stand before two mirrors. One reflects what the world says about you, the failures, the limitations, the "*not-good-enoughs*." The other reflects what God says about you: masterpiece, overcomer, more than a conqueror. The mirror you choose to believe in becomes the life you choose to live.

Labels Off

Scripture is full of people who wore the wrong labels until God renamed them:

- **Abram** → **Abraham** (Genesis 17): from *“exalted father”* to *“father of many.”*
- **Sarai** → **Sarah**: from a narrow identity to a royal one.
- **Jacob** → **Israel** (Genesis 32): from *“deceiver”* to *“one who wrestles with God”* and overcomes.
- **Simon** → **Peter** (John 1:42): from *“unstable reed”* to *“rock.”*

And over you, God speaks a name stronger than any label:

“You are God’s masterpiece.” (Ephesians 2:10)

“You are a chosen people... God’s special possession.” (1 Peter 2:9)

“There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1)

The Self-Portrait Principle

Your self-portrait determines your self-conduct. How you see yourself determines how you carry yourself, which ultimately influences how others treat you. You literally teach people how to treat you by how you treat yourself.

But here’s what’s happening in our generation: We’ve turned this principle upside down. Instead of directing the world on how to see us, we let the world decide who we become. We scroll through social media, absorbing everyone else’s highlight reel,

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then wonder why our behind-the-scenes feels inadequate. We look at what culture calls “*trending*,” then conduct ourselves to match those trends.

The problem? Trends end, and when they do, your identity gets lost with them.

Your culture tells you who you should be, but they have no idea who you are. They see your Thursday, not your Thursday-through-Sunday resurrection story. They see your current chapter, not your complete book.

In this digital age, we’ve added new complexities. Your online persona becomes another label, curated, filtered, desperately seeking validation through likes and shares. Cancel culture threatens to make one mistake your permanent identity. But God’s not in the business of cancellation; He’s in the business of transformation.

The Thoroughbred in Your Blood

Let me tell you about championship racehorses. When a colt is born from a line of Kentucky Derby winners, no one looks at its wobbly legs and tiny frame and says, “*This one’s worthless.*” Why? Because they understand bloodline. They understand DNA. They know that inside that fragile-looking creature flows the blood of champions.

You may not be the finest, you may not be the tallest, but in your bloodline, in your DNA, is God’s DNA, which signifies victory.

Labels Off

Scripture declares it boldly:

“So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them.” (Genesis 1:27)

You’re not carrying ordinary blood. You’re carrying royal blood. The DNA of the King of Kings flows through your spiritual veins.

Some people have stuck labels on you:

- *“Failure”*
- *“Not smart enough”*
- *“Too damaged”*
- *“Disadvantaged”*
- *“Will never amount to anything”*

But they’re reading the wrong birth certificate. If you’re a child of God, you’ve been adopted into a new family:

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”
(1 John 3:1)

If your Father is not a failure, then you’re not destined to be a failure. If your Father owns the cattle on a thousand hills, then lack is not your portion.

“For we are God’s masterpiece, his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:10)

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You're not a rough draft. You're not a work in progress that God abandoned halfway. You're a masterpiece, a work of art so valuable that heaven paid its highest price to redeem you.

Breaking the Sound of Silence

Nick Vujicic was born without arms or legs. The labels came fast and furious: *"Disabled."* *"Limited."* *"Burden."* By age eight, he contemplated suicide, believing the world's labels about his worth.

But then Nick discovered his true identity in Christ. Today, he's spoken to millions, written bestselling books, and inspired countless people to see beyond their limitations. When asked about his transformation, Nick says simply:

"I found out that God doesn't make mistakes."

No one can make you feel inferior without your acceptance.

People may say you don't have what it takes. Your response?

"I'm not ordinary; I'm extraordinary in Him."

They may call you weak. Your response?

***"When I am weak, then I am strong."* (2 Corinthians 12:10)**

They may say you're disadvantaged. Your response?

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
(Philippians 4:13)

The Price Tag God Refused to Put

Labels Off

You might feel worthless some days. But let me ask you this: If someone offered you £50,000 for one of your eyes, would you take it? Of course not. According to legal sources here in the UK, the average compensation for losing an arm in an accident is over £167,000. For both arms? Double that. A leg? Even more.

But here's the thing, that's just man's price tag on body parts. According to God, you're priceless. He looked at you and said:

“This one is worth My Son.”

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son.” (John 3:16)

The God who spoke galaxies into existence looked at you and said:

“You're worth the cross.”

The Digital Identity Crisis

In our Instagram-filtered world, we've created new ways to mislabel ourselves. We measure our worth in followers, our value in likes, our significance in shares. We craft online personas so perfect that we can't even live up to them ourselves.

Cancel culture has added another layer, one mistake, one wrong opinion, one bad day caught on camera, and suddenly that becomes your permanent label. The world says:

“You are your worst moment.”

But God says:

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“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Your mistake is not your identity.

Your failure is not your future.

Your past is not your potential.

The Race You Were Born to Win

Life began as a race for you, literally. Out of 200–300 million sperm, you won. You beat odds of 300 million to one just to exist. You’re not here by accident; you’re here by appointment.

You were born a winner. Don’t let the world convince you to live like a loser.

Yes, life is tough. But diamonds aren’t formed in comfortable conditions. They’re formed under pressure. Your struggles aren’t evidence that you’re failing; they’re evidence that you’re being refined.

Remember this: It’s only the sperm that face forward that eventually make it. If you’re going to fall, fall forward. Every setback is a setup for a comeback when you’re walking in your true identity.

What label do you need to peel off today? What false name have you been answering to? It’s time to stop letting your history dictate your destiny. It’s time to stop letting other people’s opinions become your reality.

Labels Off

God is in the business of giving new names, new identities, new futures.

The Truth About You

Here's what's true about you, regardless of what any label says:

- *You are chosen (1 Peter 2:9)*
- *You are loved (Jeremiah 31:3)*
- *You are forgiven (Ephesians 1:7)*
- *You are equipped (2 Timothy 3:17)*
- *You are victorious (1 Corinthians 15:57)*
- *You are enough (2 Corinthians 12:9)*

The world will try to name you, but only God can truly identify you.

Digital culture will try to define you by your worst moment, but God defines you by His best moment - the Cross. Society will try to limit you to your current circumstances, but God sees your divine potential.

You weren't created for average. You were created for awesome.

Stop asking the world for permission to be who God already called you to be. Stop waiting for approval from people who don't even know their own identity. Stop shrinking to fit into boxes that were never meant to contain you.

Time to Remove the Labels

Today is the day you start peeling off every false label. Every limitation someone spoke over you. Every failure you've worn like a name tag. Every mistake you've made becomes your identity.

Today, you look in the mirror and see what God sees: a masterpiece in progress, a champion in training, a world-changer in development.

Quick "Labels Off" Litany (Say It Aloud)

- *I am not what I've done; I am what Christ has done.*
- *I am not what I lack; I am filled with every spiritual blessing.*
- *I am not what they call me. I am what He calls me: beloved, chosen, sent.*
- *I am not my old story; I am God's new creation.*

Reflection and Response

Take a moment right now. Close your eyes. What labels have you been wearing that aren't from God? What names have you answered to that aren't on your heavenly birth certificate?

