# **Table of Content**

**Chapter #1:**

**Why Did God Create You and Me?**

Eph 2:10 NIV)

**First Main Point**: **God created us because it was part of His plan.**

**Support A: God chose us before the creation of the world (Ephesians 1: 3-5 NIV)**

**Support B: Before creation, God chose Jesus to be the Redeemer of the world.**

**1 Pet 1: 18-20**

**Support C: God promise man eternal life before creation of the world.**

**Example:** God made the promise that if Jesus become the lamb of God. God promise eternal life before the beginning of time, the Father would grant eternal life to all who placed their trust in Him and God cannot lie. (tit 1:1-2)

**Second Main Point: God created us out of love.**

**Support A: God is love. God chose to create man before the creation because of the love He had for Jesus.**

 **Example:** God loves man and desires a relationship with man

**“**See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.” 1 John 3:1

**“**We love because he first loved us.” 1 John 4:19

 **Example:** God wants us to love him

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” Deuteronomy 6:5 NIV

 **Example:** God wants us to love others

“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.” 1 John 4:7

**Support B: God created us in His image. (**Gen 1:27 NIV)

**Example:** Mental capacity: We have God’s intellect to think, reason, make decisions, invent, create

**Example:** Moral capacity: We have a conscience or “moral compass” that reflects God’s holiness. We know the difference between evil and good. We were created in righteousness and perfect innocence with the capability to be compassionate, respectful, empathetic, honest and have integrity.

**Example:** Social capacity: God created us with the intent to fellowship with others which reflects God’s triune nature and His love. In Gen 2:18, God says, “it is not good for the man to be alone” (NIV).

**Support C: Through Jesus all things were created**.

**Example:** For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, powers, rulers, or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. Colossians 1:16 NIV

**Third Main Point**: **God created us for kingdom purpose.**

**Support A:** **To Glorify Him**

 **Example:** We glorify God when we praise Him

**Example**: We glorify God when we obey His Word

**Example:** We glorify God when we produce fruit

**Support B: God created man proclaim His Truth**

**Example**: We proclaim His Truth by sharing the gospel

**Example**: We proclaim His Truth when we testify of who God is and what God has done

**Support C: God created man to rule the earth.**

**Example:** We rule the earth by serving **(**we “rule with a servant heart”) (Senator Shannon Grove)

**Example:** Being God’s gift to the earth, we rule by using our gifts, abilities, and talents

**Example:** We rule by reproducing and filling the earth

**Example:** We rule by taking charge. (**we** “lead with the heart of a king”(Senator Shannon Grove)

**Chapter 1: Conclusion**:

**Restate topic**: Created for Kingdom Purpose

 God created everything with kingdom purpose. As His children, we are all called to glorify Him, proclaim His Truths and rule over the earth. We rule as servants and lead as kings using our unique gifts, abilities, and talents.

**Chapter #2:**

**God is Calling You**

“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.” Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

 God is preparing you for everything He wants you to be at this point. He is preparing you for your destiny. “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.” Romans 8:28 (NKJV)

**First main point: Discover Your Calling through simply Volunteering.**

**Support A**: **Purpose will find you…. Serve the purpose” (Steven Furtick)**

**Example:** Others may let you know how valuable you are in your service

**Support B:**  **God prepares you through your involvement.**

**Example:** Getting involved allowed you to discover your gifts and abilities

**Support C: God may be calling you to serve in some unique way.**

**Example**: Helping in the church, or in your community or on your job allowed you to discover own way that you want to serve.

**Second Main Point: Discover Your Calling When God Positions You.**

**Support A: God may relocate you.**

**Example:** God may relocate to another city or another church to serve in some capacity

**Support B: God may allow you to be chosen for a specific task.**

**Example**: The pastor may ask you to work with the youth and the children are drawn to you and your leadership

**Support C: God may allow you to be promoted.**

**Example:** God’s may relocate you to another city or allow you to be chosen for a task or allowing you to be promoted and you then find that you are very suited for that role.

**Third Point: Discovering Your Calling Through Submission:** (your heart, mind and will)

**Support A**: **Give your whole heart to what God is establishing in your life.**

**Support B:** **Meditate on His Word and what He is showing you.**

 **Example:** Think about what God’s Word says in connection to how He is leading you

**Example:** Think about the experiences andhow what you are being called to aligns with you interest, passions, gifts, talents, abilities

**Support C: Surrender your will to do His Will**

 **Example:** Consider your motives for doing or not doing what you are being called to do

**Example:**  Bible Character discovered their purpose through surrendering

**Fourth Main Point: My Testimony - How I found my calling as a dance minister**

**Support A: I identified my passion and interest and utilized my talents and abilities.**

**Example:** I was drawn to the arts and wanted to dance, play the piano, sing, write songs and draw and my passion was dancing. (Proverbs 20:24 TPT)

**Example**: As a child, I joined the O’Quinn Royal Gladiators Drum and Bugle Corps

**Example:** I participated in a summer youth talent show where I choreographed a dance for me and other youth to perform.

**Support B: I pursued my interests.**

**Example:** At age 16**,** I paid for a dance class at Malcolm X College because I wanted to get into the performing arts for dance.

**Example**: Upon entering college, I continued to dance and attended parties to dance, join a dance company and took dance classes

**Support C: I accepted the Call.**

**Example:** During college, I chose to receive Jesus Christ in my life

**Example**: After college, I chose to join the church and get involve in the church including singing on the praise team

**Example:** A Proposition was mad to me to not give up dancing but just change partners and at that point, I made the decision to start dancing for the Lord.

**Chapter 2: Conclusion**:

**Restate topic**: God is Calling You

 God is the only one who can fulfill His purpose in you. The destiny that God had on my life was already being established during my childhood. What I enjoyed and was interested in God used to prepare me for His kingdom purpose in the ministry of dance.

