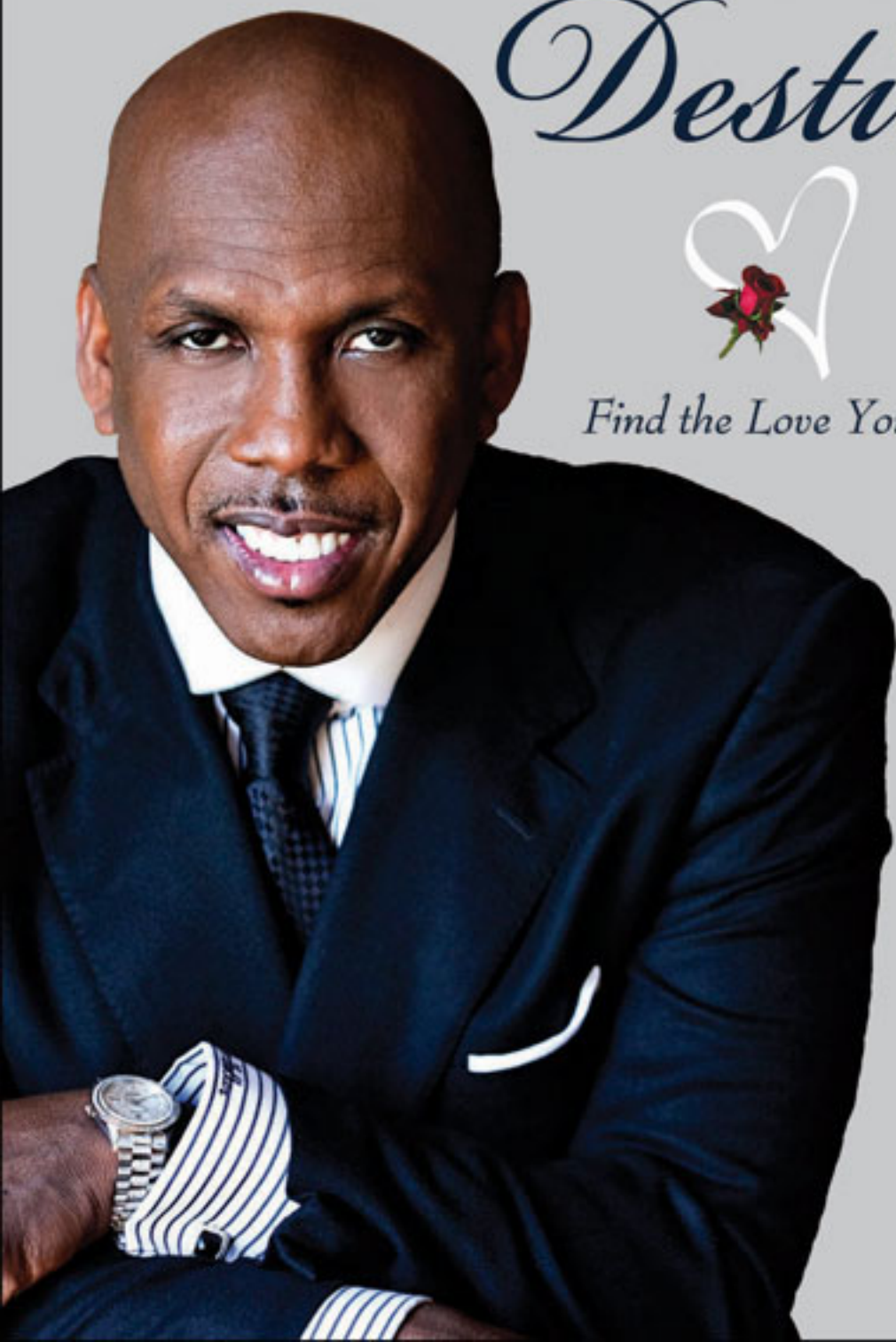


JOSEPH W. WALKER III

Date with  
*Destiny*



*Find the Love You Need*



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Abingdon Press / Nashville

**DATE WITH DESTINY  
FIND THE LOVE YOU NEED**

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# INTRODUCTION

I have had an opportunity to counsel and converse with thousands of folks who are frustrated. There is a common denominator in their relationships: they struggle with a lack of direction. They ask, “Where is this going? Where am I going? Where are we supposed to go?” So often the tension in many of their relationships is a result of competing agendas. I’ve seen good people who have struggled to make relationships work; but if you don’t know the purpose of a thing, you will abuse it. If you don’t know how a thing is supposed to end up, you will never be able to identify threats along the way. You will never be able to see the gifts along the way, either. And I am amazed at the number of people I encounter who have yet to connect with their God-given purpose, even with the numerous books, articles, and workshops dedicated to helping people find just that. For me purpose is the path toward destiny, and when I say destiny, I am referring to the way your life ends up—both as an individual and as a couple. God has a preordained destiny for us all; however, you will never arrive there if you do not have a clear understanding of your purpose.