Prayer:

Father, I come to You carrying labels I was never meant to wear. I've let the world name me, define me, limit me. But today, I choose to believe what You say about me. I am Your masterpiece. I am Your beloved. I am who You

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say I am. Remove every false label. Heal every wound caused by wrong words. Help me to see myself through Your eyes and walk in my true identity. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Journal Prompt:

Write down three labels the world has given you on one side of a paper. On the other side, write what God says about you instead. Keep this as your declaration. When the old labels try to stick, declare your true identity.

Remember: You are not what happened to you. You are not what they said about you. You are who God says you are. And that's more than enough.

The labels are coming off. Your true identity is emerging. The world is about to meet the real you, the you that God always intended you to be.

Welcome to your true identity.

Welcome to freedom.

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Chapter 7

No Identity, No Purpose

Know Identity, Know Purpose

The Man Who Almost Missed His Moment

Picture a young man, cup-bearer to the most powerful ruler in the ancient world. For years, Nehemiah served wine in the Persian palace, living what many would call a successful life. Good position. Steady income. Royal access. Yet something stirred within him every time he heard news from Jerusalem, his homeland's walls lay in ruins, its people in disgrace.

One day, the king noticed his sadness.

“Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill?” the king asked.

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This was Nehemiah's moment, but here's the key: He could only step into his purpose because he knew his identity. He wasn't just a cup-bearer; he was a son of Israel, called to rebuild what was broken.

Within months, this "wine server" became a governor, an architect of restoration, a leader who rebuilt Jerusalem's walls in just 52 days against impossible odds. Nehemiah didn't find a new purpose, he discovered it was already written in his spiritual DNA.

Here's the truth that changes everything: **The purpose is built into the product. You weren't born to find your purpose, you were born with your purpose.**

The iPhone Principle

Imagine finding an iPhone on a deserted island, never having seen one before. At first, you might use it as a mirror, admiring your reflection in its black screen. Days later, you discover it lights up, now it's a flashlight! Weeks pass, and you realize it can take pictures. Months later, you find it can connect to satellites, access infinite information, and call for rescue.

Did the iPhone gain new purposes? No. Every capability was built in from day one. You simply discovered what was always there.

Until you discover who you are, it makes sense to continue as another person's copy.

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This is why so many people live frustrated lives. They're eagles trying to win swimming competitions. They're fish attempting to climb trees. They're smartphones being used as paperweights. When you don't know your identity, you can't access your purpose. When you don't access your purpose, you live below your potential.

Who You Are, Then What You Do

God's order is consistent: He names before He sends. He speaks about identity, then releases the assignment.

- ***“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I set you apart.” (Jeremiah 1:5)***
- ***“You are a chosen people... that you may declare the praises of Him.” (1 Peter 2:9)***
- ***“We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works.” (Ephesians 2:10)***
- ***“This is my beloved Son...” (Matthew 3:17)*** – At His baptism, the Father affirmed identity. Only after identity was declared did Jesus step publicly into mission (Luke 4).

God does not ask you to manufacture a purpose to earn an identity. He gives you an identity that births your purpose.

Joseph's Journey: When Identity Meets Destiny

(Genesis 37–50)

Let me tell you about Joseph, a case study in how knowing your identity empowers you to fulfill your purpose, even through hell and high water.

Joseph was the eleventh son of Jacob, born into a complex family of twelve boys, each destined to father a tribe of Israel. As a teen, God gave Joseph dreams that revealed his identity and purpose, not just as another son, but as a deliverer, a preserver of nations, a bridge between famine and feast.

His brothers didn't understand their own identities, so they couldn't celebrate his:

- Reuben, meant to be the leader, was insecure and unstable.
- Levi, called to the priesthood, was violent and envious.
- Judah, destined for government, was selling his brother instead of protecting him.
- Dan, created for justice, participated in injustice.

When you don't find your purpose, you become envious of others. When you don't know who you are, you try to become who they are.

But Joseph held onto his identity through:

- Approx. 10 years as a slave
- ~3 years in prison
- ~13 years of preparation for 80 years of purpose

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By age 30, Joseph stepped into his dream as Prime Minister of Egypt. He served for 80 years, dying in office at 110, having saved two nations from starvation. The Egyptians loved him so much that they wanted him to rule even after Pharaoh died.

The mystery of Josephs is that even people who hate them end up hiring them.

Why? Because when you know who you are, excellence becomes inevitable. Purpose becomes undeniable. Impact becomes unavoidable.

The Eagle in Traffic

An eagle can reach speeds of 300 kilometers per hour in flight. But imagine that same eagle trying to compete with horses on the ground, or joining cars in traffic. It would lose every race, arrive last at every destination.

The eagle cannot be beaten by the horse as long as it stays in the air.

This is what happens when we don't know our identity, we compete in the wrong arenas. We measure ourselves by the wrong metrics. We fight battles we were never meant to fight while neglecting the victories we were born to win.

Every person is a star with their own solar system to illuminate. Just as our sun doesn't compete with other stars but simply shines where it's placed, you're not called to outshine others, you're called to shine where God planted you.

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The Two-Part Revelation

Part 1: No Identity, No Purpose

When you don't know who you are:

- You chase every opportunity instead of your opportunity.
- You copy others' assignments instead of completing your own.
- You measure success by others' standards instead of God's calling.
- You live reactively instead of purposefully.
- You make decisions from insecurity instead of confidence.

Think about Moses. For 40 years, he tried to be an Egyptian prince. It wasn't until he encountered God at the burning bush and discovered his true identity, ***"I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people out of Egypt"*** (*Exodus 3:10*), that his purpose was activated.

Until you discover who you are, you won't be able to identify what you're called to do.

Part 2: Know Identity, Know Purpose

When you know who you are:

- Every decision flows from divine confidence.
- Your passion becomes a pointer to your purpose.
- Your struggles become preparation, not punishment.

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- Your uniqueness becomes your strength, not your weakness.
- Your life becomes a contribution, not just a consumption.

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

(Ephesians 2:10)

Notice the sequence: **We ARE (identity) created TO DO (purpose).**

Your Assignment Is Not About Getting, It’s About Giving

Here’s where most people get it wrong. They think purpose is about what they can accumulate:

- What position can I achieve?
- What salary can I earn?
- What recognition can I gain?

But true purpose asks different questions:

- What problem am I here to solve?
- What contribution am I meant to make?
- What lives am I called to change?

Your assignment is not about what to get, but about what to give.

Nehemiah wasn’t trying to become governor, he was passionate about seeing walls rebuilt. David wasn’t trying to become king,

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he was passionate about defending God's honour. Esther wasn't trying to become queen, she was positioned to save a nation.

Certificates don't validate your worth, titles don't validate your worth. What you add, that's what validates your worth.

The Making Process

Between your identity revelation and purpose manifestation lies the making process:

- Joseph: ~13 years between dream and destiny
- David: ~13 years between anointing and throne
- Jesus: ~30 years of preparation for 3 years of ministry

Why does God allow these "wilderness years"? Because:

Moral competence alone isn't enough, you need professional competence. Being virtuous doesn't qualify you to run a bank. Being saved doesn't make you CEO material.

