

Who We Are: Design Reveals Destiny

Week 2 · Ephesians 2:10 · Source week: 2

A man's design reveals destiny through spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality, and experience.

Opening and the Question of Purpose

M2: Week 2

Who we are: Design Reveals Destiny/Spiritual Gifts

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

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

Last week, we learned that God made man to be fruitful, to multiply and to subdue the earth. We are "more than conquerors", as Paul wrote in Romans 8:37. Yet, for some reason, many men that I know don't feel like conquerors. I know many seemingly successful men, titans of industry and even faithful Kingdom-minded men, that still ask, "Why am I here? I still feel like I'm not fulfilling my calling." Mark Twain said it best, "The two greatest days in a man's life are the day he's born, and the day he finds out, why."

Let's ask the question, "**Why am I here?**" It's the first question of existentialism and though their philosophy typically places man at the center of the Universe, (we know that man is under the authority and loving care of a God who pursues us, loves us, and knows the number of hairs on our heads) it is still a great question. The God who knows EVERYTHING about you, your Designer, is calling you to something greater than yourself. Many men live to become famous, rich, and powerful, only to find that those things may satiate a hunger for a season, but ultimately leave us unfulfilled deep within. Ecclesiastes 3:11 says, "He has planted eternity in the human heart." (NLT). The desire for eternity is within us. We long to leave a legacy. Even the secular psychologist, Abraham Maslow found that the greatest need for man was "self-actualization" or becoming everything that we can become. As we age, we desire to teach the generations coming behind us all that we've learned. We long for a legacy. We long to be remembered after we're gone. Our hearts pant for Eternity.

Eternal Legacy

All men die, but few men ever live.--William Wallace

What is eternal? What in this world will last more than a few decades or centuries or even a millennium? Nothing. Not championships or money or power or accolades. Nothing makes it through the fire of eternity except for the souls of those around us. Therefore, if we are to draw out the deep waters of purpose, we must understand that our ultimate destiny is only found through others. You were called to make a difference in other people's lives. Everything else is ancillary. If you aren't making a difference in other's lives, you will live a pointless, empty, and unfulfilled life. Your life will be just as those whom William Wallace quotes, "All men die, but few men ever live."

Design Reveals Destiny

You Are Unique

There has never been another YOU in the annals of history. God uniquely designed you and there will never be another person like you. Even if you're an identical twin and genetically, exactly the same as your twin, you are uniquely designed in every other way. When God made you, He broke the mold. He carefully made you, studying each and every aspect of you, knowing full well what you would experience and what to equip you with, before one minute of your life had passed. Your unique design reveals your destiny. God has made you for a journey, and God, being a good God, has given you everything that you're going to need before you embark.

He gave you everything you need to be fruitful.

He gave you everything you need to multiply.

He gave you everything you need to subdue the earth.

He gave you everything you need to be a conqueror.

When we analyze how we're made, we can start determining what good works God has prepared for us. If design truly reveals destiny, then diving into our SHAPE will help us understand our purpose. Proverbs 20:5 says, "The purposes of a person's heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out." Insight naturally comes through analysis. So, let's put ourselves under the microscope for a moment and really ask the great existential question, "WHY am I here?". We already know it's for a good work that God has prepared, but what is that good work? Learning WHO we are will help us find it. Using this acrostic can help you remember the different aspects of your design:

- S-piritual Gifts
- H-eart
- A-bilities
- P-ersonality

- E-xperience

SHAPE and Spiritual Gifts

SHAPE/Spiritual Gifts

Genesis 1:26 (NIV)

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

What are Spiritual Gifts? Spiritual Gifts are gifts that God gave you to equip you to help build His Kingdom. You were made in God's image. That doesn't mean that you have the jawline of Christ or "eyes darker than wine" (Genesis 49:12) or His gait. You "look" like Him spiritually, you resemble your Father in the eternal ways. You have a spirit, soul and body. You are an eternal being. Jesus had an earthly body that died and was buried in Joseph's tomb, but His spirit went to paradise that day, while separate from His body for He told the thief on the cross in Luke 23:43, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." I believe that this Spiritual makeup is extremely important when it comes to understanding our purpose. It is evident that the spirit can be separate from the body and that spiritual gifts are different from physical gifts or gifts of the body like making music or intelligence.

Therefore, if we are made in His image, the more we understand about our Father, the better we will understand ourselves. The best way to understand Him is to spend time with Him, to read the gift of His Word, the Bible, and to seek Him.

Knowing the Father

Jeremiah 29:13 (NIV)

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

We can also draw significant understanding of who we are by looking at the personality of God, Himself. God presented Himself to be a male figure for a reason. He could have presented Himself as female, but He chose to be male for some purpose. Why do you think that God chose to present Himself to us as a male figure rather than female or even an animal? Part of the answer resides in how we described the role of a father last week:

- Protector
- Provider

- Teacher
- Strong
- Courageous
- Just
- Loving
- Honorable
- Counselor
- Peace Maker

We know what a good father is because God has placed that in our hearts. The attributes listed above are all the things a father should be, and we intuitively know this. Romans 2:15 says, "They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right." (NLT) As societies began to form on the earth, they all began to share a similar moral code with one another because God wrote that code deep within us. We intrinsically know what is good and evil. From the beginning of time, societies have had laws against theft and murder, against cheating and taking advantage of the less fortunate. Something rises within us when we see an injustice. We love stories of triumph; we long to see those unjustly persecuted and the innocent set free, no matter our religious affiliation. God places that hunger for righteousness within us. The good father is within you, but only Christ can draw him out.

