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# JUMP-STARTING THE JOURNEY OF PURPOSE

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MYTHS ABOUT PURPOSE AND  
HOW TO COUNTER THEM

PART 1

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# INTRODUCTION

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**A new year and new resolutions to go with it, but life remains the same.** Nothing changes, it's just the same ol' same ol'. Then a thought crosses your mind. *Maybe I should convert these resolutions into goals and see if they work. Nah, been there, done that!* You interrupt that thought with a new one. *What will get me out of this dark hole that has become my life?* You question yourself.

Then your mind wanders recounting the anatomy of the hole - a life with nothing significant to look forward to, a boring job to wake up to each day, no success stories to share with your upward mobile friends, nothing to show for all the years you have worked, relationship drama that keeps you up all night, a prayer list that has gathered dust since nothing on it has manifested, a 'Mr. or Mrs. Right' list that is parallel to the people you keep attracting, age catching up with you at the speed of light, not to mention that everyone around you is getting married left, right and centre!

This is enough to get your head spinning to the next 'success in a flash' seminar, the much hyped 'spouse delivery' crusade, the new 'double your money' pyramid scheme, the elusive sermon on TV with 'your breakthrough', or the famous man of God who can give you 'a word from the Lord' revealing who stole your blessings. Eventually, you walk away from these spaces with your head hanging low, your hard-earned money gone, loss of your self-esteem and confidence, not to mention shame, defeat, discouragement and hopelessness. Now you wonder; *where do I go from here?*

That is the path many of us have taken as we make life work and become successful. In the meantime, everyone else seems to have found the secret formula for success except you. You start to feel like your life is not progressing. Life seems unfair because you are the only one who has remained behind. When you are not living the life of your dreams, there is a gap between *your* perception and the *truth* about life and success. When you don't know how to get to the life of your dreams or use your unique talents, then the gap results from a lack of purpose.

If the above three paragraphs capture the reality of your life, then you are experiencing what I call ***The Purpose Gap***. What is it?

# THE PURPOSE GAP

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*The Purpose Gap* is the difference between the life God created you to live and the one you have settled for today. It is the void left when you do not know your purpose and fall into any path that unfolds before you. This leaves you vulnerable to following a path that looks promising but is a dead end. When you hit many dead ends and your life doesn't move forward, you stagnate. Taking any path in life believing it will lead you to your dreams is the fastest route to **stagnation**. When your life is stagnant, you lack direction and meaning, and others seem to be ahead of you in life. Success eludes you every time, because what others told you to do is not working. Nothing seems to provide the breakthrough you desire. At the heart of stagnation, you will find hidden obstacles to a life of success.

***Stagnation is a strong indicator of a purposeless life!***

To have success, you must clearly define what it means to you. What will you have achieved in life to declare that you have been successful? Success means the attainment of a desired end, and if you have identified none, this could be the reason you are experiencing a lack of progress and direction in life. You have no specific aim in life. You might ask yourself; *what should I be aiming for?* My answer is: let purpose guide you on what you need to be doing with your life.

Success begins with the commitment to living a life of purpose. It is good to want a different life or make your life count for something. However, you must commit to making it happen. Living a purposeful life means that you know your purpose, and have a high level of self-awareness and personal development intelligence. It is a life where the higher road is mandatory and the road of least resistance becomes obsolete. This is the life that gives you focus and direction and helps you identify the path that leads to your dreams. It is a life of fulfillment. ***It is a purposeful life.***

As you think about what success means to you, I will introduce you to a framework that will guide you on how to position yourself for lasting success in **Part 2** of this special report titled ***The Pathway to Success***. It focuses on bridging *the Purpose Gap* and contains what I call the *4 Pillars of Success*, which provide support for your

dreams, achievements, acquisitions and other components of your success. They provide a sure foundation for the success you envision so that it will last and you will experience fulfillment in life. Lasting success does not mean a perfect life, but a life of purpose.

### ***What created the Purpose Gap?***

Most of us grew up with a script that did not allow the pursuit of our passions, but laid out the path we were to follow. As a result, we grew up 'towing the line' for fear of dire consequences from parents, culture, society, or those in authority over us. We have been towing the line ever since until one day we hit a dead end and wondered, *what just happened?* Then we realized we were not the ones drawing the line, others had already drawn it for us. Now we have to retrace our steps and find out how to draw the line, and where to draw it. By conforming to what others want us to be or do has detached us from who we are or what we are to do with our lives. The result is a purposeless life filled with frustration, dissatisfaction, compromise, and restlessness. We have no clue where we are going, and we feel lost and confused. The only solution now is to find meaning for our lives and get back to doing what God created us to do. It is a journey, but being well equipped for it will lighten the burden of finding the right path.