This book is written to shed light on the power of purpose in relationships for couples. Why does God bring us together? Is there a purpose bigger than us? To these questions, I would argue, YES! When two people understand their purpose in life, it

becomes a qualifier for healthy relationships. God merges their individual purposes so that they complement, not compete with each other.

God has blessed my wife, Stephaine, and me to pursue our destiny together. We are blessed to understand our purpose for being together. Our life is not without its challenges, but we are motivated by what we know is possible. Our relationship as a couple is bigger than either of us individually.

Relationships should never be self-serving. We must approach them selflessly, knowing that there is a larger purpose why God has brought us together. Both persons within the relationship support and motivate each other toward the attainment of their destiny. Our date is truly with destiny.

## CHAPTER ONE

# A DATE WITH DESTINY: ANTICIPATE GREATNESS

### THE GREATNESS OF GOD

God has placed the promise of greatness inside of you. God has placed greatness inside of you as a couple. God will meet you wherever you are, despite wherever you've been. Seize this promise. Accept your gift. Align yourselves with God's purpose, and begin your date with destiny.

One of the most important lessons that every believer needs to know is that you are not defined by what has happened in your past. You are defined by how you respond. See this in God's word to the prophet Joel.

Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things.

Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength.

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately,

and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.

And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed.

And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. (Joel 2:21-27)

These people endured incredible persecution and oppression. They had lost much; they had gone through incredible pain. Perhaps this is your story as well.

Stephaine and I recognized early on in our relationship that we had to deal with our losses if we were going to have a healthy relationship. For me, it was the loss of my first wife, Diane. Diane passed away after a battle with cancer at age 37 in 2005. We were married for eleven years, and I had to come to a place of wholeness before I could be all I needed to be for Stephaine. It was important for me to go through personal and group therapy in order to deal with my pain. I had to admit that for three years of my life after Diane's death I was so consumed with preserving her legacy that I had not given myself an opportunity to experience the joy of a new relationship. It was important for Stephaine to know me as Joseph first and not as Diane's husband. Likewise, it was important for *me* to see myself as Joseph first and not as Diane's husband.

Stephaine had lost her older sister, Wendy, a few years before we met and was still struggling with numerous questions herself.

Could she have done more? At the time of her sister's death, Stephaine was a resident physician. And while experiencing the pain of a sister dying unexpectedly at age 40, Stephaine had to be the voice of reason to her family in regard to what was transpiring before all their eyes. Wendy had been a mentor and "big sister," and Stephaine realized how important it was to deal with this pain so that she might be in a better position to move forward after dealing with her grief.

Our pain ended up being a point of connectivity in our relationship. We were able to communicate about it and be transparent about where we were in the process. I believe God brings people together who can identify with the depth of each other's pain. Our stories served as a catalyst for the development of our relationship. We cried together and gave each other permission to vent when necessary. Our relationship became a safe place, and consequently, over time, this created a level of trust between us. We were convinced that God had brought us together to remind us that He is a restorer. No matter how deep and acute the pain, a part of our destiny is working through that pain together.

You may be reading this book and wondering if things are going to turn out right in your situation. You're really wondering if what has happened in your life has already been the defining moment of your destiny. Is it too late? Is it too late for a new beginning? God's answer is "No."

## **GOD BROUGHT YOU TOGETHER**

God has brought you together to work in His purpose, not apart from it. You are not competitors, rather companions. Healthy

**To be a couple on a date with destiny means that you have to be in this together.**

couples have like vision and passions and are willing to make the necessary sacrifices for the success of the relationship. But, as an individual, if you don't know where

you are going, it's hard to expect someone to go with you. **To be a couple on a date with destiny means that you have to be in this together. You have to be committed.**

Walking through our pain together means that we come out together on the other side. Stephaine and I have lived by this principle and it has blessed our relationship and marriage. You have to make a conscious decision to move forward and not become paralyzed by your pain. When God says in Isaiah 43:19 that "I will do a new thing: now it shall spring forth," He is saying He wants us to position ourselves spiritually, emotionally, and physically so that we can move forward, for it to happen.