**A Prayer to Discover the Calling**

**Chapter #3:**

**Embracing the Call**

**First Main point**: **Your Purpose is connected to knowing God.** (2 Thess 1:11-12 NIV)

**Support A: Who is God (1 Cor 13:4-7)**

 **Example:** How is God described in the Bible

 **Example:** Who is God to you

**Support B**: What is God known for in the Bible.

 **Example:** What are God’s attributes

 **Example:** What does God mean to you

**Support C: What has God done or is doing.**

 **Example:** What did God do in the Bible

 **Example:** What has God done foe you

**Second Main Point**: **Your Purpose is connected to your identity**.

**Support A: How does God see you.**

 **Example:** God knows you better than we know yourselves (Psa 139)

 **Example:** What does the Bible say about you

 **Example:** You have destiny

**Support** B: How do you see yourself

**Example:** Do you know your talents, abilities, interest, passions, weaknesses, strengths

 **Example**: You need to know your heart

“Within your heart you can make plans for your future, but the Lord chooses the steps you take to get there.” Proverbs 19:9 (TPT)

**Example:** You need to accept you and your life (experiences, crises)

**Support C: How do others see you**

 **Example:** Are you known to be friendly?

 **Example:** Are you know to be generous?

 **Example:** Are you known to be a godly person?

**Third Main Point: Your Purpose is connected to your commitment to serve.**

**Support A: Are you willing to make an impact in the kingdom?**

**Example:** Will you sacrifice time, money, and energy?

**Support B: Will you use your gifts, talents, and abilities?**

 Example: Will you teach, speak, preach, sing, dance, evangelize, etc.…?

**Support C: Will you help others?**

 **Example**: Will you mentor or disciple?

 **Example:** Will you give to meet someone else’s need?

**Fourth Main Point: I Embraced the Call to Dance for the Lord**

**Support A: I started a dance ministry at my church.**

**Example**: I started as a solo dancer

**Example:** I operated from what I knew about dance from my secular experiences

**Support B**: **I leaned on God for wisdom, knowledge, and direction because I had no one else.**

**Example:** Started praying about choreography and practicing movements as God would lead me

**Example:** Started listening to numerous songs that would minister to me paying close attention how God was speaking through the lyrics

**Support** C**: From One to Many: I saw how the dance ministry started to expand.**

**Example**: I started working with a group of children but eventually others wanted to join the ministry (teenagers and adults)

**Example:** My first liturgical garment was given to me by a Christian who I did not know

**Example:** I was introduced to a dance ministry outside the church (Divine Expression Dance Ministry), and I was invited to join and received biblical foundation about the ministry of dance

**Example:** I was invited to join Divine Expressions in providing biblical teaching and dance technique at Dorolyn Academy of Music

**Example:** I later enrolled in Eagles International Training Institute courses where I began to acquire a deeper biblical understanding of dance and the principles of serving in this capacity

**Chapter 3: Conclusion**:

**Restate topic**: Embracing the Call

 God is the only one who can fulfill His purpose in you. We cannot walk in that purpose if we do not know Him. Our purpose is connected to knowing God, knowing ourselves and being committed to serve. As an example, I share my testimony of finding my calling.

**A Prayer for Embracing Your Call**

**Chapter #4:**

**Persevering In the Call**

Confront the Challenges, Resist Temptations, Persevere through Trials

**First Main Point: Confront the Challenges: Personal, People, Unexpected Circumstance**

**Support A: Confront People**

 **Example**: People can be critical and cause conflict, and treat you unfairly

 **Example**: People can be resistant and be needed

**Support B: Confront Personal Issues**

 **Example**: Insecurities of low confidence, fear of failure, being self-critical, etc.

 **Example:** Health issues

**Example:** Misconceptions about how you think people view you such as controlling, self-centered

**Support C: Unexpected circumstances can hinder you.**

 **Example**: Lacking or Limited resources

 **Example**: Adjustment in time constraints

**Second Main Point: Resist and Avoid Temptations**

**Support A: Stand Firm when under spiritual attack.**

**Example:** 1 Corinthians 15:58 NIV – “Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

**Example:** Don’t entertain negative thoughts

**Support B: Be Content in all situations.**

**Example:** Don’t become overburdened by the resources you don’t have

**Example:** Don’t compare yourself with others

**Support C: Put on the Armor of God**

**Example:** The Word of God

 **Example:** Pray, Pray, Pray

**Example:** Rejoice: Praise and Worship God when you feel like it and when you don’t

**Third Main Point: Persevere Through Trials**

**Support A: For God’s sake**

**Example:** “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5 NIV)

**Example:** For God’s sake: God’s purpose for creating us will not be fulfill if we don’t do it. (to honor and glorify Him, to spread the Gospel, to serve in the kingdom)

**Support B: For our sake**

 **Example:** To fulfill our destiny

**Example:** God is equipping us with spiritual maturity

 **Example:** God is helping us to become whole

**Support C: For the sake of others**

**Example**: We want to leave a legacy

**Example:** We want to be a witness to others of what God is enabling you to do

**Example:** Example of Moses perseverance

Loss of joy and hope, despair

**Example:** We want to bear the fruit, spiritually and through multiplication: Others are drawn and want to follow God and your purpose by the fruit you bear spiritually (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control) and through the work of what God has purpose you to do.