To bridge the ***Purpose Gap***, we need an intervening variable. This variable must be effective in moving you from a life of stagnation to a life of success. The variable in this case is your *purpose*. Some refer to it as your special assignment in life, your calling, or the reason God created you. Your purpose gives definition to your destination. It gives your life direction. It guides you as you crystallize your personal vision and mission, which act as reference points for your goals in life. Purpose helps you know what success looks like in your life. True success comes from fulfilling your life's purpose.

Your purpose is not the only intervening variable that can move you from stagnation to success. However, it is the most ideal for you if you want success with fulfillment and to know that you are doing the work God has called you to do and to be who He has called you to be.

# PURPOSE

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When God created you, He had a purpose for your life. He knew who He wanted you to be, and what He wanted you to do. He had a special assignment for you here on earth. There was a need in this world that He wanted you to meet. That assignment is your purpose. Some people get the revelation of their purpose easily and early in life, while others discern it over time. In *Jeremiah 1:1-10*, we read about God calling Jeremiah to be a prophet. God told him that before he was born, He had set him apart to be a prophet to the nations. God even told him how he would to fulfil his purpose. He is to go to those God sends him to, and deliver His message to them. This is also clear in the stories of others in the Bible who fulfilled their God-given purpose. We see it today in those who are pursuing God's purpose for their lives.

In biblical days, God anointed David as king of Israel after He had rejected Saul because of his disobedience (*1 Samuel 15:28-29*). David did not know that he would be king, as he was just a shepherd boy. But God had already decided that he would be the next king of Israel. This was his purpose. Not knowing God's purpose for your life does not mean that it doesn't exist. It does. You are yet to realize it. You may not be clear about what it is, but as you seek God, He will reveal it to you.

Your purpose acts as a point of reference for your decisions and plans. It illuminates your path, and you can see clearly where you need to step. Taking the right steps will lead you to a life of success and fulfillment. Knowing your purpose with crystal clarity is a process. It is the limiting beliefs you have from childhood that slow it down. Maybe your family of origin frowned upon fulfilling one's purpose in life, and saw it as a distraction from getting a 'real' job. Because of this, you believed that you must be employed. A belief like this one will definitely block your path towards knowing your purpose with clarity.

Your purpose will usher you into the life of your dreams, and one of serving the world with your unique talents. It will bridge *the purpose gap* in your life. Purpose intimidates many people because it is a reality check in your life. It signifies action without excuses, and knowing yours means that you have to fulfil it. This is the

scary part of purpose for those who seek it. In order to avoid this reality, many choose not to think about it, or ignore it, and hope that it won't matter. Others even pretend that it does not exist. If you follow this school of thought, you will create an illusion that will keep you stuck not knowing where your life is heading.

Before embarking on the journey of discovering your purpose, there are certain things you need to know. For example, there are obstacles on the journey, and knowing what they are will keep you from retreating when you encounter them. In order to jump-start the journey of purpose, you must identify what purpose means to you—the positive and the negative. Start by identifying beliefs that you have about purpose that have caused you to abandon the journey of fulfilling your purpose.

### *So, what does 'purpose' mean to you?*

You may lose your way on the journey of knowing and fulfilling your purpose because of certain misconceptions you have. If you have a distorted view of purpose, you will struggle to get clarity on yours.

The chart below will help you capture your thoughts about purpose, both positive and negative. Create a list of what the concept of 'purpose' means to you - positively and negatively. Be very honest with yourself so that you can make progress on this journey.

What purpose means to me...

<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
<i>e.g. I will impact the lives of others</i>	<i>e.g. God will take me to places I don't want to go</i>
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.

The list on the negative side reflects things that hold you back on your journey of purpose. It reflects the limiting beliefs you have about purpose that keep you stuck. They are the hidden obstacles that block your path and make you retreat into a life that is mediocre and unfulfilling. These beliefs appear real and generate a lot of fear that makes you believe you are ill-equipped to fulfil your purpose.

To deal with the negative beliefs, identify and replace them with empowering ones. The next section of this report will help you deal with a few myths. Once you deal with these false beliefs, you will clearly recognize God's voice when He speaks to you about your purpose. Many times we do not clearly hear God's voice because our minds have clutter. We wonder how purpose will negatively change our lives or the negative things others have told us about our purpose. No one can tell you what your purpose is, only God can. The information you get in books, articles, and seminars is to help you become more self-aware and remove mental clutter so that you can discern what God is saying to you. Could God have revealed your purpose, and you didn't believe Him? Did it sound too simple to be true? Did it sound intimidating, and you showed it the *hand*? Do you believe it can't come to you that easily?