God is involved in making you excellent, not just spiritual. When Pharaohs look for reliable people, they should find us. When companies need problem-solvers, we should be the first choice. When nations need leaders, we should be ready.

"Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings." (Proverbs 22:29)

Your Purpose Is Layered

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Destiny is like an onion - it has layers. Don't stop at surface-level success:

- Day 1 creation is good, but there's a Day 7.
- Yesterday's success can become today's limitation.
- Your last victory might be preventing your next breakthrough.

Keep peeling back layers. Keep discovering depths. Keep unlocking new dimensions of your purpose.

Discovering Your Divine Design

So how do you discover your God-given identity and purpose? Here are practical steps:

1. Look at Your Passion Pointers

“For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:13)

- What breaks your heart that you wish could be better?
- What problems do you naturally want to solve?
- What causes make you come alive?

2. Recognize Your Natural Wiring

Every person has a unique SHAPE:

- Spiritual gifts
- Heart (passions)
- Abilities (natural talents)

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- Personality
- Experiences

Your purpose often lies at the intersection of these elements.

3. Kingdom Direction (WHY)

Remember your why: to glorify God and serve people. Purpose is not about what you get; it's about what you give. (See Acts 20:35.)

“Your assignment is not about what to get, but about what to give.”

4. Stop Comparing, Start Celebrating

“Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else.” (Galatians 6:4)

In a relay race, pushing others down doesn't help you win, it disqualifies the whole team. When you discover your lane, you can celebrate others in theirs.

5. Invest in Your Internal Resources

The greatest investment you can make is investing in yourself to bring out the resources within you to change your world.

Stop looking at what you lack externally. Start developing what you have internally.

“Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.”

(1 John 4:4)

6. Next Faithful Step (WHAT NOW)

No Filter: Discover Who You Really Are Beyond the Noise

Don't wait for a 10-year plan. Start where you are. Mentor one young person. Launch one pilot of that idea. Join one ministry team. Apply for that course.

Purpose grows with motion.

Clarity likes company: identity + movement + feedback.

Your Identity Unlocks Your Purpose

Just like that iPhone on the island, everything you need is already within you. You're not waiting for purpose to find you, it's waiting for you to discover who you already are.

You are:

- The seed of Abraham (blessed to be a blessing)
- The righteousness of God in Christ (qualified for kingdom impact)
- More than a conqueror (equipped for victory)
- God's workmanship (created for specific works)
- A royal priesthood (called to minister in your sphere)

I know who I am and what I carry. My real wealth is inside.

The Time Is Now

Some of you have been living as cup-bearers when you're called to be rebuilders. Some have been copying others' assignments when you have your own. Some have been competing in the wrong races when your flight awaits.

Today, the King notices your restlessness.

No Identity, No Purpose

“Why does your face look sad?”

Today is your moment to step from borrowed purpose into birthright purpose.

No identity, no purpose. But when you **KNOW** identity, you **KNOW** purpose.

The world is waiting for what you carry. Nations are depending on your delivery. Generations are counting on your courage to be who God created you to be.

Your Response

Stop asking, “What should I do?” Start asking, “Who am I?” Because when you answer the second question, the first one answers itself.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for building purpose into my very design. I renounce every false identity I've worn. I reject every borrowed purpose I've pursued. Show me who You created me to be. Unlock the purpose You've placed within me. Give me the courage to stop competing where I don't belong and start soaring where I do. I declare: I know who I am and what I carry. My identity is secure in You, and my purpose is clear through You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Journal Prompt: Write down three things:

1. A passion that consistently stirs your heart
2. A problem you naturally want to solve
3. A contribution you dream of making

Now ask: How might these connect to reveal your purpose?

Remember: You weren't born to find your purpose. You were born with it. It's not out there somewhere, it's in you, waiting to be activated by the power of knowing who you are and taking gradual daily steps.

Your identity is the key that unlocks your purpose. Your purpose is the gift you give to the world.

Welcome to the revolution that happens when identity meets purpose. Welcome to your reason for being.

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Chapter 8

Your Confession Must Match Your Identity

During my years as a medical doctor, I encountered someone whose life demonstrated how powerful one's regular confession can be. They visited my clinic almost weekly, convinced that something was terribly wrong with their body.

“Doctor, I just know I’m sick,” they’d say.

“I can feel it. Something bad is happening inside me.”

Test after test came back normal. Blood work: perfect. Scans: clear. Physical examinations: healthy. Yet they persisted:

“No, you’re missing something. I’m telling you, I’m dying of something.”

It required a lot of convincing every time to make them accept that we could find no abnormalities after thorough investigations.

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I began counselling for health anxiety, as it became clear over time and upon the patient's admission that they had struggled with anxiety and not an actual physical condition. They had been constantly dominated by these negative thoughts.

Twenty-four months later, the individual was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer, something extremely unusual for someone their age. And this tumour wasn't one that had developed over time; it was one that had only just developed at the time it was identified. Gracefully, it was removed successfully.

As I reflected on this case, a chilling realization struck me: they had spoken sickness over themselves so consistently, so powerfully, that those words became a reality.

Here's the truth that will transform your life: Your words are not just describing your world, they're creating it.

The Gift That Separates You from Creation

God gave humanity something He didn't give the animals - the ability to speak worlds into existence. Your dog can bark, your cat can meow, but they cannot create with their words. They cannot prophesy their future. They cannot declare their destiny.

You can.

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit” (Proverbs 18:21).

This isn't poetry. This isn't a metaphor. This is spiritual law as real as gravity.

Your Confession Must Match Your Identity

Your confession must match your identity because your words are creating the reality you'll live in tomorrow.

Words Are Not Just Words, They're Spirits

Jesus revealed something profound:

“The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

Words are spirits. You can't see them, but they move. Right now, as you read this, my words are traveling to you, entering your heart, potentially changing your life. How? They're spirits.

Think about it:

- Someone hits a person, and they cry. This is physical contact.
- On the other hand, you speak to someone, and they cry. No physical contact, just words.
- You encourage someone, and they stand taller. No medicine, just words.
- You criticize someone, and they shrink. No weapon, just words.

Words are not just for communication; they're for creation.

Just as the earth is designed to store seeds and deliver fruit, just as the womb is designed to store eggs and deliver life, the cosmos is designed to store your words and deliver your future.

We live in an age of cloud storage for our files. But long before Google Drive, God created cosmic storage for our words.

The Rudder That Steers Your Life

James gives us a powerful picture:

“Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs” (James 3:4).

Your tongue is the rudder of your life. Where your mouth goes, your life goes.

Success or failure is in your words. You need to learn how to say what you want to see.

A massive ship crossing the ocean, thousands of tons of steel, powerful engines, sophisticated navigation, is ultimately directed by a tiny rudder. That small piece determines whether the ship reaches paradise or crashes on rocks.

Your tongue is smaller than the ship’s rudder, yet it determines your destiny.

Job’s Confession Crisis

Let me tell you about Job, a man who had everything until his confession opened a door for disaster.

Job was wealthy, blessed, and respected. But he had a secret fear that leaked through his words:

“For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me” (Job 3:25).

Fear is a confession. And confession creates reality.

When Satan struck, Job lost everything - wealth, health, and children. His wife said:

Your Confession Must Match Your Identity

“Curse God and die.”

