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**Chapter #1:**

**Created With Purpose**

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.

**A Prayer: Thank You Lord for Creating Me**

**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)

**First Main Point: Discover Your Calling**

**Support A: Your Call is connected to your identity**.

 **Example:** How does God see you. (What does the Bible say about you)

**Example:** How do you see yourself (Do you know your talents, abilities, interest, passions, weaknesses, strengths. You need to know what’s inside of you)

“Within your heart you can make plans for your future, but the Lord chooses the steps

**Example:** Accept you and your life (experiences, crises)

**Example:** How do others see you (Are you known to be friendly? Are you know to be generous? Are you known to be a godly person?}

**Support B: Your Call is connected to knowing God.** (2 Thess 1:11-12 NIV)

**Example:** Who is God (1 Cor 13:4-7) (How is God described in the Bible? Who is God to you? What is God known for in the Bible.)

 **Examle:** What are God’s attributes.

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

**Example:** What has God done or is doing. (What did God do in the Bible? What has God done for you?

**Support C: Your Call is connected to serving.**

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

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

God prepares you through your involvement. Helping in the church, or in your community or on your job allowed you to discover your gifts and abilities.)

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

**Second Main Point: Embrace Your Calling**

**Support A: Come As You Are**

 **Example:** You don’t have to be knowledgeable but available

 **Example:** You don’t have to be prepared

**Support B: Embrace Your Call Through Submission**

**Example:** Give your whole heart to what God is establishing in your life. (your heart, mind and will)

**Example:** Meditate: (Think about what God’s Word says in connection to how He is leading you. Think about the experiences andhow what you are being called to aligns with you interest, passions, gifts, talents, abilities.)

**Example:** Surrender your will to do His Will

**Example**: Submit to leadership’s guidance, instructions, ideas

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

**Support C: Embrace the Call Through Trusting God**

 **Example: Biblical Example**

 **Example: God knows best**

**Third Main Point: Stay Committed to Your Calling** (Godly Lifestyle)

**Support A: Committed to the Process of being Called**

**Example:** God’s may relocate you to a new community or new city

**Example:** God may allow you to be chosen for a task or ministry that is more aligned to what He is calling you to

**Example:** God may allow you to be promoted to a new role or position.

**Support B: Committed to Spiritual Growth and Development**

 **Example:** Be alert to how God is working in your life to grow and develop you

 **Example:** Be patient and wait on God

 **Example:** Seek guidance, counsel and accountability

**Support C: Committed to Servanthood**

 **Example**: Be ready (in season and out of season)

**Example:** Dedicate time to disciple, mentor, teach, speak, preach, sing, dance, evangelize)

**Chapter 2: Conclusion**:

**Restate topic**: God is Calling You

 God is the only one who can fulfill His purpose in you. We cannot walk in that purpose if we are not connected to the right sources. Our purpose is connected to knowing God, knowing ourselves and being committed to serve. 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 to another dance minister who I can assist her and watch the ministry continue to go from glory to glory.

**A Prayer: God is Calling You**

**Chapter #3:**

**Run Your Race**

*” … let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.” (Hebrews 12:1 NIV)*

**First Main Point: Take the steps to run the race**

 **Support A: Allow God to be your personal trainer**

“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:** 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)

**Example:** Stay Connected to the leading of the Holy Spirit. (The Holy spirit will empower you with wisdom and revelation, and to speak and do things you could not do on your own. 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)

**Support B: Be willing to undergo training.**

“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.” (Heb 12:11 NIV)

 **Example:** Seek God

**Example:** Keep That Hunger for things of God. (Desire more of Him **(t**ime in His presence, in prayer, in his word, in praise, in worship, in getting to know Him

**Example:** Get Understanding, Knowledge, and Wisdom. (Grow in your biblical understanding of your purpose. Stand on biblical principles. Allow God’s Word to be your inspiration and to keep you grounded.)