I remember watching a young boy who was afraid to jump off the diving board into the deep water. He was comfortable with familiar surroundings; therefore, when he got on the diving board, he clung to it instead of jumping in, releasing himself into the water. I tell people all the time that you cannot "spring" if you "cling." You will never reach your full potential in relationships if you are holding on to things in your past. It's all right to have a history, but don't become a prisoner to your past. God has placed so much in you, and it *cannot* be eclipsed by your pain. We all come to a place where we have to decide if we are going to move ahead or stay stuck in the

past. Will we wallow in the mire of our yesterday or will we pursue the greatness that lies ahead? Stephaine and I chose the latter, and I encourage you to do the same. We dealt with our past but then moved on. If we hadn't, we wouldn't be together today.

## **SHIFT TOWARD GREATNESS**

God wants you to stop focusing so much on what has happened in the past. It's time for you as a child of God to make a shift. In other words, God is saying, "I'm moving you out of the season of your past pain, out of that season of destruction and despair. And I'm shifting you into a brand-new season where I'm getting ready to do some great and awesome things."

When God begins to shift you, things around you begin to happen. Sometimes you don't understand why they're happening, but God is literally moving you into the best days of your life. And even though you may have been wounded in your past, it's time to pick yourself up and declare, "What's ahead of me is better than what's been before!"

Something inside of you has to say, "This is my finest hour. So even with tears in my eyes, I have to convince myself that it's gonna get better up the road. Even if people laugh at me, even if you laugh at me, I know too much about God to know that God will not leave me in worse shape than He found me. He's going to take me to another

**Something awesome and  
fresh is about to happen  
in your life.**

dimension, another level.” God wants you to know that your slate is clean; something awesome and fresh is about to happen in your life and in your life together as a couple.

## **DEVELOP A POSTURE OF ANTICIPATION**

One thing we know for sure, God always makes good on His promises. Just like the prophet Joel says to a distressed people, he also says to us, “Fear not. Don’t be afraid, but be glad and rejoice because the Lord will do great things. He’s going to do great things for you” (adapted from Joel 2:21). Your part is to develop a posture of anticipation. Expect something. You can always tell when people are expecting something, because they receive revelation with anticipation.

I remember hearing a story about a group of folks who traveled down a dusty road each day to church in rural Louisiana. It was a community whose livelihood depended upon the crops coming in. They had been in a drought for several months, so the locals thought it would be a good thing to hold prayer services each night and pray for rain. Each night they passed down this road singing, enlisting others to join them in their pilgrimage to the prayer service at the church. And they were quite successful in enlisting willing participants; however, there was one man who refused to go along.

Mr. Brown would sit on his porch and shake his head, seemingly in agony as he watched them pass by day after day. They would ask him repeatedly to join them, but he refused time and time again. One day they all decided to go up and ask Mr. Brown why he wouldn’t join their small town in their prayer meeting. It was their belief that everyone would benefit from the

rain. They could not fathom why Mr. Brown was so stubborn. As they approached, a young man in his thirties with Bible in hand

**God does great things,  
not average things.**

asked Mr. Brown on behalf of the group, “Why won’t you attend our prayer services? We all need the rain, and if everybody joins in, we will have a better chance of the good Lord hearing us.” Mr. Brown stood up from his old orange rocker, rickety and worn, and gazed at the small crowd in his yard. He fixed his eyes on the group and said with resounding conviction, “Because none of you have an umbrella. I watch each of you pass this way every evening going to pray for rain, but nobody ever takes an umbrella. I only pray where there is faith and expectation.”

Expectation brings an umbrella. And if you are anticipating God doing something in your life, you have to bring your umbrella. When I pray for a thing, I believe that when I get off my knees it is already done. I’ve learned how to look like what I am asking God for. Stop looking at what you are going through and start looking like what you are going to.

Our God promises He’s going to do great things for you, so live like what you expect to happen, will happen. **God does great things, not average things, not things like you and me, but great things.** Look around you. Stuff is happening. Even if it’s not happening in your life, it’s happening all around you. It’s just a matter of time before the blessing comes into your life, because if God is blessing your neighbor, He’s still in the neighborhood.