His friends accused him of a secret sin. But watch what Job did in his darkest moment. He changed his confession:

“I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth” (Job 19:25).

Job began to align his confession with God’s truth instead of his circumstances, and afterwards, everything changed. God restored double what he had lost.

Don’t live your Christian journey constantly confessing disaster. Fear is not a believer’s lifestyle, it’s a door you leave open for the devil.

The Two Types of Confessors

There are two types of people in this world:

1. The Circumstance Confessors

- “I’m unlucky.”
- “Nothing good ever happens to me.”
- “I come from a poor family.”
- “I’m not smart enough.”
- “I’ll probably fail.”
- “I can’t do this.”

These people are planting weeds and wondering why their garden looks terrible.

2. The Identity Confessors

- *“I am blessed” (Ephesians 1:3)*

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- *“I am more than a conqueror” (Romans 8:37)*
- *“I can do all things through Christ” (Philippians 4:13)*
- *“I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14)*
- *“My future is bright” (Jeremiah 29:11)*
- *“Greater is He that is in me” (1 John 4:4)*

These people are planting seeds of destiny and watching miracles grow.

Which one are you?

Your Mouth Is Either Building or Burning

James warns us:

“The tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness... It sets on fire the entire course of life” (James 3:6).

Fire can warm a home or burn it down. Fire can cook a meal or destroy a forest. Your tongue carries that same power.

I’ve seen marriages destroyed not by infidelity but by words:

“You’re just like your mother!”

“I should have married someone else!”

“You’ll never change!”

I’ve seen businesses built by words:

“We can do this!”

Your Confession Must Match Your Identity

“I believe in our team!”

“Our best days are ahead!”

I've seen children's destinies shaped by parents' words. Which child do you think succeeds, the one told **“You're stupid”** or the one told **“You're brilliant”**?

This moment, make up your mind: You will not burn down your future with your tongue.

The Science of Seed-Planting

Every word you speak is a seed. The question isn't whether you're planting—you're always planting. The question is: What are you planting?

Different seeds produce different harvests:

- Complaint seeds produce problem harvests.
- Gratitude seeds produce blessing harvests.
- Fear seeds produce failure harvests.
- Faith seeds produce miracle harvests.

When a farmer plants corn, he doesn't get angry when the corn grows. He doesn't say:

“Why didn't I get wheat?”

You get what you plant.

If you don't like what you're reaping, check what you've been speaking.

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The ground doesn't judge the seed; it just grows it. The cosmos doesn't evaluate your words; it just stores them and produces accordingly.

Some of you have been planting poverty with statements like:

- **“I'll never have enough.”**
- **“Rich people are evil.”**
- **“The UK is not designed to make anyone rich.”**

Then you wonder why abundance avoids you.

Breaking the Negative Confession Cycle

Here's how to align your confession with your identity:

1. Recognize Your Current Confession Patterns

Listen to yourself for one day. Really listen. What are you declaring over your life? Over your family? Over your future?

2. Repent from Death-Speaking

I confess with my mouth and renounce every negative word I've spoken over my life. I cancel every word curse I've placed on myself.

3. Replace with Truth-Speaking

For every negative confession, find God's truth:

- Instead of **“I'm broke”** → ***“My God supplies all my needs” (Philippians 4:19)***
- Instead of **“I'm sick”** → ***“By His stripes I am healed” (Isaiah 53:5)***

Your Confession Must Match Your Identity

- Instead of **“I’m alone”** → **“God will never leave me nor forsake me”** (*Hebrews 13:5*)

4. Repeat Until Reality Shifts

A farmer doesn’t plant once and quit. Keep planting. Keep declaring. Keep confessing the truth even when circumstances scream lies.

The Marriage Miracle in Your Mouth

Want to transform your relationships? Change your confessions about them.

Stop saying:

- **“My spouse never listens.”**
- **“My kids are rebellious.”**
- **“My boss hates me.”**

Start saying:

- **“My spouse and I are growing in understanding.”**
- **“My children are blessed and highly favoured.”**
- **“Favor surrounds me like a shield”**

I’ve seen dead marriages resurrected by changed confessions. I’ve seen prodigal children return when parents changed their words.

The Professional Prophecy

Some of you have been confessing failure in your careers:

- **“I’ll never get promoted.”**
- **“Nobody appreciates my work.”**

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- **“I’m not smart enough for that position.”**

Let me tell you about Daniel. Captured as a slave, he could have confessed to victim status. Instead, he declared:

“My God gives me wisdom and excellence.”

He became the prime minister of Babylon.

Joseph, sold into slavery, could have confessed abandonment. Instead, he declared:

“God is with me and makes everything I do prosper.”

He became second in command of Egypt.

Your position might be low, but your confession should be high.

The Digital Age Confession Challenge

Social media has amplified our negative confessions. Now we don’t just speak defeat, we post it, tweet it, broadcast it:

- **“FML”**
- **“I’m so stupid.”**
- **“Kill me now.”**
- **“I hate my life.”**

Every post is a seed. Every tweet is a declaration. Every status update is programming your future.

What if you used that same platform to declare destiny instead of defeat?

Women of Worth, Speak Your Value

Ladies, stop saying:

Your Confession Must Match Your Identity

- **“No one will ever love me.”**
- **“All the good men are taken.”**
- **“I’m not pretty enough.”**

You’re a daughter of the King! Start declaring:

- ***“I am fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14)***
- **“The right man will find me.”**
- **“I am a Proverbs 31 woman”**

A princess doesn’t chase; she attracts. But she attracts what she confesses.

Men of Purpose, Declare Your Destiny

Men, stop saying:

- **“I’ll never be successful.”**
- **“I don’t have what it takes.”**
- **“I’m just average.”**

You carry the DNA of the Creator! Start declaring:

- **“I am the head and not the tail”**
- **“I am equipped for every good work”**
- **“Success and prosperity follow me”**

Kings speak kingdoms into existence. What kingdom are your words creating?

The Confession That Changes Everything

Here’s the confession that aligns with your true identity:

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I am who God says I am. I can do what God says I can do. I have what God says I have. My words are seeds of greatness. My mouth speaks life. My confession creates my future. I declare victory, not defeat. I speak abundance, not lack. I prophesy purpose, not problems. My words align with heaven's reality, not earth's circumstances. I am blessed. I am chosen. I am equipped. I am victorious. I am loved. I am enough.

Say it until you believe it. Believe it until you see it. See it until you live it.

Your Words, Your World

Right now, in this moment, you stand at a crossroads. You can continue speaking the language of your history, or you can start speaking the language of your destiny.

Your mouth is either your greatest asset or your greatest liability. It's either building your future or burning it down.

The choice is yours. But remember: Every word counts. Every confession creates. Every declaration determines.

Time to Align

From this moment forward:

- Your confession must match your identity.
- Your words must agree with your worth.
- Your declaration must align with your destiny.

Stop describing where you are. Start declaring where you're going.

Stop confessing what you see. Start confessing what God says.

Your Confession Must Match Your Identity

Stop speaking death. Start speaking life.

Your tongue holds the power. Your words write the story. Your confession creates the future.