 **Example:** You have to be willing to do the work that is required for your calling.

 **Support C: Walk worthy of your calling**

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

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

 **Example:** We want to leave a legacy and fulfill our destiny

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

**Example:** We want to bear the fruit, spiritually (Gal 5:22-23 NIV)) 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

**Example:** Be Confident (Your confidence comes from God. (Phil 4:6-8 NKJV)

(Phil 1:6 NIV) Be Thankful (Gives you Power, Allows you to be content, and have a Christlike attitude (humble, peaceful, positive, joyful) Be Obedient (Trust God at His Word (Numbers 23:19 ESV) Obey His Word (When God nudges you to do something, act on it. Just Be (Wait on the Lord to answer prayer and work or your behalf Isa 40:31. Stop trying so hard and just trust God)

**Second Main Point: Endure Your Race**

 **Support A: Move away from hindrances**

**Example:** Stand Firm when under spiritual attack (doubts, fears, rebelliousness, jealous, pride)

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:** Persevere through trials

 **Support B: Resist and Avoid temptation.**

 **Example:** Put on the Armor of God

 **Example:** Pray, Pray, Pray

**Example:** Rejoice: Praise and Worship God when you feel like it and when you do not

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

**Example:** Do not become overburdened by the resources you do not have

**Example:** Do not compare yourself with others

**Example**: Do not allow lack or limited resources or time constraints to make you quit

**Third Main Point: Finish Your Race by staying focus**

**Support A: Avoid Being Distracted**

**Example:** Unexpected Circumstances (Confront rebellious, resistant and critical People)

**Example:** Personal Problems: (Insecurities about self-image or character, health issues, misconceptions of people or situations)

**Example:** Contradictory feelings (feeling defeated, unmotivated, lethargic)

**Example:** Do not entertain negative thoughts

 **Support B: Stay Connected to the Vision** (Habakkuk 2:2-3 NKJV)

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

**(**God will give you a verse to stand on. God can speak to you to continue to move toward the vision through people, through situations, through prayer, through dreams, etc. Create a vision board)

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

(Take classes or read books to enhance your gift or skill or understanding. Worship before Him.

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

**Example:** Pray and fellowship with others of kindred spirit to build a unified community (Establish accountability partners or mentorship. Learn from others.)

**Support C: Fix Your eyes on Jesus**

 **Example:** He is the Author and Perfector of Your Faith

 **Example**: Fix your eyes on Jesus by staying in the word

**Example: F**ixed your mind on Jesus by praying, meditating, and memorizing scripture.

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

**Chapter 3: Conclusion**:

**Restate topic**: Endure the Race

 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 temptations 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.

 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: Endure the Race**

**Chapter 4**

**“…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: Recognize the Blessings and Victory**

**Support A: We 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

**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: Keeping the Faith**

**Conclusion**

**Introduction**

 Imagine that you are at a music school for a dance recital, and it turns out to be more of a church service. You see female praise dancers positioned across the front of the auditorium dancing with sheer white scarves as the song by Donald Lawrence and the Tri- City Singers says, "I feel seasons everywhere and I feel blessings in the air". These dancers are dressed in light blue bridal-like dresses adorned with sheer bell bottom sleeves with silver trim appearing very angelic in style. The dresses extend halfway below the knee where you can see white palazzo pants beneath. As the dancers turn, you can see the fluidness of the garment flaring out like the opening of an umbrella. Attached to the chests of the garments is a sparkling silver beaded cross symbolizing redemption (being set free from the guilt of sin through Jesus Christ who paid the price for all sin).

     At a certain point, the song says, “the wait is over, walk into your season.” The song continued to repeatedly say, “walk into your season" incorporated with adlibbing and the dancers, one by one, begin to walk through the veil which is positioned at the front of the center aisle of the auditorium. The veil is represented by two long white sheer flags which are held like curtains by two dancers. Each dancer individually walks through the veil, and then processions down the aisle flowing in movement as the spirit would lead them. As each dancer passes through the veil, you can hear people from the audience shouting, "Amen!” Praise the Lord!", "Hallelujah!". As the last dancer walks through the veil, the song ends. At the end of the song, you hear an uproar of praise. Some dancers are walking about and praising God with lifted hands and shouts of “Thank you Jesus!” and “Hallelujah!” Other dancers are just standing and praising God with tears of joy. People from the audience also continue to praise God with shouts of praise and lifted hands.

   That experience reflected God’s beauty and splendor moving through the ministry of an actual dance that took place at Dorolyn Academy School of Music in the year 2006. You could see a reflection of God’s beauty and splendor as the dancers move about gracefully with flowing scarves. You could see a reflection of God’s beauty and splendor as the dancers walked through the veil and as sounds of praise were released, hands lifted and people praising God while standing.

