
5-Day Devotional

You Are Part of God's Bigger Story

*Based on the sermon series
When Your Struggle Writes Your Story
Written by Pastor Lawrence Williams*

HIGHER PURPOSE CHURCH

This five-day devotional is drawn from the closing message of our series *When Your Struggle Writes Your Story*. Over the past weeks we have explored how God writes purpose into the middle of our pain — through the stories of Ruth, Joseph, Peter, and Jesus himself. Now we turn to the question of what we do next.

Each day includes a scripture passage, a devotional reading, reflection questions, a closing prayer, and a practical challenge. Space is provided for your personal notes and responses. We encourage you to take your time — read slowly, reflect honestly, and allow God to speak.

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." — Ephesians 2:10

DAY 1

You Were Never Just Saved — You Were Sent

Salvation is the starting block, not the finish line.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:8–10

DEVOTIONAL READING

There is a moment every believer celebrates — the moment everything changed. The moment sin lost its grip. The moment grace stepped in. And that moment deserves every bit of celebration it gets.

But here is what Pastor Lawrence Williams challenges us with: too many of us treat that moment as the destination, when God always intended it to be the departure gate.

Paul's language in Ephesians 2 tells us the full story. We were dead. God, rich in mercy, made us alive. He raised us up. He seated us with Christ. Not because of anything we did — purely by grace, through faith. That is the gift.

And then — verse 10. *For we are God's handiwork.* The word in Greek is *poiema* — a crafted masterpiece, a poem. You are not mass-produced. You are a one-of-a-kind work of divine artistry, *created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

The works already exist. The plan was filed before you arrived. Salvation did not create your purpose — it unlocked it. The question is no longer whether you have a purpose. The question is whether you are walking in it.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. When you think about your salvation, do you see it as a destination or a starting point? What might shift in your daily life if you viewed it as a launchpad?
2. What do you believe the 'good works' God prepared for you might include in this season of your life?
3. Is there an area where you have been waiting on God — when God may actually be waiting on you?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Write down three things you believe God has gifted or called you to do. Pray over each one and ask God which one he wants you to take a step toward this week.

TODAY'S PRAYER

Father, thank you for saving me — not just from something, but for something. Today I choose to see my salvation as a beginning, not an ending. Show me the works you prepared for me in advance. I want to walk in every one of them. In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES / REFLECTIONS

DAY 2

You Are Part of Something Cosmic

Your struggle is not just personal — it is part of an eternal story.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:4–6

DEVOTIONAL READING

When Paul wrote this letter, he was writing to people who lived under constant pressure. Ephesus was the spiritual power center of the Roman world. Every competing spiritual force — every idol, every principality — had a presence there. The church was not living in a vacuum. It was living on a battlefield.

And Paul's message was not: just hold on. It was: understand what is actually happening.

God is not hiding from the powers that oppose him. He is fighting them. And his strategy — the thing that demonstrates his glory against every competing force in the universe — is his people. You. Living by grace. Loving one another. Doing the good works he prepared. Walking in purpose. That is the display of God's power.

This means your life is not a small story. Your struggle is not isolated. Every moment you choose faith over fear, purpose over comfort, love over selfishness — it is a declaration in an eternal conflict that God wins.

You are seated in heavenly places with Christ, Paul says. That is not future language. That is present language. Right now, in the middle of your ordinary life, you occupy a position that carries cosmic significance.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How does knowing your life is part of a bigger, cosmic story change the way you see your daily struggles?
2. In what area of your life have you felt like your faith was small or insignificant? How does today's reading reframe that?
3. What would it look like to live this week as someone who is 'seated in heavenly places' — confident in who God says you are?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Identify one circumstance in your life that feels meaningless or frustrating right now. Write one sentence about how God could be using that situation for something larger than you can currently see.

TODAY'S PRAYER

Lord, forgive me for shrinking my story down to just my problems and my comfort. Open my eyes to see that I am part of something eternal. Let my life be a demonstration of your power and grace today — in my home, my workplace, my community. In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES / REFLECTIONS

DAY 3

The Danger of Drifting

You can do the right things for the wrong reasons — and lose your way.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

Yet I hold this against you: you have forsaken the love you had at first. Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first.

Revelation 2:4–5

DEVOTIONAL READING

Decades after Paul wrote his letter to the church at Ephesus, Jesus looked at that same church and said: I have something against you.

Not because they stopped doing the right things. They were still persevering. They were still doctrinally sound. They were still working hard. But something had quietly drained out of them — the love that once drove everything they did.

This is one of the most dangerous spiritual conditions a person can be in: doing all the right things, for all the wrong reasons. Going through the motions without the love. Serving without joy. Giving without generosity. Praying without expectation.

Jesus' diagnosis is blunt: you have forsaken your first love. And his prescription is equally direct: remember, repent, return. Go back to where you fell from. Do the things you did at first.

What did first love look like? You studied because you were hungry for him. You prayed because you couldn't wait to talk to him. You gave because you were overwhelmed by what he gave you. You served because you were grateful. You shared your faith because the news was just too good to keep quiet.

