

# God's Power and Purpose in a Woman's Identity in Christ

In today's Me, Me, Me mindset, we are told to do whatever makes us happy or is pleasing to us. We are living in times where people believe that the world revolves around them and that their wants, needs and desires are the most important. But as Christians we know that the world revolves around the S-O-N! God did not save us to do whatever makes us happy; He saved us to do what makes Him happy. Obeying God will bring us great joy, but joy also comes at a cost. Obedience involves sacrifice, hard work, and daily surrender to God's will. God does not promise that as a Christian we will have perfect lives, complete happiness, or no difficulties. But He does promise to give us His love, grace, mercy and strength.

## 4 Key Points

### I. Purpose, Not Instability

I don't know about you, but I function much better when I have a goal or a purpose. It helps me to stay focused and on track.

#### Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives *in* me; and the life which I now live *in* the flesh I live by faith *in* the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

How have our old selves been crucified with Christ? Legally - God looks at us as if we had died with Christ. Because our sins died with him, we are no longer condemned. We have been reconciled with God and are free to grow into Christ's likeness. Relationally- We have become one with Christ and his experiences are ours. Our Christian life began when in unity with him we died to our old self. In daily life-we must regularly crucify sinful desires that keep us from following Christ. Thankfully we have Christ's power as we fight this sin. We are no longer alone, for Christ lives in us-he is our power for living and our hope for the future.

As Christians, our purpose is to reflect Christ, be more like Him, and glorify God.

#### Romans 15:5-7(NKJV)

Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

#### I Corinthians 6:20 (NKJV)

For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God *in* your body and *in* your spirit, which are God's.

God has provided each of us with the tools needed to glorify Him. He has given us our own interests and abilities, and we should use them to bring Him glory. For example: I am not gifted in the kitchen (you can ask my kids) but we have wonderful ladies in our church on the kitchen committee who have been given that talent and are using it to glorify God and be a blessing to others. We have gifted singers who honor God with their voices. We have teachers who can relate the truth of God's word to young children. We have speakers who can share God's word in a way that people can relate to and glean knowledge and wisdom from. Ephesians 4 verses 11-13 stress this point which is that we are not going to be perfect at ALL things but we can use what God has blessed us with to serve Him and reach others.

## **II. Identity, Not Performance**

As women, sometimes we lose ourselves or our identity. It may be wrapped up in the roles that we have in life. When I was younger, I was Arnol and Melody Weaver's daughter. When I got married, I was Scott's wife. When I had children, I was Tyler and Josh's mom. Now I am Ava's Nana. But if this is the only way that we view ourselves, then we are devastated when those roles are taken away or no longer exist. As Christians, we are first and foremost the children of God. I John 3:1 - 2 states:

### **I John 3:1 (NKJV)**

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Our identity is in God and this is what we should be focusing on not on our own past performance. Sure we all like to have a good resume to boast about our past achievements but that is not how we should measure ourselves. God's holiness should be our standard. Relying on ourselves and our own strength to battle sin will get us nowhere. Only God can help us conquer sin. Ultimately we want to become more like Jesus. This is not a process that happens overnight; we must surrender daily to God's desires and rest in Christ's achievements not our own. As our author Diane Scallon states:

“Truly believing that Christ's achievements stand in for ours will radically change our lives. Anxiety levels and struggles with depression will decrease. Many women today struggle with anxiety and depression because they do not feel they are a good enough wife, mother, sister, daughter, friend,

or volunteer. But God wants us to be faithful to what He leads us to do, not be perfect in all that we do.”

In Philippians 3: 5-6, Paul recounts his resume and achievements but calls it all loss for the sake of knowing Christ.

### **III. Delight, Not Discontent**

In a world permeated with pictures of perfect families, living perfect lives in perfect homes it is easy for us to have feelings of inadequacy when we compare ourselves and our lives to that pictured perfection. This comparison can lead to discontent which could spiral into despair and a complete lack of hope. In Nehemiah 8, God’s people wept openly when they realized how far they were from obeying God’s law but Ezra tells them in verse 10 “Do not grieve for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” This truth applies to all of us as well. We will fail; there will be hard times; we will struggle. Yet He will constantly protect and restore us. We must remember that during these times of discouragement and discontent, we can choose joy.

In Philippians 4:11-13, Paul tells us that he knew how to be content whether he had plenty or whether he was in need. The secret was drawing on Christ’s power for strength and adjusting his attitude. Do you have great needs, or are you discontented because you don’t have what you want? Learn to rely on God’s promises and Christ’s power to help you be content. If you always want more, ask God to remove that desire and teach you contentment in every circumstance. He will supply all your needs, but in a way that He knows is best for you.

### **IV. Serve God, Not Self**

In Matthew 20:28, Christ gave us the perfect example of how we should view serving.

“just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Paul also shows what our attitude toward service should be in Philippians 2:3 & 4:

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but *in* lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”

Self ambition can ruin a church, a family, a relationship but genuine humility can rebuild it. Like Jesus, we are to humbly serve others and place their needs before our own. In this Me, Me, Me driven world, this is definitely going against the tide. We will fail at times; nevertheless, we should strive to care for others the way we care about ourselves for this is Christlike and will result in better relationships.

God calls us to serve Him day by day and moment by moment even if we do not feel equipped to do it. In 2 Corinthians 12:9, Paul tells us that he will boast about his weakness so that Christ's power may be seen. The fact that God's power is displayed in weak people should give us courage. We must rely on God for our effectiveness rather than simply on our own energy, effort, or talent. This is especially true as we serve Him not just in the big things that we do but also in all of the little things as well.

Our book lists 6 ways to serve God:

1. Invest your time, energy and finance in someone else
2. Practice hospitality
3. Practice Godly repentance & forgiveness
4. Take the time to fellowship with other believers and participate in a local church
5. Be available to someone and
6. Use your passions and gifts for godliness

Some of these will be ways that you already serve God and are easy for you. Others may push you out of your comfort zone and require improvement and practice.

Now for the application:

The book has some thought provoking questions that we are to apply to our lives such as:

How have you actively glorified God today? Yesterday? Last week?

Have you seen God's purpose and power played out in your life recently?

Which of these ways to serve God are you good at? Which do you need to improve? Which do you not do at all?

What are some ways you can choose joy each day even as you face discouragement?

What a privilege we have to be witness to and recipients of Christ's power for salvation and living. God and His word provide the only stability in an unstable world. We can find true satisfaction and joy in Him.

I'd like to close with my life verses Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways  
acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.