 It was not man, but a move of God that made that experience possible. People were being ministered to on that day because of the willingness of individuals who were called or being called to the ministry of dance for God’s service. Being called is about having a sense of purpose or direction through the orchestration and inspiration from God. God called me to the ministry of dance. In that calling, He open doors so that I could teach dance classes at a music school. He brought students to the school that felt that they were being called to dance for the Lord. From the class, preparations were made for a dance recital.

 For God to use me and the students of dance, we had to discover our calling, embrace our calling, and commit to our calling. As we did our part, God did the equipping and the ministering in and through us. What started out as a typical dance recital became a ministry. God was able to use the dance recital for kingdom purpose. People were blessed, touched, and encouraged at that recital. God was able to fulfill His purpose upon that day because individuals were willing to say “yes” to their calling and to His Will.

 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 has 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 excellent 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, so that people can be saved, delivered, restored, encouraged, and inspired. 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. God sees you as valuable in His kingdom.

 In this book, you will see the word, ‘*kingdom’* or ‘*God’s kingdom*’ or ‘*kingdom of God’* used. Let us 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 thirty-four 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 committed suicide because they fail to realize they have a purpose. Some people have chosen to be homeless they they felt they had no purpose. People have walked away from their purpose because they were tired of drowning in disappointment. I am here to tell you that the time is now to pick yourself up again. There is an abundant life waiting for you. A kingdom life built around family, friendship, and fun. A kingdom life built on a relationship with God. A kingdom life built on experiencing all that God would have for you. God is not looking for us to be spectators or participators in his kingdom, but He is looking for us to be movers, shakers, leaders and life changers.

 In the movie, “Never Give Up” which is based on true events, a professional deaf tennis player, Brad Minns had many reasons to give up on himself, his education, and 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 Brad to do what seemed impossible because Brad believed 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 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 cannot 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 step out on faith. It is easier to lean into your own insecurities than to lean into God’s Word. It may seem easier to believe in the lies that you hear and see around you, than to trust God. No matter how easy it may seem, you must not give up but keep moving forward.

 In this book, “Don’t Stop Dancing, You Got Purpose.,” I am making an appeal to stay in the race, fight the good fight, to not give up on yourself, to not give up on God and to not give up on fulfilling the calling God has on your life. In other words, do not allow the enemy, people, situations, or even views of yourself to hinder what God is doing or want to do in your life. Continue the work that God has begun in you. Know that you are not being called to run a sprint but a marathon. God is cheering you on, and you must keep running until you reach the heavenly finish line. 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.

 This book is here to serve as a source of inspiration and remind you that God has a plan for your life no matter your age, your background, your level of education or level of experience. God uses those who make themselves available. Those who have the drive and the zeal to serve, and to say yes to the things God is calling them to do, to become and to display. 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.

 This book will take you on a soul-searching journey to help you understand your purpose or to revitalize you in fulfilling your purpose. It will take you back to the basics of understanding why God created you. Aspects of discovering your purpose, understanding, and embracing your purpose, and persevering in your purpose are presented in this book. Throughout the journey that this book will take you on, I share my testimonies from my 34 years of ministry in the dance.

 The Bible gives us many examples of people who persevered to fulfill God’s purpose in their lives. Jeremiah was called to the ministry of prophecy. Despite threats, prison and other obstacles, Jeremiah continued preaching, teaching, and sharing the Gospel to an unfaithful nation. After Paul converted to Christianity, he became so on fired for the Lord that he was spreading the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire. Paul persevered in his faith, despite being imprisoned, exposed to death several times, receiving thirty-nine lashes five times, beaten with rods three times, attack with stones and being shipwreck three times. In Genesis, God established a covenant with Abraham saying that he will be the father of many nations and that kings will come from his lineage. This was Abraham’s response. “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.” (Genesis 17: 17 TPT), God did fulfill his promise and Abraham and Sarah bore a son, Isaac in their old age. God provided for Jeremiah, for Paul and for Abraham and Sarah because they all had a great purpose to fulfill in what was to come. God will also provide for you so that you are able to fulfill your purpose.