That love is not gone forever. But it must be pursued. The path back is not working harder — it is going deeper. Return to relationship. And let everything else flow from that.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Be honest: is there any area of your spiritual life where you are going through the motions without the love? What does that look like for you?
2. What did your relationship with God look like when it was at its most alive? What has changed since then?
3. What is one specific thing you did 'at first' — in the early days of your walk with God — that you have slowly stopped doing?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Set aside 15 minutes today to do something you did in your early walk with God — journal, worship spontaneously, pray out loud, call someone to share what God has done. Let love be the fuel.

TODAY'S PRAYER

Jesus, I don't want to be someone who does the right things for the wrong reasons. Restore my first love. Remind me of what it felt like when your grace was fresh and everything I did came out of that gratitude. I return to you today — not to a religion, but to a relationship. In your name, amen.

NOTES / REFLECTIONS

DAY 4

You Are a Masterpiece — Not a Copy

God made you uniquely on purpose, for a purpose.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

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

Ephesians 2:10

DEVOTIONAL READING

The Greek word behind 'handiwork' in Ephesians 2:10 is *poiema*. It is the same root as our English word 'poem.' A poem is not an accident. It is crafted. Every word is chosen. Every line is intentional. The rhythm, the weight, the meaning — all of it, deliberate.

You are God's poem. God's crafted masterpiece. He wired your personality, shaped your experiences, assigned your gifts, and placed you in this moment in history with intention. Nobody else on this planet carries exactly what you carry.

This has a profound implication: you are not competing with anyone. You are *completing* what no one else can do.

When you see someone thriving in their gifting, the right response is not jealousy — it is celebration. Because they are running their lane. And your lane is different. When you understand your purpose, you stop being threatened by others and start becoming a collaborator. Their gifts are not a threat to your assignment; they are a complement to it.

The body of Christ only works when every part is doing what it was uniquely designed to do. Your specific combination of gifts, experiences, and calling fills a gap that will remain open until you step into it. The team needs exactly what God put in you — not a more polished version of someone else.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Do you struggle with comparison? In what areas do you find yourself measuring your gifts or calling against someone else's?
2. What gifts, experiences, or qualities has God placed in you that feel unique — even if you have not fully embraced them yet?
3. Who in your life could you celebrate and support this week, knowing their gifts complete something you cannot do alone?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Take a spiritual gifts assessment today if you have never done one (visit giftstest.com or a similar resource). If you already know your gifts, write them down and identify one specific way you could use your top gift to serve someone this week.

TODAY'S PRAYER

Father, forgive me for the times I have compared myself to others or wished I had a different calling. You made me intentionally. Help me to receive that fully — not in pride, but in gratitude. Show me the lane you built me for, and give me the courage to run it with everything I have. In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES / REFLECTIONS

DAY 5

Get Off the Bench — The Team Needs You

You were not saved to spectate. You were saved to participate.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. / In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Ephesians 2:10 / James 2:17

DEVOTIONAL READING

We live in the most sophisticated spectator culture in human history. We watch athletes compete. We watch chefs cook. We watch entrepreneurs build. We watch gamers play. Over 500 million people worldwide regularly watch other people play video games — not play themselves, just watch.

And the church has not been immune. Many of us have mastered the art of attending without participating. We come, we worship, we listen, we go home. And we call that our spiritual life.

But Pastor Lawrence Williams puts it plainly: you were not saved to spectate. You were saved to participate.

Research suggests that 50 to 60 percent of regular churchgoers are not actively serving anywhere. Half the team is on the bench. The mission is in the field. And the gap between what God prepared and what is actually happening is, in large part, filled with gifted people who haven't yet decided to get in the game.

Here is the word of hope: God has already decided the outcome. He did not prepare works for you to do so that you could fail. He prepared you to succeed at them. The result is already set. All you have to do is show up, suit up, and run the play.

One day, we will all stand before God. And there will be a reckoning — not of condemnation for those who are in Christ, but of account. What did you do with what I gave you? Where is the fruit? Paul speaks of crowns and rewards and a celebration that we cannot fully imagine from here. The people on that floor, celebrating, are the ones who got off the bench.

Today is the day. Not someday. Not when you feel ready. The works were prepared in advance — which means the moment is now.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. In what area of your life have you been a spectator when God has called you to be a participant?
2. What fear or excuse has kept you on the sideline? Name it honestly before God today.

3. If you knew with certainty that God had already determined you would succeed at the works he prepared for you, what would you do differently starting this week?

TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Take one concrete step today: if you don't know your gifts, take an assessment. If you know your gifts but aren't serving, sign up for a ministry team at Higher Purpose Church. If you're already serving, invite one person to join you. No team wins with its best players on the bench.

TODAY'S PRAYER

Lord, I don't want to arrive at eternity having watched from the stands at a game I was created to play. I choose today to get off the bench. I trust that you prepared the works, you prepared me, and you have already determined the outcome. I will pray. I will give. I will serve. I will go. Use me, Lord — every gift, every day, for your glory. In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES / REFLECTIONS

Thank you for completing this devotional.

If God has stirred something in you this week, we encourage you to take a next step.

Discover your gifts

Visit giftstest.com and take the spiritual gifts assessment. Share your top 5 with us by texting them to the church line.

Get connected

Join a ministry team at Higher Purpose Church. There is a place for every gift on this team.

Invite someone

Share this devotional with a friend who needs to hear that they were created for more than they are currently living.

"No team wins with its best players on the bench."

— Pastor Lawrence Williams

HIGHER PURPOSE CHURCH | higherpurposechurch.org