**Fourth Main Point: My Testimony of Persevering in Leading the Dance Ministry**

**Support A: The Challenges and Temptations that I faced.**

**Example:** Insecurities (myself or others), being a perfectionist, doubts

ministry

**Example:** Spiritual attacks (doubts, fears, rebelliousness, jealous, pride, competitiveness within the ministry)

**Example:** Health Issues: myself or others

**Support B: I was fixed on Jesus.**

 **Example**: I fixed my eyes on Jesus by staying in the word

**Example:** I fixed my mind on Jesus by praying, meditating, and memorizing scripture

**Example:** I fixed my heart on Jesus by receiving His peace, comfort, and strength through the knowledge of his word and remembering the past experiences of His faithfulness

**Support C: I received the victory in Jesus** (Hebrews 12:2 NIV)

**Example:** Increase faith **-** My faith was increased to trust God through every trail and tribulation that I experience.

**Example:** Spiritual Growth **-** I was growing because I was learning from the trials and tribulation

**Example:** Renewed Strength - God continue to renew my strength

**Example:** Becoming more confident in my calling

**Chapter 4: Conclusion**:

**Restate topic**: Persevering in Your Purpose, Your Calling: Confront the Challenges, Resist Temptations, Persevere through Trials

No matter what obstacles arise, you must stay in the race and not give up on yourself, God, or His purpose for your life. You will not fulfill your kingdom purpose or glorify God or grow in spiritual maturity, if you allow people and personal issues and other circumstance to cause you to give up on your god given purpose. You must persevere through the challenges, feelings, and spiritual attacks. My testimony testifies of the challenges and temptation that I experience in the ministry of dance. What has helped me to stay the course is keeping my eyes, my mind and my heart fixed on Jesus. Jesus is where I and you will find the strength and the victory to overcome every obstacle.

**A Prayer for Persevering in Your Calling**

**Chapter 4: Conclusion**

**Restate topic**: My Story: How I Survived in Dance Ministry for 34 years

Just like you have experience challenges and temptation that have tried to hinder you in fulfilling God’s purpose in your life, I have experience challenges and temptations in the ministry of dance. What has helped me to stay the course is keeping my eyes, my mind and my heart fixed on Jesus. Jesus is where I and you will find the strength and the victory to overcome every obstacle.

**Prayer for Overcoming Challenges and Temptations**

**Chapter #5:**

**Thriving in Your Calling**

**First main point: God is Your Ultimate Partner in Ministry** (James 4:8 NKJV)

**Support A: Keep That Hunger for things of God.**

**Example:** Desire more of Him **(more t**ime in His presence, in prayer, in his word, in praise, in worship, in getting to know Him

**Example:** Listen for God’s voice. Intimacy with God should bring us to a place of hearing God. God speaks to us in unique ways (vision, thoughts, feelings, sensing, ….) (John 10:27-28 NIV)

**Example:** Trust God – “Before you do anything, put your trust totally in God and not in yourself. Then every plan you make will succeed.” Proverbs 16:8 (TPT)

**Support B: Stay Connected to the leading of the Holy Spirit**

**Example:** The Holy spirit will empower you with wisdom and revelation, and to speak and do things you could not do on your own.

**Example:** God will continue to establish you through the Holy Spirit(withdirection, guidance, teaching you His ways, interceding for you, and helping you fulfill the Will of God)

**Example:** You will bear fruit (Gal 5:22-23 NIV)

**Support C: Get Understanding, Knowledge, and Wisdom.**

**Example:** Grow in your biblical understanding of your purpose.

**Example:** Stand on biblical principles

**Example:** Allow God’s Word to be your inspiration and to keep you grounded.

**Second Main Point: Stay Connected to the Vision** (Habakkuk 2:2-3 NKJV)

**Support A: The kingdom is voice activated, how is God speaking to you.**

 **Example:** God will give you a verse to stand on

**Example:** God can speak to you to continue to move toward the vision through people, through situations, through prayer, through dreams, etc.

**Example:** Create a vision board

**Support B: Continue to Enhance your vision as God takes you through seasons.**

 **Example:** Take classes or read books to enhance your gift or skill or understanding

**Example:** Worship before Him

**Support C: Glean and connect with others of kindred spirit and purpose.**

**Example:** Pray and fellowship with others of kindred spirit to build a unified community

**Example:** Establish accountability partners or mentorship

**Example:** Learn from others

**Third Main Point**: **Walking Worthy of Your Calling**

**Support A:** **Be Confident**

 **Example:** Your confidence comes from God

**Example**: (Phil 4:6-8 NKJV)

**Example**:(Phil 1:6 NIV)

**Support B: Be Thankful**

**Example:** Gives you Power

**Example:** Allows you to be content

**Example:** Christlike attitude (humble, peaceful, positive, joyful)

**Support C: Be Obedient**

**Example:** Trust God at His Word (Numbers 23:19 ESV)

**Example:** Obey His Word

**Example:** When God nudges you to do something, act on it

**Support D: Just Be**

**Example:** Wait on the Lord to answer prayer and work or your behalf Isa 40:31

**Example: Stop trying so hard and just trust God**

**Fourth Main Point: My Testimony: I thrived in the Dance Ministry for 34 Years**

**Support A: It was a faith journey.**

**Example:** I stayed prayerful and thankful. I sought God in prayer about everything (how to move, what song to choreography, how to choreograph, what to wear, who would be my helper, what age group to work with, etc.)