 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**

**Created With Purpose**

*“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)*

 During my childhood, I was interested in the arts. I wanted to sing, play the violin, play the piano, write songs and attend modeling school. Most of all, I wanted to dance. Dancing was my joy, and it was something that I was good at doing. I kept abreast of all the latest dance trends. I danced at home, I danced at house parties, I danced in a youth talent show and I dance in a club at school. I do not know, at that time, why I had such a passion for dancing. I just knew that dancing brought me joy, a sense of satisfaction and a sense of belonging.

 During my childhood, I knew of God, but I did not know Him personally. I knew that He created the world, but I did not know why. When I came to know God, I realize that God did not have to create me. He chose to create me. I wanted to know why I had an interest in the arts as a child. I wanted to know why I had a passion for dance. I came to learn that God is the creator and Lord over all things. When God created me, He gave me certain interests, passions, and desires. My interests and passion were the beginning of the plan God had for my life. God has created everything, including you and me, with a plan and a purpose in mind. Consider a time when you created something. What motivated you to create? What motivated you to draw a picture, to make a cake, to choreograph a dance or author a book? You were motivated by a purpose.

 One of my mentees from dance ministry, Tatianna, loves designing clothes. Her mother started teaching her how to sew when she was a child. Tatianna says ‘I continue to sew because it is not a talent for me, but a beautiful God-given gift. I enjoy being able to create something out of nothing and put my own spin on a modern thing.”

 Over the course of five years, I have seen Tatianna find her purpose as fashion designer. She has started her own sewing business called Karisma Stitches. She has made praise dance garments, 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.” It has been a joy to see some of her final products and admire the beauty and creativity of her artistry. Just like Tatianna or any of us are pleased with the things that we create, God is pleased with all He created. In Genesis it says, “God surveyed all he had made and said, “I love it!” For it pleased him greatly. Evening gave way to morning – day six” (Genesis 1:31 TPT)

 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 already had in mind the layout for the design of the world. God already had in mind that He would create you and me. Jeremiah 1:5 states that Jeremiah the prophet was called to ministry before he was born. The scripture says, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+1%3A5&version=NIV#fen-NIV-18952a)] you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” (NIV) 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 people to serve in His kingdom.

 Even in all that God has done and planned, God still gives us freedom. We have the freedom to live, to explore, to create and to grow on this earth as we choose. God did not create us as robots. He created us in His image 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 are born with talents that are connected to our purpose in God’s kingdom. Others of us grow into our purpose as we go through life embracing and developing those abilities that we have interest in or are passionate about. Unfortunately, some of us never find our purpose while here on earth because we do not pursue it. Without knowing our kingdom purpose, we will never feel complete as God would have for us to be in his kingdom.

 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 life, which is true, but He wanted to. God can do whatever He wants. Whatever you and I create is our choice, as well. We do not 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.

**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. God always existed. He is the beginning and the end.

 Before the creation of the world, God had us on His mind. As it says in Ephesians 1:4-5, God chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before Him in love. God predestined us to be adopted as his sons and daughters through Jesus Christ. Jesus, on the other hand, was chosen as the one to make man holy and blameless. It tells us in 1 Peter 1:18-20 that God created us knowing that we would sin and would need a Savior to redeem us from our sin. God already had in mind that Jesus would be the sacrificial lamb to redeem the world from sin. Jesus was chosen before the creation of the world to redeem us from our sin and to give us eternal life by sacrificing his precious blood on the cross.

**God created us out of love.**

 God is love and he created you and me with love and care. God had us in His heart before the creation of the world. The Bible tells us that God’s love existed before time, and before humanity because God is love. Before the beginning of creation, there was love between God and Jesus. 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. Just as God loves us, He wants us to love Him and love. 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. We have God’s intellect to think, to reason, to make decisions, to invent, to create, and to 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 for us 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.**

 *“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 do not do – but that God does through you.”****8***

*God Created Us to Glorify Him*

 The next time that you can enjoy the 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 the sights and sounds of God. You are experiencing God’s creations. God’s magnificence and splendor is being displayed as nature functions in the way that God purposed it to function. 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 God is. We are seeing His power and majestic beauty.

 If God is glorified in nature, how much more is He glorified through us. 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. Whether we praise God in words, in song, in dance, by playing an instrument, by lifting our hands, or by some other means, God is present.