# MYTHS ABOUT PURPOSE

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Myths are false beliefs that you have believed to be the truth, and which determine how you view life, others and yourself. If not careful, they can wreak havoc in your life. They act as hidden obstacles that keep you stuck in life when you are trying to move forward. These myths make you believe obstacles are insurmountable, and the only way out is to retreat. Knowing what they are beforehand will help you move forward with clarity and discernment, and you will succeed in finding your purpose.

We will look at 7 leading myths about purpose. There are more, but these form the focus of this report. I have also shared God's truth after each myth to help you think positively about purpose.

## **Myth #1: God will take me to places I don't want to go**

You may be reluctant to pursue your purpose because you believe God will take you to unpleasant places. You may think that when you say 'Yes' to God that He will immediately ship you off to a remote village for the rest of your life and live on donations only; or He will make you wear clothes that are not your style. God will not force you to be someone He never intended for you to be.

Yes, God will take you somewhere, and He has already equipped you with everything you need to make it there, your abilities, desires, gifting, etc. If you are a city girl who loves the city life, complete with all its trappings, then why would He take you to some remote village for the rest of your life? If you love your red high heels, don't you think you would be the best person to minister to others who love them too? There's a certain reason that God created you with the desires you have, not any evil ones though, but the one's He knew you would need to fulfill your purpose. Everyone has their place of ministry, therefore, do not judge what yours will look like based on what someone else's looks like. Say 'Yes' to God and seek Him to know your purpose.

## **God's truth: *Jeremiah 29:11***

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." (NIV)*

## **Myth #2: I can't handle the life changes expected of me**

Are you reluctant to know your purpose because of the changes you need to undergo in order to be effective? Well, look at it this way, for the level of success you are seeking, you need to grow and change. There is no escaping change because you will encounter it throughout your life. You would rather prepare yourself for change always. When you accept that change is part of the process in life, then you will be ready to handle the changes that come your way without falling apart.

Fulfilling your purpose will definitely require you to change to be effective. God is already preparing you for the changes up ahead, without you even knowing it. Some challenges you are experiencing in life today are preparing you for the journey ahead. They are equipping you with the capacity to handle the changes required as you fulfil your purpose. Don't forget that God's grace is perfect for you as you change. He will give you His grace to handle whatever comes your way.

Change builds your character so that you will remain successful now and in the future. The process of change is not always a pleasant one, but a necessary one. The fruits are tremendous. You discover you can do things that you never thought you could. Trust that you will handle the changes ahead, and that God will support you on your journey of purpose. He wants you to succeed and will offer you all the help that you need. It may not be what you expect sometimes, but it will definitely be what you need.

## **God's truth: *James 1:2-4***

*Consider it pure joy my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking in anything. (NIV)*

## Myth #3: I will be broke

Do you fear fulfilling your purpose because you think you will be broke? Have others told you that fulfilling your purpose means you will not be making any money and you have to rely on donations? I'm here to tell you that this is not true. You may have heard that it is not about the money and wondered, so, how do I survive? As much as the focus of purpose is not the money, as you create value as God intended, you will make money. God knew you would make money after providing value to others. You would earn a livelihood from your work.

The relationship between purpose and your livelihood lies in a career that is aligned with your purpose. This is work that you will love to do and will be exceptional at it. As you do your work with zeal and excellence, this will bring you before kings, and as you know where kings are, there is gold! Purpose guides you into a career that is fulfilling. It is important to note that your job *is not* your purpose; it is only an expression of it. If you are in the wrong job, then purpose has nothing to do with it.

Back to the money part. God wants you to be prosperous, and this is part of His plan for your life. Prosperity is not only in monetary terms, but in every area of your life. Financial prosperity will help you support the work of the church. If God expects you to support His church, then He will provide you with the financial means to do so, and you still get to enjoy financial blessing.

Pursuing purpose will not leave you broke. It will leave you richer in every way, financial and otherwise. Do not assume that because some people rely on offerings from others that yours will be like that. You have your unique journey, and God will give you financial blessings, more than you imagine.

### God's truth: *Philippians 4:19*

*And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.  
(NIV)*

## Myth #4: My family will reject me

Do you come from a family where parents write a life script for their children and pursuing purpose means breaking away from that script? Are you scared of the cost of abandoning that script? Do you feel that your family will withdraw their support from you, and leave you out in the cold?