## **BEGIN TO THANK GOD FOR THE LITTLE STUFF**

Once you understand that stuff is happening around you, light dawns. This understanding is a revelation that can shine the light on the areas of life that I take for granted, stuff I am overlooking. God says, "I'm tired of you people walking around with your lips stuck out, with your arms folded; you have an attitude, because I'm not doing what you think I ought to do." God says, "If you'll just look, I'm already doing some stuff, but because it isn't big enough for you, you think that the blessing is not going to come." Learn how to thank God for the little stuff first.

Thank God for the stuff He's doing right now, on the way to the blessing. You have an attitude, but you ought to thank God for the car you have; you ought to thank God for the house you have; you ought to thank God for the wife you have. God is for you, so who can be against you?

We spend too much time adding up our problems rather than counting our blessings. It's the little stuff that makes the difference on the way to destiny. I meet so many chronic complainers. These people are always alone. Nothing is ever good enough. They complain about everything. You will never be in a destiny-driven relationship if you are not appreciative. If you cannot appreciate the things that God does for you, then you will never be grateful for what your mate does.

I have learned in my relationship with Stephaine that the things that mean the most to her are the little things. I've seen her cry like a baby over little things that I thought were insignificant expressions of love, yet I've learned that they were more valuable than large, tangible things or my attempts at grand gestures.

My parents always told me to stay clear of people who didn't

know how to say thank you. Ungrateful people never realize destiny because they go through life with entitlement issues. They feel that everyone owes them something. When you have entitlement issues, you are almost impossible to please. Expressions of kindness are often met with cynicism and criticism. Nobody wants to be in a relationship with this kind of person. It's not the kind of relationship that leads to destiny. It leads to your demise. Take a moment and reflect over the small things God has done in your life and give Him thanks for them. As you learn to do that, you will be more appreciative of the little things your mate does. It's the little things that count.

Think of some things you can do for your mate today. Do them without thought of getting a reward or something back. See what happens. If you don't get the results you want, don't give up. Keep trying.

Once you know stuff is happening, you'll start walking around with a spirit of readiness. Do you know how you can tell someone has that spirit? Just think of the people you know. They are the people who aren't concerned about what you think about them. And they are the people who say, "At any moment, God will do great things."

## **DELIVER US FROM EVIL**

But sometimes we pray for deliverance. "Deliver me from my job." "Deliver me from my enemy." Sometimes we pray, "Lord, get me out of this." But God may say, "This is not the season. I'll keep you right in the mess, but I will give you a breakthrough right there so your enemy gets to see you blessed. I will prepare a table before you in the presence of your enemy."

I don't want to belittle your pain and suffering. Some of you may have been through deep, deep despair, perhaps at the hands of others, but also perhaps by your own hand. Some of you may be scarred by abuse, hatred, guilt, or violence; and you may be justified in feeling anger or hurt at the injustice of it all. I'm not advocating a quick fix and I'm not saying, "Don't worry, be happy." But I am saying that God knows your pain and can help you through it and then move you beyond it.

One of the most amazing stories in the Bible is the story of the three Hebrew boys in the fiery furnace. Their convictions put them there, yet they had faith to believe that God could deliver. Many of you reading this book have your own heated situations, and you are convinced that God can deliver. But if you examine how God delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, it might give you some insight into how your deliverance will come. God did not deliver them **out** of the furnace; He delivered them **in** the furnace. They were free and unharmed, although the fire had been turned up to seven times its normal heat. They even came out without a scent of smoke.

God may not change your situation, but He will change you **in** it. So when you come through, you won't even smell like smoke. God uses moments like this to build character and faith. He will protect your destiny at all costs. Although you may experience temporary discomfort or even suffering, you must know that God is pushing you toward destiny.

## **YOUR TRUE DESTINY IS IN GOD'S HANDS**

Once I begin to anticipate that God will do stuff in my life, I'm expecting God to show up, so I don't have to be afraid. I've dealt

with the fear. This is true freedom, because it frees me to reach out to live, to love, to be fruitful and accept the blessings God has for me. The knots that have tied me up and bound my spirit are gone, allowing me to run the good race with my eyes on the prize.