Men, Leadership, and Spiritual Order

Men are Different than Women

Why did God present Himself to us as a male figurehead? I believe it's because God is showing us that our design and role as men is an important one. If you are a man, you are a leader. God made you to be the spiritual head of your home with Jesus as your covering and God the covering of Christ. That is the Spiritual Order that God designed. When we get away from that order, we find confusion and ultimately, chaos. God gives certain and specific roles to men. We are the stronger sex, but as such, we are to protect and love our wives. **Ephesians 5:23-25 (NKJV)**

For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her...

Your role as the leader of your home is yours, but you must step into the role. It's an active role, not a passive one. It requires diligence, vision and direction. God has a vision for your life; do you have a vision for your family? Do you pray over your wife, seeing where she is weak and standing in the gap for her weakness? Do you pray over your children as you see them grow into young adults? Do you analyze where they are and

create an individual spiritual action plan for them? If you don't, who will? Seize your role as the spiritual leader of the church and provide spiritual food for your family, pray over and protect your family from the enemy who is prowling like a lion to try to destroy you!

Spiritual Order

- God
- Jesus
- Man/Husband
- Woman/Wife
- Children

Men's Needs and Honor

Men's Needs

Men have different needs than women. You have different physical and emotional needs--that's been well documented; you also have different spiritual needs. God presented Himself as a male to us for a specific reason. His design is similar to ours. God demonstrates His need through the Ten Commandments. The first four are about Him and our relationship with Him.

Here is a summary of the first four commandments found in Exodus 20:

Do not have any other gods before Me.

Do not take make an image out of anything and worship it.

Don't take My Name in vain.

Honor my Day.

God specifically says in verse 5, "for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God". What is He jealous of exactly? You! Your heart and your worship. Likewise, I don't know many men that would be excited if their wife came home from work and started talking about the great looking man that she met at work that day! You would be jealous and rightfully so! We NEED to be honored as God needs to be honored. We need to be the only one for our wives as God needs to be the only one in our lives. How would we feel if our son took on our neighbor's last name because he took him to the zoo? We would be hurt and probably more than a little bit angry! Shakespeare famously penned through the words of Juliet, "What's in a name?". Your name means something to you. When our sons and daughters are born, deep down, we hope that our offspring carry on our family name with honor.

We are made like God. We desire honor.

Question: What is Honor?

Spiritual Gifts for Battle

Spiritual Gifts we Receive

Remember, you were called to be warriors. When Paul wrote to the Ephesians, he told us to "Put on the armor of God." The metaphorical armor Paul wrote about was the exact armor the Roman soldiers wore. He wasn't saying your life should be passive. The very description of what we are to do daily is to gather up the weapons of warfare and get ready for a fight. You as a man, won't feel useful until you are engaged in the battle.

Our primary battle is spiritual. You may think it's your boss, or your bills or your kids acting up... But Ephesians 6:12 says, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." (NIV) Therefore, if our battle is in the spiritual realm, it's time that we engage in that realm? How do we do that? First, we need to understand our role on the battlefield.

God has given you specific gifts in order to engage the enemy. You are called to battle. If you were engaged in a normal battle, you might be a gunner, a tanker, a pilot or a drone operator. In the book of Ephesians, Paul tells us the different roles God has for His army.

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers... Ephesians 4:11(NIV)

These roles are the main roles and missions of a church. As a Christian, we should all be operating in our spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts can be nurtured and grown. As we mature in Christ, God will grow each gift. You may not have the gift of teaching, but you can still teach a small group. You may not have the gift of being a pastor, but you can still help guide a close friend through a divorce. Here is a small definition of the five main gifts that God has given to the Church. Each role is different and complimentary. The gifts of the spirit aren't to be confused for the Offices assigned within the church. You may be called to fulltime ministry, but if you're not, you may still operate in one of the 5-Fold ministry gifts, daily. As a father, you'll pastor and teach your children. As a friend to a lost friend, you may be just the evangelist that is needed in his life. Ask God to lead you and guide you in how you should utilize your gifts. He will!

- Apostle: On a Mission from God.
- Prophet: A Messenger from God
- Evangelist: Someone who shares the Gospel with the Lost

- Pastors: Shepherd
- Teachers: Instructor

Here are other Spiritual Gifts listed elsewhere in the Bible:

- Serving, Encouraging, Giving, Leadership, Mercy (Romans 12)
- Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Discernment, Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)
- Helps, Government

Summary and Personal Practice

Summary

After you've taken the Spiritual Gifts Test, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you and reveal to you how you should use the gifts that God has given you. God wants you to start now. There is a task for you to do, today. He has a plan. Put one foot in front of another, ask God to lead you and keep putting your own will in the back seat every time it tries to drive. You are uniquely you. You were made to do good works and those good works start now! Ask God what His plan is for you DAILY. You don't have to wait. Your purpose begins right where you are and as you grow, mature, and nurture the gifts God has given to you, God will expand your territory.

Personal Practice

Spiritual Gifts Test: Go to the link below and take the test. Keep your results in a notebook or notes app so you can return to them in the next lesson as you work through your gifts and calling.

<https://spiritualgiftstest.com>