Going down the path of purpose means that not everyone will support or understand you. However, I have learnt that your family may resist at first, but with time, they will understand, and let you be. If they come round, they will support you and be your biggest cheerleaders. This journey will cause certain changes in you, and not everyone will be comfortable with them because they will have to relate to you differently. If your family resists at first, it is because the change in you is forcing them to get out of their comfort zone, and it is not a pleasant experience.

When you know about the challenges ahead, you will be ready to handle them effectively. You will even be able to prepare your loved ones in advance for your new journey. Once they understand why you are pursuing purpose and the benefits of doing so, you will be in for a surprise that you inspire them to do the same. As you experience any challenges with family, remember to be respectful at all times, disagree respectfully and continue to treat your parents honourably. Their reactions will come from a point of concern or even fear; they love you and want the best for you. Once they see how fulfilling your purpose transforms your life, they will celebrate you.

Should you lack the support of family, yet you strongly believe in stepping into what God is calling you to do, seek God on how to proceed. Eventually, you will have to decide whether you are going to please God or your family. Sometimes it takes a bold step and standing up against opposition to fulfil your purpose. Remember that God works out everything for your good. Only He knows how to right the situation.

### **God's truth: *Proverbs 26:2***

*Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest. (NIV)*

## Myth #5: God will control my life

Are you avoiding your purpose because you think God will control your life in a dictatorial way? That's a lie. Are you thinking that because of this control, your life will be boring and uneventful? That's a lie. Do you assume God will control you as if you are a puppet? That too is a lie. So, what is the truth?

Here goes...

As Christians, we are to obey God and submit to His will for our lives. He did not create us to live life on our terms, but for His divine purpose for our lives. We are to go where He leads because He knows what is best for us. God has also given us free will that allows us to decide what we want to experience in life. In my experience, God likes it when His people can decide and stand their ground. However, there needs to be room in your decision-making process for God. He sees the bigger picture of your life and knows the best path for you. This is not controlling your life. This is *leadership*. Fulfilling your purpose is a partnership between you and God, where you listen to where He would like you to go, and you follow His lead.

I have learnt that God gives us room for negotiation because He values our thoughts and desires. He is ready to accommodate those that are in line with His will for our lives. Sometimes God gives you the discretion to make certain decisions in a situation. Why? Because He knows you are heading in the right direction, and you are on track. He is watching you closely. It is important to be real with God during your prayer time, as this is what a genuine relationship is all about. Only then can He minister to the deepest parts of your soul because you have bared yourself before Him. This is where true healing occurs. Only when you open your heart to God are you ready to receive His will for your life.

God is not out to control you, but to lead you into your destiny. Sometimes you may not understand why He takes you in a direction that seems unpleasant or even painful. Understand that God's got your back, and He is not malicious. God is good.

**God's truth: *Jeremiah 10:23***

*I know O Lord, that a man's life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps.*  
(NIV)

## **Myth #6: Purpose is very difficult to find**

Have others discouraged you from fulfilling your purpose because they made you believe it was a difficult and impossible journey? Your purpose is easy to find. It only becomes difficult when you crack your brain to discover what it is. God does not intend for you to struggle to find it, however, He expects you to ask Him what it is.

If you want to know your purpose, ask God! And then give Him time to reveal it in a way you will understand. When you decide to figure it out, you miss the mark every time. You end up with a speculative answer, which keeps changing. God created you for a purpose, and only He can clearly articulate what it is in your life. God's purpose for your life goes beyond the holistic Christian purpose of worshiping Him and submitting to His will for every situation in your life.

Some people say that to be happy in life, find what you are passionate about and make money from it. However, I have seen many take this route and end up more disappointed than before they tried it. I then asked myself, *Why this is so?* This was after taking that advice, and hitting a dead end every time.

What I discovered is that people have business ideas they think they are passionate about, but when it's time to create a unique product, they get stuck. They cannot clearly define their product or solution. These people cannot imagine immersing themselves completely into something that is not resonating deeply with their hearts. They do not want to start a business or project and discover that it is not what they want to do for the rest of their lives. Suddenly, they have doubts.

Why have doubts when you think that this is what you are passionate about?

The simple answer is that the passion or idea lacks the foundation of their purpose. There is no foundation to support their passion; they are already on shaky ground before they even start. The problem with approaching what you are passionate about without having the foundation of purpose is that you will take 2 steps

forward, and then retreat. When this happens over again, you will eventually believe it is impossible to make money from your passion.