Prayer of Alignment

Father, I repent for every word I've spoken that contradicts who You say I am. I cancel every negative confession I've made over my life, my family, my future. Today, I choose to align my mouth with Your truth. I declare that my words will build, not destroy. My tongue will bless, not curse. My confession will match my identity in Christ. I am who You say I am, and I will speak what You speak over me. Fill my mouth with Your words. Let my tongue be an instrument of life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Journal Prompt

Write down three negative confessions you've been making. Cross them out. Below each one, write God's truth about that situation. For the next 30 days, speak only the truth, not the facts.

Remember: Facts describe what is. Truth declares what will be.

Your confession is your creation. Speak well. Live well. Be well.

Welcome to the power of aligned confession. Welcome to words that work.

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Chapter 9

Unshakable Confidence

Courage That Comes from Knowing Whose You Are

Hold up your thumb and look closely at the intricate patterns etched into your skin. Those ridges, loops, and whorls form a design so unique that in all of human history - past, present, and future - no one else will ever carry the exact same fingerprint. Not your twin, not your sibling, not among the billions who have walked this earth before you or the billions yet to come.

Think about that for a moment. The God who spoke galaxies into existence, who commands the stars by name, who orchestrates the dance of planets, this same God took the time to craft a fingerprint that belongs to you alone. He didn't mass-

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produce you on some cosmic assembly line. He didn't use a template or copy someone else's design. He deliberately, intentionally, lovingly made you one-of-a-kind. Do you think He's casual about your purpose or your personality? Your uniqueness isn't an accident; it's a signature.

If God loves the idea of your uniqueness enough to embed it into the very fiber of your being, doesn't that tell you something profound? You weren't meant to be anyone's copy. You were meant to be an original.

Yet here we are, living in a world that whispers, and sometimes shouts that we should blend in, fit the mold, be like everyone else. We scroll through social media and feel the sting of comparison. We look at others' achievements and wonder if we measure up. We dim our light because we're afraid it might shine too differently from the crowd.

But what if I told you that your uniqueness isn't something to hide, it's your superpower?

The Security of Identity: When You Know Whose You Are

There's something magnificent that happens when you truly understand who you are in Christ. It's like a light switch flips on in your soul, and suddenly everything becomes clearer. The noise of the world gets quieter. The pressure to conform loses its grip. The need to prove yourself to others melts away.

When you know whose you are, a beautiful truth emerges:

- The horse's speed doesn't intimidate the eagle's flight.

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- The fish's swimming doesn't shame the lion's roar.
- Another's success doesn't diminish your significance.

Picture an eagle soaring high above the mountains. Does it look down at a horse galloping across the plains and think, **“I wish I could run like that”**? Of course not! The eagle knows it was created to fly, to ride the wind currents, to see the world from heights the horse will never reach. The eagle doesn't envy the horse's speed because it's secure in its own design.

This is the confidence God wants you to have; the unshakable knowledge that you are exactly who He created you to be, for exactly the purpose He has in mind.

Scripture declares this truth with breathtaking clarity:

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” (1 Peter 2:9)

Read those words again slowly. You are chosen. You are royal. You are holy. You are special. Not because of what you've accomplished or how you measure up to others, but because of whose you are.

When you know whose you are, you know who you are. When you know who you are, you know why you're here.

Because you belong to Him, you can live bold and clean in a noisy world:

- ***Romans 8:15-17 – You're not a slave to fear; you are an adopted child, a co-heir with Christ.***

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- *Ephesians 2:10 – You are His workmanship, created for good works already prepared.*
- *Proverbs 28:1 – “The righteous are as bold as a lion.” Righteousness in Christ produces lion-heartedness in life.*
- *Joshua 1:9 – “Be strong and courageous... for the LORD your God is with you.” Presence produces courage.*

Confidence isn’t “I’m great”; confidence is “God is with me.”

The Mirror That Reveals Truth

James gives us a powerful picture of identity formation:

“Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it— not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.” (James 1:23–25)

The mirror of God’s Word is where you discover your true identity. Not the mirror of culture, not the mirror of social media, not the mirror of other people’s opinions. When you look into God’s Word, you see yourself as He sees you, fearfully and wonderfully made, equipped with gifts and talents, called to a purpose that only you can fulfill.

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But here's the crucial part: James warns us not to be someone who forgets what we see. Too often, we look into God's Word, catch a glimpse of our true identity, feel encouraged for a moment, and then walk away and forget. We let the world's voice drown out God's voice. We let temporary circumstances eclipse eternal truth.

Don't forget what you see in God's mirror. If you forget what you see, you forget that you have kingdom authority.

Think about it like this: Imagine looking in a mirror and seeing a small spot on your face. If you're not careful, you'll become so fixated on that one imperfection that it begins to dominate your entire view of yourself. You forget about your beautiful eyes, your warm smile, the unique features that make you who you are. All you see is the spot.

This is what happens when we lose sight of our identity in Christ. We focus on what we lack instead of what we have. We concentrate on our weaknesses and forget we are God's children, beautifully and purposefully made. We compare our behind-the-scenes with everyone else's highlight reel and wonder why we don't measure up.

The mirror of God's Word shows you who you really are, not culture, not comparison, not criticism. Let God's truth be your guide.

Find Your Place and Master It

One of the greatest tragedies in the body of Christ is believers who never discover their unique place of impact. They try to be

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everything to everyone and end up being nothing special to anyone.

There's an old saying: **“Jack of all trades, master of none.”** Now, it's perfectly fine to have multiple interests and abilities. In fact, being well-rounded can be a tremendous asset. But if you want to leave a mark, if you desire a life of impact and influence, you need to master at least one area where God has gifted you.

It's great to be a jack of all trades, but if you want to leave a mark, master at least one.

Think about David. He could be a shepherd, a musician, a warrior, a poet, and a king. But he mastered the art of having a heart after God, and that mastery defined everything else he did.

Think about Paul. He was educated, travelled, spoke multiple languages, and understood various cultures. But he mastered the gospel message, and that mastery transformed the world.

What is the one area where God has uniquely gifted you? What is the thing you do that seems to flow naturally, that energizes rather than drains you, that creates impact in others' lives? That's your sweet spot. That's where you should invest the majority of your time and energy.

Don't try to be someone you're not. However, improve who you are and make it better.

Courage in the Bible: Three Snapshots

1. David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17)

David's confidence wasn't armour; it was identity. He refused Saul's suit because it didn't fit his design. He

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chose a sling because that's what he had trained with in the field. Then he spoke faith:

“The battle is the Lord’s.”

Identity → tool selection → confession → victory.

2. Esther (Esther 4)

A young woman with a hidden identity becomes a courageous intercessor.

“For such a time as this.”

Her courage flowed from her place in God's story. She stepped in as daughter before she spoke as queen.

3. Paul (Acts 20; 2 Timothy 4)

Beaten, misunderstood, imprisoned, yet unshaken. Why?

“I know whom I have believed.”

Not “what,” but “whom.” Relationship anchored his resilience.

Courage is identity applied under pressure.

The Confidence to Walk in Your Calling

Let me share something personal. There was a time in my life when I was so busy trying to be like other successful people that I almost missed my own calling. I was copying their strategies, mimicking their styles, trying to fit into their molds. But God had to show me something profound: He didn't need another version of them. He needed the original version of me.