**Example:** I listened and obeyed God’s Voice as He spoke to me

**Example:** I submitted to God’s Will and saw how He established me in my purpose

**Support B**: **God continue to bless the ministry year after year** (Proverbs 18:16 NKJV)

**Example:** God increased my relationships with other dance ministers across the city of Chicago and then internationally

**Example**: I continue to acquire more knowledge, wisdom and understanding about the ministry of dance as I interacted with more dance ministers

**Support C: I kept the vision before me and testimonies of his blessings through the years within me.**

**Example:** I held on to God’s promises and commands (Jeremiah 29:11 NIV, John 4:23-24 NIV)

**Example:** I remembered the many ways that God had already blessed me and the ministry

**Example:** God kept renewing my strength and enhancing the vision.

**Chapter 3: Conclusion**

**Restate topic**: Thriving in Your Purpose

If you are to thrive in our purpose, you must stay connected to God. God will give you the eyes to see, ears to hear and the heart to receive from Him as you move in the purpose that He has called you to. You also must continue to stay connected to your purpose by keeping the vision in mind, developing your gifts and skills, and building positive relationships. You also must maintain a kingdom mindset by being optimistic, obedient, and emotionally stable. My testimony of thriving in dance ministry for 34 years was about a journey of faith. Through my faith I was able to follow the leading of God for when it was time to start the ministry and expand the ministry. Through my faith, God blessed the ministry and open many doors for building relationships with other dance ministers within my church and across Chicago and even internationally. I was able to teach beyond the church walls and grow in my biblical knowledge and in my skill of dancing for the Lord. After 34 years, I was able to pass the ministry on another dance minister who I can assist her and watch the ministry continue to go from glory to glory.

**A Prayer for Thriving in Your Purpose**

**Chapter 6**

**“…for the joy set before you...”**

**First Main Point: Moving Forward in Joy** (James 1:2-4 NIV)

“Eyes that focus on what is beautiful bring joy to the heart and hearing a good report refresh.

and strengthens the inner being.” Proverbs 15:30 (TPT)

**Second Main Point: Moving Forward in Victory**

**Third Main Point: Wanting to hear, “Well Done Good and Faithful Servant”**

2 Tim 4:7 –**“**I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (NIV)

Matthew 25:21 – “His lord said to him, ‘Well *done,* good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.” (NKJV)

**Prayer to Move Forward**

**Conclusion**

**Introduction**

 Do you know the purpose for which God has created you? Are you walking in that purpose? Do you know what gifts, talents, and abilities that God birthed in you? Why is knowing your purpose or knowing your gifts, talents, and abilities so important? Let me tell you why.

 You are God’s gift to the earth. You have been given the hands, the feet, the mouth, the heart and the mind of Jesus to do good work. Your gifts, talents and abilities are needed to make an impact in the kingdom of God, serving in a way that only you can. Before God created you, you were already predestined with a purpose. God has qualified you to serve. God has qualified you to live an abundant life in Him. You are valued in God’s kingdom.

 In this book, you will see the word, ‘*kingdom’* or ‘*God’s kingdom*’ or ‘*kingdom of God’* used frequently but all refer to God or Jesus. Let’s take a moment to consider what these phrases mean. In the ESV Bible translation, the word, ‘*kingdom*’ is mentioned 126 times in the Gospels and 34 times in the rest of the New Testament**.1**  The exact phrase, “*kingdom of God*” is not in the Old testament. However, “*kingdom of the Lord*” is found in 2 Chronicles 12:8**.2** “The basic meaning of the word kingdom in the Bible is God’s kingly rule — his reign, his action, his lordship, his sovereign governance.” **1** In 2 Chronicles 20:6 (NIV), it says, “and said: “Lord, the God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you.”  “The “*kingdom of God”* is a spiritual kingdom, an eternal kingdom” not a physical place. “It is the realm of God's sovereignty, presence, and influence in our lives, where God reigns and rules over us with love, justice, mercy, and grace. In the kingdom, we find hope, peace, joy, and purpose that can only be found through living under God's rule.”**3**

 God has a greater purpose for your life than what you could ever think or imagine. People have gone on to glory and never discovered or fulfilled the purpose God had for them. People have walked away from their purpose because they were tired of drowning in a sea of hopelessness. I am here to tell you that it is time to pick yourself up again because there is an abundant life waiting for you. A kingdom life built around family, friendship, and fun. A kingdom life built on saving souls and helping people in need, and growing in the wisdom, knowledge and understanding of God and what God requires of us. A kingdom life built on experiencing all that God would have for you. God is not looking for spectators or participators, but movers, shakers, and life changers.

 In the movie, “Never Give Up” which is based on a true bout a professional deaf tennis player, Brad Minns had multiple reasons to give up on himself, on getting an education, on pursuing his dreams, but he did not. At the age of three, the doctor diagnosed Brad with 80 to 90 percent loss of hearing after experiencing an extremely high fever. Despite the challenges and the rejection that Brad experience throughout his life, He kept moving forward. At the age of twenty, Brad became the number one deaf tennis player in the nation after winning the 1985 Men’s Single Tennis Finals for the deaf. The odds of Brad winning were against him. Yet, Brad held the title of number one deaf tennis player in the nation for five consecutive years.

 It was God who made it possible for Brad to win and become the number one deaf tennis player in the nation. Brad was a man of faith. He trusted God. God showed the world that He could work through Bran to do what seemed impossible because Brad believe in Him. God enabled Brad to become a very skilled tennis player. If Brad had given up on what God had gifted and purposed him to do, he would not have reached his destiny. Today, Brad serves as a tennis professional and personal trainer helping others to achieve their dreams. Brad also shares his testimony of living his life for Christ with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes group.

 This endearing movie about Brad Minns’ life is a great reminder of overcoming obstacles, staying focus on your dreams, believing God for the impossible, believing in yourself and the value of community and persevering through tough situations. No matter what you experience, you can’t quit or give up because God has a purpose for your life. Brad did not give up on his purpose or give in to the temptations that he faced throughout his life.

 It may seem easier to quit than to weather the storms. It may seem easier to become complacent or stick with what you know than to challenge yourself. It is easier to lean into your own insecurities than to lean into God. It may seem easier to believe in the lies that you hear and see around you, than to walk in faith. No matter how easy it may seem, you must pick yourself up and keep moving forward.