Growing up is a process; maturity is a process; faith is a process; growing in love and Christian marriage is a process. God is a **process** God, especially when it comes to getting the blessing into lives. Blessings come as a process because of what the enemy does. The enemy systematically, categorically comes into your life. He calculates this thing, comes in, and assaults the people of God. The enemy doesn't just come in one time. He sits back, strategizes how he's going to take your family out, how he's going to come at your mind, come at your money, come at your marriage; that's how the enemy does. Sometimes the enemy will wait years before he launches his assault. And God might allow these things to happen. But God also says that there is a process and that your destiny is never defined by what happened in the past. Your destiny, your future, is in God's hands.

## **IT WAS WORTH IT**

We all know that the road is not easy. Our question is, "Is it worth it?"

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire,

and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call. (Joel 2:28-32)

God never promised that just because He reveals our destiny to us, our end result to us, that the devil is not going to do everything to discourage us from arriving at the place where God intends us to be. We can see this plain truth in what the prophet Joel says to the people of God. Everything that has happened in your life was really worth it. Whether good or bad, when you look back over your life, when you reflect on what God gives you as a result of persevering, then you can look back and thank God for what He's allowed to happen. Because what I've gone through has developed character; it has developed patience; it has developed dependency on God like never before. And this allows God to release something in your life regarding your destiny—the next dimension of blessings. This is not to say that it may not take some time to come to this realization. But God and Christian friends can help.

I know personally that the right people in your life are a great blessing during the most difficult times of your life. God blessed me with friends who told me the truth. The Bible says in Proverbs 27:6 that “faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.” It's important that you pray for strategic friendships. We all need people in our lives who can speak to our destiny. I was fortunate to have friends who would never let me

slip into despair. They would remind me of God's promise over my life. They would hold me accountable and keep me focused on what God was doing

**What you've gone through has qualified you.**

in my life. The amazing thing about God is that He will always connect you with like-minded people who see your "not yet."

## **YOU'VE BEEN QUALIFIED**

You have been knocked down and may be, even now, down for the count. You may need some help getting back up. You may be battered and bruised, but what you've gone through has qualified you. There is the hope. God will not allow His spirit into people who have not proven their integrity in tough times. He will not trust His Spirit to people who will not acknowledge that it was His power that got them where they are.

I remember speaking with a friend named James. James was having difficulty reconciling why he was experiencing so many bad things at the same time. He had recently lost his job, experienced the death of his mother as well as a cousin, and had gone through a nasty breakup with his girlfriend. As you can imagine, James was disillusioned and discouraged. Our talks often involved him reminding me how life had dealt him a bad hand and how God was punishing him for things he had done in his past. I had to remind James that God was preparing him for his destiny.

These things have not come to destroy you; they have come to develop you. You will never know what you can handle until you are put in a situation to confront it. I reminded James of something I want to remind you of as well. Every story leads to a greater glory. God uses the substance of our story to propel us to new levels of glory. Don't allow what you are experiencing to make you turn away from God. He is strategically using these events to mature you and prepare you for where He is taking you. If God allowed it, it has to bless you. Today James thanks God for what he was bitter about a year ago. Perhaps that's why the James of the Bible declared that we should "count it all joy when [we] fall into divers temptations" (James 1:2).

Every tear, every hater, every person who quit on me, every person who walked out on me, every person who lied to me—all of it was worth it, because all things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose. What the devil didn't realize when he threw all that stuff at me to destroy my life was that God would use it to develop me.

## **AVAILABILITY IS BETTER THAN ABILITY**

After you have proven yourself credible and that God can trust you with trouble, that's when He will pour out His Spirit. And when He does, He says, "I'm going to pour it out among **all** flesh, men and women, young and old." To really appreciate this, you have to understand that in biblical days women were considered unimportant. They were considered property—in many cases they had no more rights than animals. And here God speaks back into that culture and says, "I'm getting ready to do

something that goes against culture. I'm getting ready to use people, who people think cannot be used. I'm moving beyond gender, I'm moving beyond age. I'm moving beyond color. It doesn't matter what side of the track you were born on." God says, "When I pour out my spirit, I'm not pouring it out to people who have the **ability**, I'm pouring it out to people who have the **availability**."

It is incredibly important that you put yourself in position for God to use you. Stop reminding God of your deficiencies and shortcomings. He already knows. The only reason God uses imperfect people is because He has nobody else to choose from. Imagine the power of purpose in a relationship rooted in availability.

