

Mid-week Service: Purpose Series 10

13th September 2023

Topic: Recognizing Your Purpose

Text: 1Chronicles 12:32: *of the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, their chiefs were two hundred, and all their brethren were at their command (NKJV)*

INTRODUCTION

This teaching is a continuation of "**Seasons of Life**". There are about four seasons you must go if you will attain the height of your purpose. In the last teaching, we laid a foundation and learned explicitly about the sovereignty of God. He is God and no one can question him. I explained the importance of understanding this person of God if you will live a life without struggling to become that which God wants you to be. By revelation, we went further to understand that as believers we navigate the Sovereignty of God by FAITH not "fate". Together then comes an alignment so that there is an understanding that all things are working together for your good according to His purpose. Faith is important.

We must never resolve to fate but instead faith. We work by faith, not by fate. If a believer does not understand this dimension of God he might struggle with becoming what has been purposed for him by God.

We also proceeded on understanding men who understood the seasons of life, in particular, we looked at the life of Philip and Stephen. There was a season in their lives where they served tables as deacons. But at a point in their lives, they understood by discernment the need to change from a deacon to an evangelist during a time of persecution. Stephen was a man who at the point of his death instead of experiencing agony, was so in the spirit that he saw a revelation of heaven. Philip experienced the supernatural move of God by appearing in the chariot of the man who lacked an understanding of the scripture. I implore you, to understand the seasons. Philip became an evangelist after being assigned to serve tables. The Bible says terrible signs and wonders were wrought by him.

There is always a result, manifestation if you understand seasons and enter into it per time.

There was a time in my life when all I wanted to pursue in life was money, but God told me that season was far gone and to move to the next. The moment I switched to the season God wanted me to be at that time, everything turned around. You must be sensitive to every call of God into a season.

Don't be persistent in a season God has left because you are comfortable, learn to move in alignment with God.

Our text today shows us certain principles in navigating seasons of life;

➤ **Identity**

The Sons of Issachar were people of great ability and the result was that they had all their brethren at their command. They became relevant and

influential because of the understanding of seasons. God did not design anyone to be irrelevant but rather we are designed to be distinct in our spheres. For you to reach that point where you are influential and relevant, you must first of all have an identity as seen with the Sons of Issachar.

"Nobody navigates through the seasons of life without an identity. If you lose your identity, you remain irrelevant in the journey of purpose."

At the beginning of this series, we asked 5 peculiar questions around purpose. The first to be mentioned was "Who are you?", that is the question of identity. The scripture didn't say any other name but it stated specifically, the Sons of Issachar.

"If you do not have an identity in Christ, you will suffer the crisis of identity."

Identity makes you unique. A deep understanding of identity will never allow you to copy and compete with anyone. Know that you are who you are uncommonly.

➤ **Have an Understanding**

You must have understanding if you would navigate your way in the season of life and come out relevant. The understanding of time won't allow you to take your life with levity. Many who lack understanding tend to take the right action at the wrong time and end up getting frustrated because they don't get their desired result.

To have an understanding, it is important to have exposure. It gives a type of understanding that naturally you will not have.

There are moments in life when certain things ought to be done, if you miss those moments, everything about your life becomes a prayer point. This is why you must be sensitive in your spirit to every movement happening.

I pray the Lord helps you in the application of this series. *Purpose is doing, it is not explaining nor narrating.* Even the Bible records that, "Blessed are those who hear and do". Do you know that despite the fact the Sons of Issachar understood times if the Israelites refused to do as they were told, they would remain stagnant in their problems?

Let me add this, learn to ask God what to do in every situation rather than praying aimlessly. Seek solutions from God at all times.

What are the Seasons Of Life?

1. Season of Recognition and Discovery

Mark 1:16-17

And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." (NKJV)

All through the lives of Simon and Andrew, their only focus was to catch fish until they encountered Jesus who changed their season. If they remained as fishermen, no one would know them and they wouldn't fulfil their purpose. God took them to a new life that he had purposed for them.

"Each time God is said to change the season of a man, there will always be a discovery."

Every living soul must discover what God has called them to do. However, it is not enough that you discover, you must be spiritually minded in a dimension that makes you sensitive to changes in seasons. Your antenna must be high.

Genesis 25:23 - *And the LORD said to her: "Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger."* (NKJV)

This was the story of Rebecca when she was carrying two 'nations' in her womb who were always struggling. She enquired and got a reply from God. Rebecca experienced recognition and discovery in the reply she got; having thought she was carrying ordinary children in her womb. Rebecca couldn't rest until had this discovery.