 The title of this book, “Don’t Stop Dancing, You Got Purpose.”, is making an appeal to persevere, stay in the race, do not give up on yourself, do not give up on God and do not give up on the calling God has on your life. In other words, do not allow people, situations, or even views of yourself to stagnate you. Continue the work that God has begun in you. Know that you are not being called to run a sprint but a relay. God has passed the baton to you, and you must keep running until it is time to pass the baton to someone else. You are not alone in any of your endeavors because our heavenly Father is with you for every step, every lap, and every mile that you take.

 If you do not know your purpose, then you cannot begin the race. Too many people have not invested time or energy in finding their purpose because the busyness of life is driving them or they have been hindered by rejection, church hurt, lack of confidence, age or some other insecurity. It is the enemy that wants to infiltrate you heart and mind with negative thoughts, fears of failing, shame, or inhibit you from stepping out on faith.

 Where is the drive and the zeal to do, to become, to seek and to find. This book is here to serve as a source of inspiration and remind you that God has a plan for your life. There are blessings in store for those who persevere in what God is calling them to do. God sees you, knows you, and most importantly, created you with a purpose. You are significant, your desires are significant and what you do are all significant to God. God wants to use you in the kingdom.

 This book will take you on a soul-searching journey to help you find your purpose or to revitalized you in fulfilling your purpose. I take you back to the basics of understanding why God created you. I move on to discuss finding and embracing your calling. from understanding how to embrace your purpose to learning what it takes to thrive in your purpose and on to persevering in your purpose. I also talk about how to overcome the challenges and temptations that can prevent you from fulfilling your purpose and continuing to flourish in your purpose. I also share my testimony of how I found my purpose serving in the ministry of dance for 34 years and some of the challenges that I faced while fulfilling my purpose.

 There are also people in the Bible who faced obstacles but did not give up in fulfilling God’s purpose. In Genesis 17: 4- 6 (TPT), God established a covenant with Abraham saying that he will be the father of many nations and that kings will come from his lineage. In Genesis 17: 17 (TPT), Abraham acknowledges the challenge, “Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, “Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety.” God did fulfill his promise and Sarah bore a son to Isaac in their old age. God provided for Abraham and Sarah and will provide for you so that you are able to persevere through challenging times.

 As you read the chapters, I hope that you receive a word from the Lord that empowers you with new hope in this season of your life. The kingdom of God needs you. Let us make sure we are on the path that will enable us to become what God wants us to become so we can impact our life as well as the lives of others.

**Chapter #1**

**Why Did God Create You and Me?**

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Eph 2:10 NIV)

 While lying in bed the thought came to mind that God did not have to create us. He chose to create us. He did not have to create us, but He wanted to create us. His creations were motivated by a desire and a purpose and then came a plan. Think about when you have created something. What motivated you to draw a picture, to make a cake, to choreograph a dance or write a book.

 Thinking about this makes me think about friend and mentee, Tatianna, aka Tati. Over the course of five years, I have seen Tati find her purpose as a seamstress. I remember when her mom first started teaching her how to sew at a young age. It wasn’t an easy task for her. Now over two decades later, Tati has started her own sewing business called Karisma Stititches. She has made purses. bookbags, pants, dresses, gowns, tops and coats. She has even given names to some of her clothing calling her coat, “The coat of Many Cultures”. Tati has shared with me some of her design ideas and it is such a joy to see the final product and admire the beauty and creativity of her artistry. Tatianna takes something out of nothing and make it into something beautiful. Isn’t that what God id with us? Isn’t that what God did when He created the world.

I know that Tatianna felt please, excited, happy and proud of each one her accomplishments. How much more it must have been for our heavenly Father when he completed the creation of the world in six days.

 Before God created the world, He knew how He would create, why He would create, when He would create and what He would create. God is all knowing and knows the beginning and end of all things. God is also love and he created with love and care. God created life knowing that man would sin and would need a Savior to redeem them from their sin. God already had in mind that Jesus would be the sacrificial lamb to redeem the world from sin. God already had in mind the layout for the design of the world. God already had in mind that He would create you and me. He already knew what day, what time, what place and what person would bring us into the world. God already had in mind how He wanted to use you and how He wanted to use me. Even in all that God has done and planned, God has still given us free course to live, to explore, to create and to grow on this earth as we choose. He did not create us as robots. He created us with the intent to have a relationship with Him. Even before He created the world, God knew the purpose that He wanted us to fulfill. Some of us identify the talents or gifts or skills hat lead to our purpose at a very young age. Some of us grow into our purpose as we go through life embracing our interests, talents, abilities, and passions. Some of us never learn our purpose while here on earth. Without a relationship with God, we will never be able to fulfill our purpose as kingdom purpose.

 Before the creation of the world, God predestined us with kingdom purpose. It was part of His plan. Even if you say that God did not have to create this book of life, which is true, but He wanted to. God can do whatever He wants. Whatever you and I create is our choice. We don’t have to create but we want to because we know that our creation will bring satisfaction. joy, beauty and fulfillment to us, to God and similar feelings to others.

 In understanding how our purpose is connected to God’s creation of the world, we will discuss these three aspects: God created us because it was part of His plan. God created us out of love and God created us for kingdom purpose. Let’s get started.

**God created us because it was part of His plan.**

 “Do you not know?  Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. “ (Isaiah 40:28 NIV)

 God is everlasting. God has always existed “even before there was time, before there was space, before there was matter... there was God.” **5** So when Genesis 1:1 says,” In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”, this does not represent God’s beginning but the time when God started physically creating. In essence, God always existed. He is the beginning and the end.