Knowing what you are passionate about is definitely part of the purpose journey, just not all of it. There are many things you are passionate about, but not all of them relate to your purpose. When I used the route of identifying what I am passionate about and making money from it, I got stuck. Why? Because I am passionate about cooking, baking, travelling, and personal development. When I tried baking cakes to sell (because people told me my cakes were great), I did not get the fulfillment I thought I would. It didn't feel like what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I didn't know my purpose clearly then and I was just going with I was passionate about. However, when I came to know my purpose – taking others through the journey of purpose and self-awareness - I knew it was aligned my passion for personal growth. After years of getting to know myself more deeply, I discovered I was really passionate about purposeful living; I just paid no attention to this.

Purpose goes beyond your passions, and helps you know which core passions, skills, abilities, and talents to apply to fulfil it. God revealed that He was calling me to write, and other things I do in my career cannot take the place of writing books.

Go beyond the things that you are passionate about and get to know your purpose. That will give you a solid foundation on which to lay your passions, talents, and gifts.

### **God's truth: *James 4:2***

*If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. (NIV)*

### **Myth #7: I am too old to pursue my purpose**

Do you think you are too old to fulfil your purpose because you have hit midlife or retired? Do you feel that you do not have the energy to keep up? Have you always thought that purpose is for the youngsters? This is not true. As long as you are alive, it is not too late. When you compare your purpose with the script handed to

you that says, 'go to school, get a job, retire after several years and enjoy your pension', then it will fail the test in your eyes.

Your purpose goes beyond your job, and you are never too old for it. You can fulfil it until your dying day, unlike a job that has an expiry date. If Moses in the Bible had said he was too old to help the Israelites, and asked God to get a youngster to do the job, what would have happened? God had appointed him to do the job, even at 80 years of age, because He knew He had equipped Moses to carry out the task.

Purpose is versatile and you can express it in different ways, for example, you can speak, write, coach, consult, etc. You will execute it through various avenues throughout your life. You may think that you do not want to upset the flow of your life today, but the changes you make will lead to a better life where you have *success-with fulfillment*.

You are always making life changes, why not change for a good cause - *your cause*? Nothing beats the fulfillment that comes from affecting the lives of others and seeing the value you create in this world. You will experience the joy that comes from living beyond yourself and the 4 (or 14) walls of your house.

### **God's truth: *Psalm 92: 12-14***

*The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green... (NIV)*

The 7 myths above cover the leading reasons why people shy away from pursuing their purpose and settle for an unfulfilling life. There are more myths, and your 'negative' list on the chart at the beginning of this report will reveal more. They are myths when there is evidence to suggest the opposite. The best way of confirming that is by looking at those around you who are fulfilling their purpose. You could also read the stories of others who have found their purpose. As you deal with these myths and replace them with God's truth, you will be ready to begin the journey of your purpose once more.

# REWARDS OF FULFILLING YOUR PURPOSE

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There are many benefits of fulfilling your purpose, some of which you have listed on the 'positive' side of the chart at the beginning of this report. These are the rewards you get for stepping into a life of purpose and they should motivate you to pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and embark on the journey once more. I will discuss 5 rewards. There are more, but the 5 will form the focus of this report.

## Reward #1: Fulfillment

Stepping into your purpose gives you a sense of fulfillment because you are doing what God created you to do – His special assignment for you. Fulfilling your God-given assignment and achieving your dreams will give you a sense of satisfaction in life. It comes from having God in your life and submitting to His divine plan. You know you are on the right track, and your life is on a solid foundation. Your life may not be perfect, but it is on purpose. You have success with fulfillment. You have inner joy that is not determined by your circumstances. Your life has meaning.

## Reward #2: Success

Fulfilling your purpose brings success into your life. The success is in every area of your life—career, spiritual, social, financial, health, etc. Success is a journey, not a destination. Your definition of success may not be like that of the next person. However, there are certain common indicators of success like a career you love and excel at, healthy relationships, a close relationship with God, a healthy and fit body, a vibrant social life, financial wealth, achievement of your goals and dreams, just to name a few.

Success based on material things brings a lot of emptiness, especially if you think those things will fill a certain need in your life, and then they don't. It becomes a recipe for addictions, abuse, discontent, and greed. We must avoid this at all costs. When your purpose is the foundation of your success, you are on solid ground. You will be happy with how your life turns out, and if certain aspects of it don't please you, then keeping your eyes on your purpose will help you make it through.