It is the same with purpose, *until you live a purposeful life, you won't have rest.* It is possible to be involved in a lot of activities yet have no fulfilment. Do you remember Simon in the Book of Luke? He was alive solely to see the Lord. He couldn't even die because of this. I have said this numerous times: **"One of the things that preserves life is purpose."** If you discover your purpose, no devil can kill you unless you are done with it. Simon was ready to die but God said he couldn't until he saw the Promise. It was the very day he saw Jesus Christ that he gave glory and died. I pray for you, may you fulfill purpose.

The next question we want to answer is the basis of our teaching today.

HOW DO I RECOGNIZE MY PURPOSE?

There are different things God uses.

1. Consistent Revelation in Christ

Ephesians 1:17

"...that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him" (NKJV)

It takes revelation to discover purpose, it is not what you search or look for. If you are not close to God to open your eyes to see it you will continue to struggle. Revelation enables us to recognize purpose and it comes via :

i. Vision

Acts 16:7-9 - *After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." (NKJV)*

It takes the Spirit of Revelation to know the next purpose of your life. Paul and the other brethren had the intention to start a ministry in a city however it was not the next purpose for them. There was a need for the Spirit of Revelation to come through a vision to show them the right location to take action. Vision can be open, closed and there is a trance. It takes your growth in Christ for you to know which one God is using to unveil your purpose.

"Vision is the first aspect of revelation God uses for you to recognize (discover) purpose."

ii. Dream

Genesis 37:5-8 - *Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers, and they hated him even more. So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed:*

There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright, and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf."
(NKJV)

God showed Joseph in a dream the purpose of his life. There are dreams you have when you sleep and there are dreams that are projections of the future. Sometimes God comes to you in dreams to reveal His purpose for your life but you must be careful who you share it with before the materialization of the purpose. *It is not all dreams that are evil some point you to your purpose.*

iii. Trance

In Acts Chapter 10, Peter was hungry and was thinking of what to eat. It was at this point he went into a trance for a revelation of purpose. Trance doesn't occur for long it is very short often in seconds. God revealed a dimension of purpose to Peter in a trance about the spread of the gospel to the Gentiles (Abrahamic promises).

Let me tell you, God will never reveal to someone else what He has not told you. If it happens, it is because you are acting deaf and dumb to God. I know you are wondering about the place of the ministry of the prophet as regards this statement. The existence of the ministry of the prophet is to confirm the New Testament in junction over our lives. **You are a prophet of yourself in the New Testament.** I pray that you grow to be mature in God.

iv. Circumstances

Acts 13:1-3 - *Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had*

been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. (NKJV)

Circumstances can warrant purpose. The scripture above shows how your church can provide purpose for you. When you are called for an assignment in church, it is not ordinary instead it is a purpose in the season of recognition. More than often, you would say it is your pastor who called you for the assignment but that is not it. If you see God in your pastor then it is God's calling. **A church is a place of recognition of purpose as well.** Are you faithful to your local church in service? It is through service that purpose is often discovered in the church. Never be idle in your local church.

One of the ways God reveals purpose to you is through the people around you, your local church so if you don't have one you are committed to then you might struggle with purpose discovery.

From verse 1 of our scripture, I realize it takes a prophet to recognize a prophet. They are well situated in church, hence if you carry such anointing it is a prophet in the church that will locate you. ***Gifts are discovered in the church of God, ensure you are available for discovery.*** Don't run away from the church. Don't deprive yourself of becoming that which God wants you to be.

v. **Revelation can come through the Word of God**

2. Appropriate Burden

What is Burden?

Burden is something that is heavy in your heart so much that you pray and do all but that heaviness remains. *It is a prompting of God speaking.*

Exodus 2:11-12 - *Now it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. So he looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. (NKJV)*

This was a story of a man who had a burden but applied it in the wrong way. Moses saw an Egyptian maltreating an Israelite, and being displeased he killed the Egyptian. The question is why did he do what he did? He carried a burden in his heart about the suffering of his people so he killed. This is the wrong mentality of burden, it is a wrong way of fulfilling purpose.

Nehemiah 1:1-11; Nehemiah received a burden from an information and he sat, wept, fasted, and prayed (*check verse 4*). This was a different approach to burden as compared to Moses. Note that the first thing he did was sit.

"Men that discover purpose are 'sitters'."

Many people take the wrong approach to burden because they refuse to allow the burden to mature to give them accuracy in action. *Don't be in a rush with your burden.*

Even before Jesus began to do ministry, He went to the synagogue to sit among doctors. It may take you years for the burden, and purpose received to mature and fly but I tell you never rush. Learn to sit.

When you have a burden about a union or any situation you don't jump to fight, you need to sit and pray first. See the difference between Moses and Nehemiah, one killed, and the other prayed.

"When you have a burden, the first thing you do is bury yourself in fasting, and prayers."

Whatever burden it is you have turn them into prayers!