 Through Jesus, Paul and Peter, we learn in scripture a little about God’s plan before creating the world. In Ephesians 1:4-5, we learn what God had us on His mind before the creation of the world. Paul says, “just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, **5**having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,” (NKJV). God desired man before creating man. While man was chosen before creation to be holy and blameless, Peter lets us know in 1 Peter 1:18-20 (TLB) that Jesus was chosen as the one to make man holy and blameless. Jesus was chosen before the creation of the world to redeem man from sin by sacrificing his precious blood on the cross. In Titus 1: 1-2 (NIV), God promise eternal life before the creation of the world, to those who trust in Him. Being God, he cannot lie. Whatever He says, He will do and whatever He promises, He will fulfill. (Numbers 19:23 NIV)

**God created us out of love.**

 God had us in His heart before the creation of the world. The Bible tells us that God is love and His love existed before time, and before humanity. Before the beginning of creation, there was love between God and Jesus (John 17:24b NIV). When the Bible refers to love in [1Co 13:4-7](https://biblia.com/bible/niv/1%20Cor%2013.4-7), it is referring to God. **5** It says, “Love (God) is patient, love (God) is kind. It (He) does not envy, it (He) does not boast, it is not proud. **5**It (He) does not dishonor others, it (He) is not self-seeking, it (He) is not easily angered, it (He) keeps no record of wrongs. **6**Love (God) does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. **7**It (He) always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” (NIV) God’s love extends to man. (1 John 3:1 and John 3:16 NIV). Just as God loves us, He wants us to love Him (Deuteronomy 6:5) and love others (1 Joh 4:7-8 NIV). We can love because God first loved us. God is the author of love.

 God loved us so much that He created us in His image. **(**Gen 1:27 NIV) We have God’s intellect to think reason, make decisions, invent, create and operate with the mind of Christ. We have a conscience or “moral compass” that reflects God’s holiness. We know the difference between evil and good. We were created in righteousness and perfect innocence with the capability to be compassionate, respectful, empathetic, honest and have integrity. God also created us with the intent to fellowship with others which reflects God’s triune nature and His love. In Gen 2:18, God says, “it is not good for the man to be alone” (NIV).

 Without Jesus, the love of man, the creation of man, the forgiveness of man, God’s relationship with man and life eternal would not be possible. Colossians 1:16 says, “For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, powers, rulers, or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.” (NIV)

**God Created Us for Kingdom Purpose.**

 “Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature So they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, And, yes, Earth itself, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth.” God created human beings; he created them godlike, Reflecting God’s nature. He created them male and female. God blessed them: “Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth! Take charge! Be responsible for fish in the sea and birds in the air,”

 (Genesis 1:26-28 The Message MSG)

**God Created Us to Glorify Him**

 The next time that you are outdoors, look around. Take note of the radiant sun, the blue skies, the swaying of the tree branches, and the blooming flowers. Listen to the chirping birds and feel the caress of the gentle fresh wind as it touches your face. What you are experiencing is God’s creations. God’s magnificence and splendor is being displayed as nature functions in the way that God purposed it to function. Psalms 148 (NIV) describes how God created all things to glorify Him or in other words, to honor Him with praise, admiration, or worship. When we see God’s glory in nature, we are seeing how amazing and wonderful He is. We are seeing His power and majestic beauty. The glory of the Lord is defined by Christopher Morgan as the following: “God’s glory is the magnificence, worth, loveliness, and grandeur of his many perfections. God communicates his glory through his creation, image-bearers, providence, and redemptive acts. God’s people respond by glorifying him. God receives glory and, through uniting his people to Christ, shares his glory with them”. **11**

 If God is glorified in nature, how much more is He glorified through mankind. Part of our kingdom purpose is to glorify God by praising and worshiping Him. Psalms 15:6 says, “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.” (NIV) There is also a verse in bible that expresses that God inhabits the praises of His people. This means that God is present when we praise Him, whether we are praising Him in words, in song, in dance, by playing an instrument, by lifting our hands, or some other means. As we praise and worship God, we are also being blessed. That time of praise and worship may deliver us spiritually, from any attacks of the enemy. It also may be a time of revival or restoration bringing us to a place where we can hear God and God can work through us. God is desires to commune with us and is seeking those who will praise and worship Him. (Isaiah 43:21 & John 4:23-24 NIV)

 We also glorify God when we obey His word. Obedience to God’s word is the way we grow personally and the way we draw closer to God. In 1 John 2:5, it says, “But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+2%3A5-6&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-30556a)]is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.” “God wants us to hear His Word, to know His Word, to trust His Word, and to keep His Word….We can only keep His Word if we trust His Word. We can only trust His Word if we hear His Word, for "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." And we can only keep His Word if we hear, know, and believe in our hearts ALL that God has said in and through His Holy WORD.”**12**

We glorify God when we produce fruit.

To be continued

**God Created Man Proclaim His Truth**

We are all called to proclaim God’s Truth. We are telling the story of God’s saving grace in our lives to others. We talk about our faith to others. We are being an example of Christ through how we live our lives at home, on the job and other places. We use our gifts in such a way that God’s Truth is being proclaimed through us. In Luke 4: 18, it says “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,”. NIV We are to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others. We are to teach and admonish one another with the wisdom we are receiving from God’s word and the holy Spirit.

To be continued

**God created man to rule the earth.**

 “Your Kingdom purpose is the service God has gifted you to perform, that has eternal value.  More specifically, your Kingdom purpose is that thing you do, that you don’t do – but that God does through you.”**8**

 I once heard Senator Sharon Grove say,“rule with a servant heart” and “lead with the heart of a king”,(Senator Shannon Grove)

To be continued

**Chapter #2**

**God is Calling You**

“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.” Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

 God is preparing you for everything He wants you to be at this point. He is preparing you for your destiny. “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.” Romans 8:28 (NKJV)

**First main point: Discover Your Calling through simply Volunteering.**

**Second Main Point: Discover Your Calling When God Positions You.**

**Third Point: Discovering Your Calling Through Submission:** (your heart, mind and will)

**Fourth Main Point: My Testimony - How I found my calling as a dance minister**

Who would have ever thought that God would or could use me as a dance minister. As a child, I had no clue that I would one day be dancing for the Lord. All I knew was that I wanted to dance. Dancing for me was a joy. In addition to secular dancing, I wanted to pursue all genres of dancing. I wanted to be like Debbie Allen because dance was my passion.