### **Reward #3: Transformation**

Transformation is two ways here: your own and of those whose lives you are affecting. We focus a lot on the transformation of others and forget that we also get transformed. As you embrace changes along the purpose journey, you become transformed. You become more discerning, wise, resilient, and patient, not to mention that you go through a healing process. God is at work in you as you are working for Him.

When you fulfil your purpose, you bring about a transformation into the lives of others. It is God working through you to transform the lives of those He has sent you to. God's special assignment for you involves touching the lives of others, and bringing them back to Him. The essence of your life's purpose is to reach out to others. It is your ministry on earth. To execute your purpose, you need God's leadership and wisdom.

Your transformation comes when you use your gifts to reach out to others the way God intended. For example, by using my gift of writing, I am enlightening you on how to live a purposeful life. There is such great joy seeing someone transformed because of something you taught them, sang for them, or prayed for them. It is overwhelming and humbling. Let God use you to reach out to others who need your help.

### **Reward #4: Living a focused life**

Purpose gives your life focus and direction because it acts as a focal point for your choices. Living a purposeful life means that your purpose guides how you live your life, and with whom you align yourself. You know which forums to engage in or avoid, which jobs to take up or avoid, which path to take at any point, or which opportunities to pursue and when.

When you are living a life of purpose, you are more careful about how you spend your time and with whom. You get to define what your personal development needs are, and this helps you know which courses to attend or books to read. You only attend courses or seminars that apply to your needs and not because they are popular. There are times you will attend courses and seminars that are in line with your passion but still support your purpose.

## Reward #5: Clarity in decision making

The number one reason for indecision is lack of clarity. Because you do not know the criteria to make particular decisions, you go round in circles. It is easy at this point to spiritualize decisions and claim to wait for God to show you where to go. All this time, He is waiting for you to decide because He has given you the wisdom and discretion to do so. This kind of waiting will fill you with a lot of frustration.

Purpose acts as a guide when you find yourself at cross roads, and wondering which path to take. It shows you if the path you choose will take you closer or further away from your destiny. It also drowns the noise when everyone is telling you which way to go. You should listen to wise counsel, but know you the final decision maker in your life. Your purpose is obvious to you and not to others. When you are sure about your purpose, you can stand your ground because you are on a strong foundation. Others may strongly disagree with your decisions, but you know in your heart that you are on the right track.

I hope the rewards listed above will encourage you to continue on the path that directs you to your purpose. Looking back, you will be happy you did and find more rewards.

# THE HIDDEN COSTS OF NOT PURSUING YOUR PURPOSE

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Deciding to ignore your purpose or postpone the journey doesn't mean that you are safe, and that all is well. All is not well. Not knowing your purpose is costing you a lot. Sometimes, unexpected things happen in our lives, and they direct us to the path that leads to our life's purpose. For example, you could undergo retrenchment, or your boss fires you and you cannot get another job. You then decide to try several businesses and they all don't work out. By then, you have debt up to your eyeballs, and don't know what to do. If you knew your purpose, you would have a safe landing because you can quickly get back on your feet.

**So, what are these hidden costs?**

## 1. Stagnation in life

Stagnation is when you are experiencing movement in life, but none of it is forward. Your movement is more in circles than one direction progressively. You change jobs often and you are still on the same salary; you leave employment to start a business and many years later, your income does not change; you keep getting into romantic relationships that go nowhere; you don't know how to get out of unemployment; you are not achieving your dreams despite your efforts. You seem to encounter many closed doors in your life and not understanding why, and the list is endless.

To move from stagnation to success, you need an intervening variable, and in this case, it is your purpose. Purpose gives you direction and a new perspective. You look at your life differently and you clearly see which path will lead you to success. By choosing to settle for your life as it is, you will end up with less than you have settled for, and your life will remain like that—one big compromise!

## 2. Costly mistakes

When you don't know your purpose, any path that opens up before you looks like the right one. This is until you take a few more steps and you get the greatest shock

of your life—it is the wrong one, and you cannot turn back. You take up almost every opportunity that shows up, thinking it is the one to give you your ‘big break’ only for it to become a major setback in your life. You end up in the wrong relationships and get your heart shattered because the others were not going in your direction.

By knowing your purpose and the direction your life is taking, you will avoid costly mistakes. You will know who is going in your direction and who isn’t, which opportunities advance your purpose and those that do not. Your purpose will empower you to make wise decisions in life.

### **3. Debt**

Are you wondering what the connection between purpose and debt is? Oh, we are talking about bad debt here, the kind that keeps you stuck when you want to walk away from your job or leaves you broke every time. Debt can keep you where you do not want to be because you have pay it off before you leave. It keeps you bound to circumstances that prevent you from fulfilling your purpose.