One of the biggest challenges among couples is availing themselves to each other. With our hectic schedules, many couples live by their calendars. They literally have to make appointments to spend quality time with each other. The excuses and the clutter that crowd our lives breed contempt in our relationships. If people cannot make themselves available for God to use their gifts and talents, then it is highly probable that they will not make themselves available to each other. God wants to use us to bring His will to pass on earth. There are a lot of people who **can** do, but **will not** do. This strains our relationships with God and with others.

Everyday I wake up, I ask God to use me wherever and however He needs to. I'm available to Him. Availability has become a lifestyle that

**God honors your  
availability over your  
ability.**

**God speaks not to your reality, but to your possibility.**

has also permeated our marriage. Stephaine and I both are tremendously busy. My ministry schedule and her medical schedule are brutal; yet we avail

ourselves to God's purpose because our destiny is greater than our personal desires.

## **GOD SPEAKS TO YOUR POSSIBILITY**

God does not only speak to your "right now." He also speaks to your "not yet." You've got enough people speaking to your right now; you already know how bad it is right now. God says, "I don't want you to develop a 'blues theology' that reaffirms to you why you're crying and gives you all kinds of permission to whine and have a pity-party, and sit back and sing the blues about how bad things are."

The moment we begin to receive our gift from God, our perspective changes. We dream dreams; we see visions. We make ourselves available for what God wants to do in our lives, in our marriage, in our family, with our friends. God responds by widening our perspective.

It is an amazing thing when two visions become one. Whatever God is showing you, He has placed similar destiny in the person He has ordained for your life. Remember, destiny is how a thing ends up. Vision is a glimpse of the end result of purpose. As you walk in relationship with someone, you should discover similar values and ideals.

Although Stephaine and I are in different fields, we share a vision of making our communities better. She is committed to making our community better through health and awareness, and I am committed to the same vision through spirituality and empowerment. Though the methodologies are different, the goal is the same. I often tell my staff that the effectiveness of vision is when we focus not on the “role” but on the “goal.” It doesn’t matter who gets the credit as long as the objective is met. Whatever God does through you as a couple, remember it is larger than your independent agendas.

This vision can also live beyond you. We dream knowing that the generation behind us will realize what we can only dream of now. Martin Luther King, Jr., had a dream that he knew would not be fulfilled in his lifetime, but we have seen that dream come to pass in ours. So when God says that He is going to deposit vision in you, once He gives you a “not yet” word, then God says, “What I’m going to do is, I’m going to start **showing** you what I just **spoke** to you.”

When God called me to preach, I was twenty years old at Southern University. I was already going to law school, had everything straight; I was on my way. It’s good to go to law school, but God called me to preach, and God sent me to Nashville, Tennessee, to Vanderbilt Divinity School. Understand this, I’m twenty-one years old now, I’m coming to Nashville, Tennessee—I have never heard of Nashville, Tennessee, other than *Hee Haw*. I didn’t know what was in Nashville; I just knew God called me. But I went, and two years later, God put the vision inside of me.

God told me, “Now, son, this vision I could not give you when I first called you, because you had not gone through enough to be a good steward of it. That’s why I don’t call people on Sunday and

let them pastor on Tuesday, because they hadn't been through enough." He says now, "But understand that this vision is very important." So I know this is different, because it's like I had a Damascus Road experience. It was like my eyes were blinded and when I opened them up I saw the world totally differently. We would be driving down the street and people would see dilapidated buildings, and I'd see condominiums. People would see cow pastures and I would see strip malls; people would see grocery stores and an old nightclub and I'd see an Antioch church location. Here's the deal—after a while when nobody was seeing what I was seeing, I started thinking I was crazy. But I kept on seeing it, and soon others saw it too.

## **GOD'S CHOICE IS GOD'S INVOICE**

The vision that God gives you is essential and He promises that if you keep this vision under divine supervision, He will always give you provision, and you will never have division or a

**If you keep this vision  
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need for revision. So I have never had a vision that I could afford, because if you have a vision that you can afford, it's not a vision. It's just a good idea. Vision is always bigger than your budget. It's always bigger than the money you have.

Does that make you upset? Good, because if it's God's will, it's God's bill.

If it's God's choice; it's God's invoice. You don't have to worry about how you're going to pay for what God showed you! Mt. Zion Church is a 17-million-dollar facility that we began building with only \$30,000 in the bank. You never have to have the money when God gives you a vision, because if you keep the vision where God wants it to be, you'll always have provision. But this does not mean that God wants you to have a new car every time you drive past the dealer's showroom. Letting God pick up the tab is not an excuse for being irresponsible.