 Growing up in a single-family home with my mom and my two brothers and my two sisters, I knew that my mom could not afford to spend money to fulfill my dreams or interests. If I was going to pursue any of my dreams or interests, I would need to make it happen. I wanted to play the piano. I wanted to attend modeling school. I wanted to sing and write songs. Most of all, I wanted to dance. I loved secular dancing, and I was exceptionally good at it. However, I wanted more than that. I also wanted to pursue dance in the performing arts.

 At the age of 16, I was able to pay for my first dance class after working a summer job. I took a ballet class at Malcolm X College with an African American male instructor. That male instructor was so challenging and intimidating that I quit the class. I then began to question my abilities. Do I really know how to dance? Why couldn’t I keep up in doing the movements in his class? Raised on the west side of Chicago, and with limited exposure, I had no experience with the performing arts, other than what I saw on tv. I thought I could be like Debbie Allen, but I came to realize that dance in the performing arts was not easy. Much was demanded of me than I knew about or could grasp. I did not know or understand the ballet terminology including how to do jetes or ton ‘dues. I didn’t know that a dance rehearsal or class could be so intense. I was not prepared to get down like that. In my discouragement, I walked away from dancing in the performing arts. However, I did continue to dance the way I knew how and that is secular dancing to secular music. Sometimes I found myself dancing all night long when I attended house parties. I also participated in summer youth programs where I was able to participate in a talent show and choreograph a dance for me and other youth to display in the talent show. Along with that, I also joined O’ Quinn Royal Gladiators Drum and Bugle Corps. Through this organization, I was able to participate in parades where I either twirled a rifle or carried a flag.

 During my childhood, I did not know why I was drawn to dance, music, singing or writing songs or the drum and bugle corps but I did know that I had to do it. Doing these things made me feel complete. This is what I gravitated to for enjoyment. It made me feel like I was moving towards my destiny.

 After graduating from high school, I attended the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. I decided to give another shot at performing arts, so I took dance classes which included ballet, jazz, and modern dance every semester. Even though I was not a dance major, I felt a need to continue to pursue my interest in dancing. I also joined a dance company called the Omnimov Dance company which was an African dance company. And, of course, I continued with secular dancing at the college parties. In fact, I became popular among the Black students on campus because of my dancing abilities at the house parties. On the other hand, my dean couldn’t tell from my college transcript if I was an engineering major or a dance major. All he knew was that I really enjoyed dancing, and he encouraged me to continue to do it as an outlet from my studies.

 ***“I receive Jesus Christ into my life and my life began to transform.”***

 As college started becoming more challenging for me, I started backing away from the party life. At some point in my sophomore year, I had to focus on getting a job to help pay for my tuition. I signed up for the work study program where they help you find a job on campus. I was assigned a job working in the cafeteria of my dorm as a server for the breakfast shift. As students went through the breakfast line in the morning, I would serve the food that they were not allowed to get themselves.

 There was one student who caught my attention every morning as he went through the food line. He was not your typical college student. Every day I saw college students that were grumpy, half sleepy and speechless when they went through the food line in the morning, but this student was always pleasant, smiling, and saying, “Good Morning” every single day. I couldn’t understand why this student was always happy. There weren’t any other students that had a countenance like his that came through the food line or sat in any of my classes. Coming from the west side of Chicago, I was not used to seeing people so nice and happy as he was.

 One day I decided to ask this student who I learned was named Micheal, why he was always so happy. Michael told me that he had received Jesus Christ into his life and if I was interested, he could have a female student share more details about what that meant.

 Even though I found pleasure in dancing, I was searching for more. I knew of God, but I did not know how to connect with God. I once got baptize at the age of 14 at the Baptist church across the street from my house and I thought something magical was going to happen, but it didn’t. Now I see someone that has something I want which I couldn’t quite explain what it was. Because I wanted what Michael had, I took Michael up on his offer of meeting with the female student. Through that female student, I came to accept Jesus Christ into my life. From that point on, my life began to transform. I was no longer investing time in attending parties or trying to pledge a sorority. My family wanted to be to pledge Zeta, but I was more interested in pledging Alpha Kappa Alpha. Nonetheless, I started attending a Bible study and focusing more of my time on my studies so I could graduate. In any regard, I did continue to take dance classes.

 When I graduated from college I returned to Chicago and through a friend I learned about a church called Rock of Our Salvation Evangelical Free church located on the west side of Chicago. I decided to join Rock church and became highly involved in seeking God and serving. I was singing on the praise and worship team, helping with the children’s choir, participating in singles ministry, and attending church events and bible study. As my faith grew, I began to question the dance. I was no longer sure if dancing was pleasing to God. I became convinced that dancing was wrong. I decided that I needed to give up dancing if I was going to live for God. I approached my worship leader with my concern about the dance. My worship leader said to me, “My sister, you don’t have to stop dancing, you just need to change partners.”

***“God did not want me to give up the dance but to begin to dance for Him.”***

 I was in awe of what my worship leader’s response. It really resonated in my spirit. I continue to reflect on the idea that I needed to change partners and reflect on the idea that I could continue to dance. At some point, I was convinced that God did not want me to give up the dance but to begin to dance for Him. I had no idea of how it would look or what it meant for me, but I felt a calling to dance for God.