Imagine taking a loan from your company to buy a car, and you can’t leave until you pay it back. Or taking a mortgage to buy a house, yet you need to fulfil your purpose in another city or country. In these instances, debt will delay your journey of purpose and discourage you. When your purpose guides your purchasing decisions, you will avoid taking loans to do certain things you think are important in your life, yet they are not.

### **4. Confusion**

When you experience confusion, you don’t know what you want in life. It becomes easy to second guess your decisions and ideas, and you are never sure if they are the right ones. You are always ‘down for whatever’ because you do not know where you want to go. You have many options but are unable to choose one because every option feels like the right one.

Confusion robs us of the clarity we need to move in the right direction. It leaves us in a perpetual state of not knowing what to do. If we want to be clear on what to do or where to go in life, we must know our God-given purpose. Clarity comes from seeing the bigger picture of your life so that you decide from an elevated point. Your purpose guides your daily actions and decisions.

## 5. Prolonged unemployment

Many people have lost their jobs and cannot get others. They find themselves unemployed for long, and are unsure what the future holds for them. Some have tried different businesses without success, and do not know where to turn for help.

I believe the leading cause of unemployment is lack of purpose, which leads to a lack of direction in life. A job seems like a sure foundation, but in reality, it is very shaky. You only realize this when you are unemployed and cannot find another job.

The journey of purpose sheds light on your talents and gifts, which help you know the path to take in life. Your purpose will equip you to find work you love, and you will not have to settle for any business just to make a living. Knowing your purpose helps you make a smooth transition should you decide to take a different career path.

Your purpose will give you direction and clarity as you go along the journey of life. When you know which direction to take, you will clearly see the steps you need to take. This will help you achieve the success you envision.

# FALSE REWARDS OF ABANDONING YOUR JOURNEY OF PURPOSE

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When the journey of fulfilling your purpose becomes tough, it is easy to give up. It may look like it is more trouble to know your purpose than it is worth. It then becomes easy for you to retreat to your usual life and look for rewards that you can fall back on. Well, what may look like rewards are actually 'false rewards', and you only get to discover this when life throws you a curve ball and you completely lose your bearing. The only way to get back on track is to know your purpose.

Are there things or situations in your life that you are allowing to reward you at the expense of fulfilling your purpose?

So, how do you identify false rewards in your life? Below are some examples; try to identify more in your life, and see them for what they are-*illusions*.

## 1. Job title

A job title is a group of words we hold dear because they give us an identity and prestige. When you have a coveted job title, it gives you power in the marketplace. Seeing the reactions our job titles evoke, we feel important. What many of us don't know is that when we lose our job titles, we feel like we have lost our identity. It's as if we lost value and feel vulnerable. Our protective armour is gone, and we feel unsafe. It made us feel safe. The question is, safe from what?

A job title works for you when you have it, and when you lose it, you find you had nothing else going for you in that environment. That is when you know that the title was fooling you all along. Many people realize this when they find themselves unemployed, and employers are no longer enthusiastic about hiring them. It is only until such a time that you engage with your purpose, hoping it will give you a solution.

When you know your purpose, you no longer take your identity from a job title. This is because your purpose is bigger than your job. You can express your purpose

through various jobs. When you know who you are and what your purpose is, you will not have an unhealthy attachment to a job title. You learn to take your identity from being a child of God. Your purpose helps you know the value you bring to the marketplace, and this will set your career on a sure foundation; your ladder will lean on the right wall.

## **2. Salary**

A salary is good because it allows you to pay your bills and make a livelihood. When does a salary become a false reward? When you hang on to the wrong job because it guarantees you a salary, and you imagine the journey of purpose is full of financial uncertainty. The salary blinds you to the fact that purpose comes with financial provision. The financial success you are looking for will come as part of the package of fulfilling your purpose. Chasing a salary can keep you in a job that does not allow you any free time to think about the direction your life is taking.

You may use the 'certainty' of your salary to gain debt to pursue your dreams, and remain struck in employment when you could be fulfilling your purpose. Your purpose will give you the freedom of multiple sources of income. You will pay your bills and bless others too. See a salary for what it really is, 'uncertain' because there is no such thing as job security. Instead, put your trust in God because He will provide for you financially as you fulfill His purpose for your life. He knows everything you need in order to do that which He has called you to do.