The moment I stopped trying to be someone else's duplicate and started walking in my unique design, everything changed. Not because I became perfect, but because I became authentic. And

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there's something powerful about authenticity that resonates with people in a way that imitation never can.

This is what unshakable confidence looks like. Not the arrogance that says *"I'm better than others,"* but the quiet assurance that says *"I'm exactly who God created me to be, and that's enough."*

This is what unshakable confidence looks like. Not the arrogance that says, *"I'm better than others,"* but the quiet assurance that says, *"I'm exactly who God created me to be, and that's enough."*

Your confidence shouldn't come from comparing yourself to others. Your confidence should come from being compared to Christ and realizing you are His beloved.

Practical Guidance: Building Lion-Hearted Confidence

So how do you develop this unshakable confidence? How do you walk in the courage that comes from knowing whose you are?

1) Anchor Daily (Identity Reset – 5 Minutes)

- **Read aloud: 1 Peter 2:9; Romans 8:15-17; Ephesians 2:10.**
- *Prayer: Father, I thank You that I am chosen, loved, and sent. Today I will carry salt and light.*
- *Confess one sentence for your day: I will be faithful, excellent, and kind.*

2) Practise Micro-Bravery

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Confidence grows like muscle, by reps. Do one small brave thing daily: speak up respectfully, share your idea, apply for the opportunity, set a boundary, post something honest (not performative).

3) Curate Comparisons

Comparison is a confidence leak. Limit doom-scrolling. For each hour online, invest an hour in craft. Replace envy with inquiry: *“What can I learn?”*

4) Put Feedback in the Right Place

Invite feedback from people who know your calling and care for your growth. Filter criticism: if it’s true, adjust; if it’s toxic, release.

5) Stack Competence

Identity gives courage, but competence sustains it. Take courses. Practise. Read. Ask questions. Excellence quiets impostor syndrome.

6) Declare and Do

Pair confession with action.

I am disciplined → set your alarm.

I am gracious → choose the soft answer.

I am a builder → schedule the build.

7) Rest Like the Loved

Confidence isn’t constant motion.

“Jesus slept in the storm.” (Mark 4:38)

Rest says, I’m not holding the world together; God is.

*Confidence is formed in prayer, tested in practice,
and proven in persistence.*

A Life That Leaves a Mark

Imagine a life where you wake up every morning knowing exactly who you are and why you're here. Imagine the freedom of not needing anyone's approval to be yourself. Imagine the impact you could have if you stopped trying to be like everyone else and started being the person God uniquely created you to be.

This isn't a fantasy, this is your birthright as a child of God. This is the confidence available to every believer who chooses to walk in their God-given identity.

The world doesn't need another copy. The world needs an original, it needs you, walking in your unique calling with unshakable confidence.

Your fingerprint isn't the only thing that's unique about you. Your purpose, your perspective, your potential - all uniquely yours, all divinely designed, all desperately needed.

Reflection and Prayer

Take a moment to consider: What would change in your life if you truly believed you were uniquely created by God for a specific purpose? What would you start doing? What would you stop doing? What dreams would you pursue that you've been too afraid to chase?

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Prayer:

Lord, thank You for creating me as an original, not a copy. Help me to see myself through Your eyes and to walk in the confidence that comes from knowing whose I am. Give me the courage to be authentically myself and to use my unique gifts for Your glory. Show me the areas where You've called me to master my gifts, and help me to stop comparing myself to others. Let my life be a reflection of Your creativity and love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Journal Prompt:

Write down three unique qualities or gifts that God has given you. How can you use these more boldly in your daily life to make a kingdom impact?

Remember: You were not created to blend in. You were created to stand out, not for your own glory, but for God's glory shining through your unique design.

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Chapter 10

It's Your Time to Shine

Picture this: You're in a massive stadium filled with 80,000 people. The lights go out completely, plunging everyone into absolute darkness. You can hear voices, movement, confusion, but you can't see a thing.

Then, suddenly, one person in the crowd turns on their phone's flashlight. Just one small light in an ocean of darkness.

What happens? Every eye turns toward that light. That single beam becomes a beacon of hope, a point of reference, a guide for everyone around. One light, small as it may seem, has the power to pierce through the deepest darkness and show others the way.

This is exactly what Jesus meant when He looked at His disciples and declared:

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.” (Matthew 5:14-15)

You are that light. Not tomorrow, not when you’re older, not when you have it all figured out. Right now, today, exactly as you are, you are the light of the world.

The question isn’t whether you have light to give. The question is: Will you let it shine?

Jesus continues:

“A city set on a hill cannot be hidden... let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16)

Notice the order:

1. **Identity** – You are light.
2. **Visibility** – You’re meant to be seen.
3. **Activity** – Your good works are evidence.
4. **Glory** – The credit returns to the Father.

Paul adds a breathtaking perspective:

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work in us.” (Ephesians 3:20)

God’s “immeasurably more” isn’t only out there; it’s in you, working through you. Light isn’t something you perform; it’s something you are because Christ dwells in you (Colossians 1:27).

It's Your Time to Shine

God's more for the world often arrives through God's power in you.

You Cannot Make a Difference If You're Not Different

Here's a truth that will revolutionize how you see yourself: You cannot make a difference if you're not different. And you cannot be different if you don't spend time with the One who sets you apart.

The world is desperate for authentic difference-makers, not carbon copies of what already exists. But here's the beautiful paradox: the more time you spend with God, the more uniquely yourself you become. Intimacy with your Creator doesn't make you blend in; it makes you stand out for all the right reasons.

Think about it: When Moses spent time on the mountain with God, his face literally glowed so brightly that people couldn't look at him directly (Exodus 34:29–30). Time with God doesn't dim your light, it amplifies it. Time with God doesn't make you ordinary, it reveals your extraordinary.

The secret to shining isn't trying harder to be different. The secret to shining is spending time with the Light Himself.

Your Planting Season: The Foundation of Your Future

You are in your planting season as a young person. This isn't your waiting season, your preparation season, or your "someday"

season, this is your planting season. And what you plant now determines what you harvest tomorrow.

Life has been called many things, but one of the most accurate descriptions is this: Life is a race of individuality. You were classmates in school, but after leaving those four walls, each person goes to find their own unique path.

Don't get lost in the crowd trying to follow everyone else's race plan. Look ahead, not around. Plan accordingly, not comparatively.

Scripture reminds us:

“Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.” (1 Corinthians 9:24)

Here's the thing about this race: You're not competing against others, you're running toward the unique purpose God has placed before you.

I once heard Bishop David Oyedepo say:

“Life is a race; only committed runners win the prize.”

Notice he didn't say talented runners, connected runners, or even gifted runners. He said committed runners. Commitment beats talent when talent isn't committed.

Only serious-minded young people emerge as responsible citizens who light up their generation. Whatever seeds you plant today; discipline, excellence, integrity, faith, those are the fruits you'll harvest tomorrow.

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Don't wish for success; run toward it. Don't join the shouting corner; become the one people cheer for. Refuse to be merely entertained; become the entertainer.

The Power of Your Thoughts: Your Imagination Sets Your Destination

In the school of success, your thoughts constitute one of the most powerful keys to achievement. Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, understood this principle:

“For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.” (Proverbs 23:7 NKJV)

Your thoughts don't just reflect your reality, they create your reality. You can think one thing and become another. What you think consistently is what you become eventually.