When your perspective changes, God will send the vision, and that vision, God's vision, will always outlive the visionary. I started pastoring Mt. Zion when I was 24 years old. Do you really think that when I'm in my 70s, I'm going to be running between services? No, I'm going to be on my yacht in the Atlantic watching some young guy up here do his thing. Why? Because I recognize that if the vision of Mt. Zion dies when I retire, it wasn't under God's supervision. Mt. Zion's purpose is to get better when I retire. Mt. Zion's best days are to yet to come, because a good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children; a good couple plans together for the benefit of their children and grandchildren.

If your stuff dies with you, then something's wrong with it from the jump. The vision has to outlive you. Your vision for your family, your vision for your spouse, your vision for your neighborhood—if your vision is from God and remains under His supervision, it's going to live on. It's your children's inheritance.

## **GOD MEETS ME IN MY MESS**

“Yes,” you say, “but my life is still in a mess.” But like Jesus asked the “certain man” He met by the pool of Bethesda in John, chapter 5, Jesus says to you, “Do you want to be made whole? Get up, take up your bed and walk.” And the man was made whole and took up his bed and walked. God met him in his mess, and He will deliver you too.

## **GOD DOES NOT DELIVER YOU FROM NOTHING**

God does not deliver from nothing; He delivers from something, even if it is your own mess. So it is that something that I thank Him for. 'Cause if I hadn't gotten into something, I wouldn't have known He could get me out of it. Please realize that the devil is trying to get you to give up on school; he's trying to get you to give up on your family, on your vision, on your destiny. Do you want to know why? Because he knows that he can't take from you what God promises. But the devil is a liar! And he has messed with the wrong somebody. Because when God delivers us, God knows we have big mouths and God knows we are going to tell somebody what He did for us. God will meet you where you are.

Oftentimes we allow ourselves to become discouraged because of the situation we are in. God's word to you today is that He cares. No matter what mistakes or messes you've made, your destiny is salvageable. I meet so many people who have come out of unhealthy relationships and feel like it's all over. They wonder if

they can go on. They speculate whether or not what they desire is even possible. God's word to you today is that you are never so low that the grace of God can't find you. Your life may be a mess now, but God can turn it into a miracle. I've made a mess of my life on numerous occasions. I've gotten ahead of God. I've listened to bad advice from friends. I've moved on my raw emotions without praying and ended up in places inconsistent with my destiny. The good news is that I'm writing this book as evidence that it's not over until God says so.

You don't have to have it all together. You might be messed up, tore up from the floor up, but the good news is that God looks beyond your faults and supplies your needs. Yeah, we are all messed up; we haven't always been where we are. The Lord will meet you right in your mess, right where you are lying all bent and crippled. He will reach out and ask you if you want to be whole.

When we're introduced to this "certain man," the Bible wants us to know that we are like this man. He is a certain person who has been in his particular situation for thirty-eight years—a long time. And every time his breakthrough was going to come, the moment he got ready to get in the pool, somebody pushed him out of the way and jumped in before him. Somebody got his promotion, took his credit, stole his thunder. But then something powerful happens, because Jesus comes by and sees him as more than his suffering, knows that he has no one to help him, and, in a word, Jesus changes everything. Jesus not only cures his infirmity but heals him from the inside out. Jesus cures the disease but also connects him to his ultimate purpose and destiny in God.

You may believe that you're *going to have* a date with destiny someday, but you're also wondering just how long you have to

**God's about to show up  
in your life.**

wait for God to start blessing you. You might even be frustrated by the process of waiting on things to happen. Your

patience might be about gone. But you've got a date, you're in God's PDA, and God's about to show up in your life. He's about to do something you've been expecting Him to do; He's about to break some rules on your behalf; He's about to do something unorthodox in order to get your miracle in your life. God is about to meet you in your mess. It doesn't matter how long you've been there, doesn't matter how low you've been, doesn't matter what people have labeled you, how they look at you, what they call you. The truth is that God's about to turn your situation around and connect you to your purpose.

## **FINDING YOUR GREATNESS AS A COUPLE**

1. As a couple, talk about what first attracted you to each other.
2. Make a list of the blessings God has already given you.
3. Share with each other how God has qualified you.
4. Talk about how you can make yourselves more available to God.
5. What makes you a great couple?
6. Make a date with each other and celebrate your future together.
7. If you don't already, start praying together.