## **3. Comfortable life**

We all love it when our lives are comfortable, with nothing coming to disrupt that comfort. We like to say, 'Why fix it when it ain't broke?' After all, I am living 'on the Coke side of life'. You are in a relationship you think is heading towards marriage, you have a high-flying career, enjoy the finer things in life, a vibrant social life, designer clothes and perfumes, and a good car, and then BOOM! Everything falls apart!

You feel lost, like someone pulled the rug from under your feet. What next? Now it hits you that your life was on a shaky foundation. You come face to face with the fact that your life had no direction and meaning, and you have no clue where to start or what to do.

Your purpose ensures that you have a good foundation in life, and your success comes with fulfillment. Knowing your purpose will help you make a smooth transition should you face unemployment. Get clear on your purpose so that you can easily tell who or what needs to be in your life. You will identify illusions in your life like relationships that don't stand the test of purpose.

#### **4. I don't have to do what I don't know**

We have heard it said many times that 'what you don't know won't hurt you' but with purpose, what you don't know will hurt you. How? By stealing your fulfillment, faith, progress, success, and the list is endless. You may think that because you don't know your purpose, then you don't have to fulfil it, and you feel it is okay. The problem with this kind of thinking is that you get into the trap of thinking that someday you will fulfil your purpose, and there is no pressure to do it. I hate to break it to you, but 'someday' will never come. When your life is ending, it will hit you that 'someday' never came, and all you have to share with the world at this point is your litany of regrets. Don't let that be you. Decide to get clear on your purpose NOW, and get moving.

Remember that God is ready and very willing to give you the clarity you need. Ask Him, and be willing to listen and obey Him. He gives us the grace and strength to do what He has called us to do. He has already wired us to carry out that purpose. The journey of purpose only becomes difficult when we are full of fear and doubt, and expect an assignment we can comfortably fulfil. I choose to look at my purpose as a 'stretch assignment', and I grow as I fulfil it.

#### **5. There is no such thing as 'purpose'**

Sometimes, along the journey of finding your purpose, the going gets tough and you quit. You then conclude there is no such thing as purpose. It is easier to accept the path you are on, even though it is not working for you. You believe you have to accept your life as it is, and don't have to make any changes, or worry about upsetting anyone.

The unfortunate bit is that something inside you will not allow you to quit halfway through the journey. You end up with a tug-of-war on the inside that causes you a lot of frustration. You want to believe there is no purpose, but you know getting

clarity on your purpose is the way out. Don't settle for less because you hit a roadblock along the journey. You can overcome the obstacles you find on the way. God can use an obstacle to test your resilience and readiness to fulfil your purpose. Make sure you pass the test.

## WHAT NEXT?

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As you jump-start the journey of your purpose, take stock of all the fears, myths, doubts and concerns and deal with them. How? Take them to God in prayer and ask Him to show you how to eliminate them. Learn how to develop empowering beliefs about your purpose that will support you on your journey. This will remove the mental clutter that stops you from getting clarity on your God-given assignment.

Ask God specific questions about your purpose so that you receive answers that help you move forward faster. Trust that God will help you put together the bits and pieces to the puzzle that is your purpose. Be willing to receive God's answers even when they are not what you expect. As you gain clarity on your purpose, do not neglect self-awareness. When you increase your knowledge of self, you are better able to receive answers relating to your purpose. Purpose and self-awareness go hand in hand. You fulfil your purpose using your gifts, abilities and passion.

No one can tell you what your purpose is. Only God can do that. If you decide to figure it out as is the norm, you will only end up feeling frustration and defeat. Trust that God is good, and He gives good gifts to His children. Any sacrifices He asks of you will be worth it when you see the transformation in the lives of others.

You may have a vague idea of what your purpose is, but this will not help you fulfil it. You need clarity so that you define it in a single statement. This helps you capture it crisply, so you can articulate it. It will come in handy as you brand yourself and your business. You will be very clear on your value proposition in a way that others see the uniqueness of your product.

As you pursue your purpose and get excited about doing things for God, remember that He values your relationship with Him more. Your purpose is a partnership between you and God. Do not divorce Him from the process.

It's time to get up, dust yourself off and try again. You will make it. When you get thirsty along the way, ask God for a 'Purpose cola', He has plenty of them ready for your refreshment!

Look out for **Part 2** of this special report: **The Pathway to Success**. It focuses on the transition from stagnation to success. It includes ***The 4 Pillars of Success*** and how they act as a foundation for a successful life.

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Josephine Ngatia is a Digital Content Writer & Strategist. She works with Christian ministers and business owners to plan, develop, and manage digital content for them. She develops digital content for their websites, blogs, and other channels. Josephine mostly works with new authors, business startups, and small businesses.



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