You can think of failure and remain stuck, or you can think of success and a breakthrough. But you cannot truly think success and end up a failure.

Consider the profound truth found in Genesis 11:6:

“And the LORD said, ‘Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.’”

Did you catch that? God Himself acknowledged that when people align their thoughts and imagination, nothing can stop them from achieving what they've set their minds to accomplish.

Their success was rooted in their imagination, “which they have imagined to do.”

“What you cannot see in your mind, you cannot hold in your life.”

Your imagination sets the pace for your destination. If it’s beyond your imagination, it will remain beyond your manifestation. Your thoughts today define your placement tomorrow.

But here’s where many young people get trapped in contradictory thinking:

- “No one can really make it here” ... while working to make it.
- “You need connections to succeed” ... while still wanting to succeed without them.
- “All men are scum” ... while hoping to find a good man to marry.

This kind of double-minded thinking creates internal conflict that sabotages your success before you even start.

God addresses this directly:

“I, the Lord, search and examine the mind, I test the heart, to give to each man according to his ways, according to the results of his deeds.” (Jeremiah 17:10 AMP)

In other words, God searches your thought processes and rewards you accordingly. When your imagination is established in faith, your destination becomes secure.

There's More to Success Than You Think

Here's a revelation that will change your approach to achievement: There's more to life than hard work. There's more to success than skill alone.

Don't misunderstand; hard work and skill are important. But they're not everything. You think success to truly succeed. You envision victory to obtain it. You allow faith to override impossibility.

“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.” (Proverbs 4:23 NKJV)

Everything that flows from your life - success, failure, joy, frustration, impact, mediocrity - springs from the condition of your heart and the content of your thoughts.

If God cannot fail, then you cannot fail when you align your thinking with His purposes for your life.

From Potential to Powerful: Your Time Is Now

Every child of God is a potential star because Jesus, the Star of stars, lives within them. But potential without action remains just that, potential. The world doesn't need more people with potential; the world needs people who actualize their potential.

There are no shortcuts to anywhere worth going. Success isn't a destination you stumble upon; it's a direction you deliberately choose. Don't spend your life guessing your purpose or you'll miss out on your assignment.

Every race has a starting point. You have to be a starter before you can become a finisher. You don't start climbing a tree from the top; you begin at the bottom and work your way up. The best way to start anything is at the beginning, and the best time to begin is now.

Without a clear direction, life becomes a burden instead of an adventure. Find your bearing in life while you're young. No one arrives at a future they cannot see. No one reaches a destination they haven't first envisioned in their mind.

As the saying goes:

“As the morning shows the day, so the child shows the future adult.”

What you're becoming now is what you'll be then. A playful attitude today might need more focus tomorrow if you want to make a lasting impact.

The Discipline of Difference-Makers

Every spotlight star you admire didn't just appear overnight, they're always the result of years of grinding, growing, and getting better when no one was watching.

This journey begins with three non-negotiables: discipline, diligence, and sacrifice in pursuit of your God-given assignment.

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” (Joshua 1:8 NKJV)

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Notice the progression: God's Word in your mouth, meditation in your heart, obedience in your actions, prosperity in your results. This isn't just religious activity, this is the blueprint for supernatural success.

You want success so you can be a blessing, not just to be impressive. You pursue excellence to serve others, not just to serve yourself.

Lighting Up Your Generation: A Personal Story

Let me share something personal with you. When I was in my teenage years, I thought making a difference meant doing something massive that everyone would notice immediately. I was looking for the grand gesture, the big moment, the spotlight opportunity.

But God showed me something different. He showed me that lighting up your generation starts with lighting up your immediate circle. It begins with being the light in your family, your school, your friend group, and your workplace.

It starts with small acts of integrity when no one is looking, small moments of kindness when no one is keeping score, small decisions to choose excellence when no one would blame you for choosing average.

One day, a younger student approached me and said:

“I've been watching how you handle difficult situations, and it's inspired me to respond differently to my own challenges.”

I realized then that I had been shining without even knowing it. My light wasn't in what I said, it was in how I lived.

This is how you light up your generation: One authentic interaction at a time. One moment of integrity at a time. One act of excellence at a time.

Your Assignment: Be the Light the World Needs

The beautiful truth about light is that it doesn't have to try to shine. Shining is simply its nature. When you're connected to the Light of the world, shining becomes your nature too.

But light always serves a purpose:

- **Light reveals what's hidden.** Your authentic life will expose the pretence around you, not in a judgmental way, but in a way that makes others hungry for the real thing.
- **Light provides direction.** Your clear sense of purpose will help others find their way when they're lost in confusion about their own calling.
- **Light brings warmth.** Your genuine love and care will thaw hearts that have been frozen by disappointment and hurt.
- **Light creates growth.** Just as plants need light to flourish, the people around you need your unique light to help them grow into who God created them to be.

If you leave your life to chance, you won't have a chance in life. Living without a defined goal makes you a scapegoat instead of a gamechanger.

Practical Steps to Shine Brighter

Here's how to practically walk in your calling to be the light of your generation:

1. **Start with your inner light.** Spend daily time with God, allowing His Word to illuminate your heart and mind. You can't give what you don't have.
2. **Identify your unique brightness.** What gifts, talents, and perspectives has God given you that can bring light to others? Don't hide them under false humility.
3. **Choose your sphere of influence.** Where has God placed you to shine? Your family? Your school? Your workplace? Your community? Start there.
4. **Embrace the process.** Remember, there's no product in the market without a purpose from the manufacturer. God has a specific purpose for you, so invest in walking in that purpose.
5. **Think like a winner.** Guard your thoughts carefully. Think success, speak faith, act with confidence in God's calling on your life.
6. **Be consistently excellent.** Excellence is not a one-time act but a habit. Let your light shine through the quality of everything you do.

The Generation That's Waiting for Your Light

There's a generation watching you. They're watching to see if what you believe actually works in real life. They're watching to

see if your faith makes a practical difference. They're watching to see if you're different in a way that makes them want what you have.

You cannot impact a generation you refuse to engage. You cannot light up a world you choose to hide from.

The enemy wants you to believe that you're too young to make a difference, too inexperienced to have influence, too ordinary to create extraordinary change.

But God has a different message:

“Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.” (1 Timothy 4:12)

Your age isn't your limitation, it's your advantage. Your youth isn't your weakness, it's your strength. Your inexperience isn't your disqualification, it's your fresh perspective.

This is your time to shine. Not someday, today. Not when you're ready, you're ready now.

Unto Him Who Is Able

As we close this journey together, I want to remind you of one of the most powerful promises in Scripture:

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us” (Ephesians 3:20).

Read that again slowly. God is able to do immeasurably more than all you can ask or think, according to His power that is at

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work within you. Not the power that might one day work within you, but the power that is already at work within you right now.

You have everything you need to light up your generation. You have the light of Christ within you. You have unique gifts and talents. You have a specific assignment. You have God's power working in you.

The only question remaining is: Will you let your light shine?

Your Moment of Decision

The world is waiting in darkness. Your generation is looking for authentic light. Your community needs what you have to offer. Your family, your friends, your sphere of influence, they're all waiting to see the light that God has placed within you.