 That experience catapulted my interest in dancing for the Lord and I begin to seek God on how to use what was my passion to use for His glory. This journey has not just given me purpose in God’s kingdom, but it has helped me to learn who God is and how God sees me. It has been a time of seeking God and developing a relationship with Him. It has been a time of learning to trust him, to walk in faith and to surrender to Him as I ministered through the platform of dance. God used the ministry of dance to draw me to Himself and this has been a spiritual experience with Him that goes beyond what I could ever imagine. As God has worked through me through the ministry of dance, I began to pour into others. The dance ministry team was being used by Him to impact the church with messages from the songs and movements to express His love, His power, His hope and His salvation. As I was finding my place in ministry, I also found my identity as a person. I was learning of my spiritual gifts of creativity, administration, teaching, compassion, and encouragement. I was learning how to hear God’s voice when it came to choreography songs.

 The point that I am making here is that God created me with a desire and ability to dance. He created in me those things that would bring joy to me and to Him and that He would use to mold my character. Do you know that what God has done in my life through serving in the ministry of dance, He also wants to do the same for you? Just like I found my purpose you can find yours too. You don’t have to go searching beyond what God already created inside of you. Your desires, your interests and your passion are what God had given you to connect to your purpose. You may not be a dance minister, but God has a calling for you. God wants to work in and through you in ways you cannot imagine but only experience when you serve Him in ministry. Recall that David, in the bible, played the harp as a boy. He didn’t know that one day God would use him to play the harp for Saul. He didn’t know that God was preparing him for a warfare ministry. He didn’t know that his playing would bring Saul deliverance.

 It was once said by a guest speaker on Moody Bible Institute radio station that “Christianity works best when it is an action.” God has not just called us to just be known as a Christian but to serve in the kingdom. **James 2:14-26** says, **“What good is it, my brothers, and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? 15Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? 17In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.**

**(to be continued)**

**Chapter #3:**

**Embracing the Call**

(Psalms 138:8 ESV)

 I remember at the age of 14 saying that I would never become a teacher.

Imagine a life that consisted of a weekly routine of working from 8am to 4pm, Monday house, doing laundry and running errands on Saturday followed by attending church, eating out and a movie on Sunday. After doing this week after week, month after month, year after year, I think you would agree that there must be more to life than this and you should. That longing for more is rooted in how God has created us. God has created all of us for His purpose.

 There are desires and interest have God placed in you. There is something that brings you pleasure. There is something that you enjoy doing. What did you do for enjoyment as a child? What are you skillful at doing now or interested in becoming skillful at doing? Is there anything you feel a strong need to do even though you are not obligated? Whatever that thing is, that brings you pleasure, that you are interested in becoming more skillful in doing or you feel that you must do, is connected to your purpose. God has created us all with purpose.

 When I started dancing for the Lord, I had no idea that God was going to use me to lead a dance ministry. I never knew that I would one day lead the dance ministry at my church with children, then lead the dance ministry with adults and eventually lead the ministry with teenagers. I never knew that I would be teaching dance and spiritually pouring into the lives of others. I never knew but God knew**.** In fact, all my interest that I had as a child, was now being used for God’s purpose. I was not only leading the dance ministry, but I was also singing praise and worship with an ensemble and writing praise and worship songs during my spare time. Ephesians 2:10 says, **“**For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (NIV)

 God is not partial, when it comes to people. He wants to use everyone, but we must find our purpose. If we don’t see our purpose, then we must be alert as to how God is moving in our lives. We must be in tuned for when God brings our purpose into full fruition. Nothing that happens in our lives is coincidental. Everything happens for a reason. “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Rom 8:28 NIV)

I was called to the ministry of dance. Some of you may be called to ushering or operating the sound system in your church or doing the church announcements or preaching or even authoring a book. Some of you may even be called to ministries outside the church such as the prison ministry or providing home care for the sick or ministry through your job or serving as a missionary in another country. What is it that God has prepared or is preparing you to do? Matt 7:7-8 says, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 8For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. (NIV)

**First main point: God is Your Ultimate Partner in Ministry** (James 4:8 NKJV)

**Second Main Point: Stay Connected to the Vision** (Habakkuk 2:2-3 NKJV)

**Third Main Point**: **Walking Worthy of Your Calling**

**Fourth Main Point: I Embraced the Call to Dance for the Lord**

**(to be continued)**

**Chapter #4**

**Persevering In Your Calling**

 Confronting the Challenges, Resisting Temptations, Persevering through Trials

“Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and your right hand delivers me. The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.” (Psa 138: 7-8 ESV)

**First Main Point: Confront the Challenges: Personal, People, Unexpected Circumstance**

**Second Main Point: Resist and Avoid Temptations**

**Third Main Point: Persevere Through Trials**

**Fourth Main Point: My Testimony of Persevering in the Dance Ministry**

Hebrews 12:2 – “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (NIV)

 Even through God’s provisions and how He was continuing to guide and bless me through the many years of ministering through the dance, there has been times where I have taken a sabbatical and even felt like quitting. During those times, I was reminded that God was with me. I also remember the covenant that I establish with God after I was once told by my worship leader, ‘Don’t stop dancing, just change partners. So, through the years, through the hurts, through the insecurities, through the aging, through the spiritual attacks, through the loneliness, and through health issues and other challenges, I stayed in the race. As a result, God has taken me from glory to glory through the platform of dance ministry.

**(to be continued)**

**Chapter #5:**

**Thriving in Your Calling**

**First main point: God is Your Ultimate Partner in Ministry** (James 4:8 NKJV)

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**Second Main Point: Stay Connected to the Vision** (Habakkuk 2:2-3 NKJV)

**Third Main Point**: **Walking Worthy of Your Calling**

**Fourth Main Point: My Testimony: Thriving in the Dance Ministry for 34 Years**

**Chapter 6**

**“…for the joy set before you...”**

**Conclusion**

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**Bible Versions**

* King James Version – KJV
* English Standard Version – ESV
* The Message (MSG)
* New International Version - NIV
* New King James Version – NKJV
* The Passion Translation (TPT)

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