Don't hide your light under the bowl of insecurity. Don't dim your brightness because others might be intimidated. Don't wait for permission to shine. You already have God's approval.

The morning is showing the day. What you choose now determines what you become later. As a young person, you're not just preparing for your future, you're creating it with every choice, every thought, every action.

It's your time to shine. The stage is set. The audience is waiting. The Director has called "Action!" Now step into the light and show the world what God can do through a young person who refuses to hide their flame.

Remember: You are the light of the world. Not will be - you ARE. Right now, exactly as you are, with all your

imperfections and insecurities, you are still the light of the world.

So shine, beloved. Shine bright. Shine boldly. Shine without apology.

Your generation is waiting, and it's time to light them up.

Clarity of Theme: Shine = Identity + Integrity + Impact

This chapter pulls the whole journey together:

- **Identity** – You know whose you are (beloved, chosen, sent).
- **Integrity** – You live the truth you confess (no mask, no filter).
- **Impact** – You add value where you stand (salt and light, not smoke and mirrors).

Your generation doesn't need more noise. It needs noticeable goodness, light that is patient in conflict, excellent at work, kind online, courageous in truth, generous in service. Darkness is loud, but light is louder.

It's your time to shine, not for applause, but for His glory; not to be famous, but to be faithful. Lift your lamp. Go light up your generation.

Reflection and Prayer

As you close this book and step into your calling, take a moment to reflect on these questions:

- What has God been stirring in your heart about your unique purpose?

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- How can you begin to shine brighter in your current sphere of influence?
- What thoughts do you need to change to align with God's vision for your life?
- Who in your generation needs the light that you carry?

Prayer:

Lord, thank You for calling me to be the light of the world. Help me to understand the weight and privilege of this calling. Give me the courage to shine brightly without fear or apology. Show me how to use my unique gifts and talents to light up my generation. Guard my thoughts and align them with Your purposes for my life. Let Your power work mightily within me to do immeasurably more than I can ask or imagine. I choose to be a difference-maker, a light-bringer, a generation-changer. Let my life be a beacon that points others to You. In Jesus' mighty name, Amen.

Your Final Challenge

Write down three specific ways you will let your light shine this week. Share them with someone you trust, and ask them to hold you accountable. Your generation is waiting. It's time to rise and shine!

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” (John 1:5)

Now go and light up your generation.

A Prayer to Begin Anew

If you've come to the end of this book and you feel a stirring in your heart, a desire to know Jesus personally and to walk in the identity He gave you, I want you to know this: it's not too late, and it's not too hard.

The Bible says,

“If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” Romans 10:9 (NIV)

Salvation is not about religion, trying harder, or pretending to be perfect. It's about surrendering your life to the One who already paid the price for you.

If you'd like to make that decision today, you can pray this simple prayer from your heart:

Sinner's Prayer

Lord Jesus, I come to You today just as I am.

I confess that I am a sinner, and I cannot save myself.

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Thank You for dying for me on the cross and rising again to give me life.

Today, I choose to turn away from my past and receive Your forgiveness.

I declare that You are my Lord and my Saviour.

From this moment on, I belong to You.

Help me to live in my true identity as a child of God.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

What's Next?

If you prayed that prayer sincerely, welcome to the family of God! You are now a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). Your past is forgiven, and your future is secure in Christ.

Here are some next steps to help you grow:

Read the Bible daily – start with the book of John.

Pray regularly – talk to God as you would a loving Father.

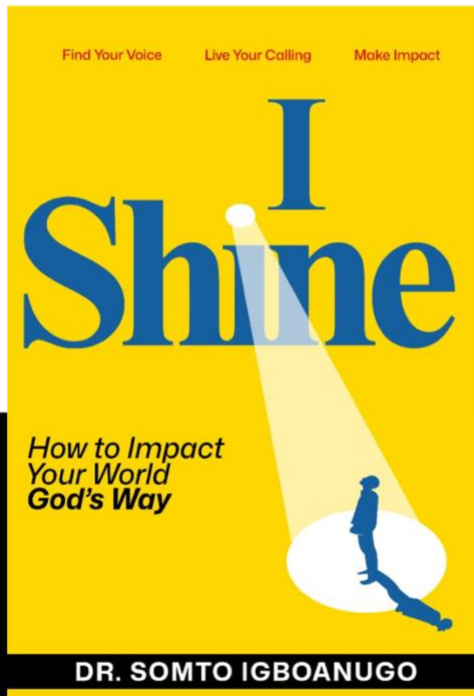
Find a Bible-believing church – community will strengthen your journey.

Share your decision – tell someone about the new life you've received.

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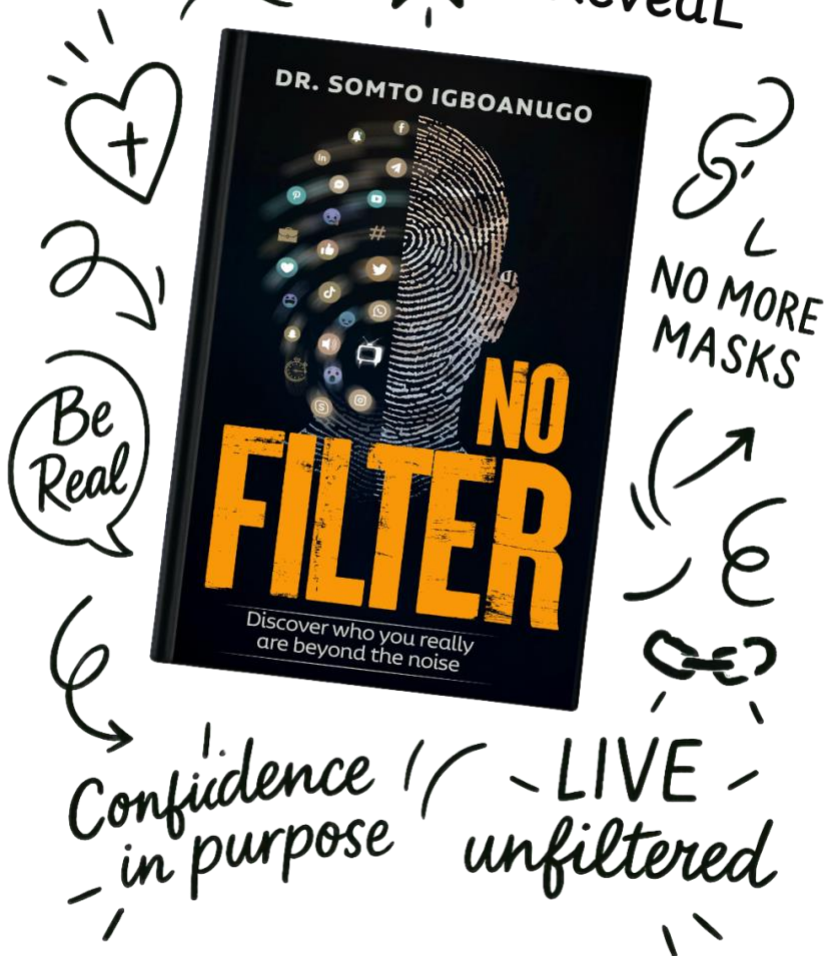


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