 God values our praise. Jesus told the Pharisees that if the people had kept quiet, he would have gotten the stones to praise him. (Luke 19:36 -40) As we praise and worship God, we are also being blessed. That time of praise and worship can end up being a time of deliverance for you. It can also be a time of revival or restoration bringing you to a place where we can hear God and God can work through us to renew our minds. God desires to commune with us and is seeking those who will praise and worship Him.

 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**

*God Created Us to Proclaim His Truth*

God has not only given us the eyes to see His magnificence but the words to proclaim His Truth. “In the Bible, “proclaim” signifies making a public announcement or sharing the good news.” **15** We are all called to proclaim to others God’s Truth about sin, love, judgment, repentance, and salvation. When we talk about our faith to others, we are proclaiming God’s Truth. It is not only in spoken word but the songs that are song or danced to, proclaim the attributes and power of God. 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 to or the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,” (NIV).

 We are to be an example of Christ through how we live our lives at home, on the job, at school and other places. In *Colossians 1:27*, it says we have the hope of His glory which is Christ in us. “Don’t you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16 NLT) When we are born again, the Spirit of God dwells in us which makes us love the way God loves and think the way God thinks. The Word says, “So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.” (2 Corinthians 3:18) “The weighty presence of God's goodness is released in us and remains in us.”**13**

 The Holy spirit is doing the work of transforming us into the image of Christ who is the image of God. God’s glory is flowing through us. The glory will manifest in each believer differently. Some will preach, some will teach, some will love through giving and some will love through healing. It was because of a college student reflecting God’s glory that I came to know the Lord.

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

 During my sophomore year at the University of Illinois in Champaign, Urbana, I signed up for a work study program where I was assigned a job working in the cafeteria of my dorm as a server during the breakfast shift. As I serve food every morning, there was one student that I was captivated by as he went through the food line. He was not your typical college student. Every day I saw college students that were grumpy, half sleep 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 could not understand at that time why this student was always happy, but I am certain now that he was carrying the glory of God. There were not any other students that came through the food line in the morning that had a countenance and personality like his. I wanted to know why he was so nice and happy all the time.

 One day I decided to ask this student named Micheal, why he was always so happy. Michael told me that he had received Jesus Christ into his life and if I were interested, he could have a female student share more details about what that meant. Through that female student, I came to accept Jesus Christ into my life. From that point on, my life was transformed. I was no longer investing so much time in attending parties, nor feeling the pressure to pledge a sorority, even though there was nothing wrong with pledging a sorority. I just wanted to graduate. I did start attending a Bible study and took dance classes but most of my time was dedicated to my studies so I could graduate.

 Meeting Michael made a difference in my life and in the kingdom of God. Michael allowed God’s light to shine through him on a college campus. We are to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others. We are to be living example of God’s love. We are to teach and admonish one another with God’s wisdom. We are to make disciples. We are to reflect God’s glory everywhere we go.

*God Created Us to Rule the Earth.*

***“****Then God said, “Let us make man[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+1%3A26-28&version=ESV#fen-ESV-26a)*] in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” (Genesis 1:26-28 ESV)*

*Prosper! Reproduce! Fill Earth!*

 When God blessed them, and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it,” God was giving Adam and Eve the responsibility to rule over the earth. God intended for us to be fruitful and to multiply. Both fruitful and multiply denotes increase. Multiply is to increase in number and fruitfulness denotes growth and prosperity, both physically and spiritually. Being fruitful signifies the reproduction of humanity as well as bearing fruit in our lives through as the result of the Holy Spirit transforming our hearts. We bear fruit through our righteous deeds and through our relationship with God. When God commands us to “Fill the earth,” He is telling us t0 oversee and manage the earth’s resources with wisdom, respect, and care.

*Take Charge!*

 In Genesis 1:28, God commands Adam and Eve to subdue the earth which also means to take charge or conquer. God has given us the authority to take control of, to exercise power over and to dominate the earth. In other words, God has called us to serve. I once heard an important politician say,“rule with a servant heart” and “lead with the heart of a king,”Serving should not be a chore but a privilege for us. As we serve, we are utilizing our gifts, talents, and abilities to be a gift to someone else. We are giving from what God has given us. Nothing is really ours; everything belongs to God. Our bodies belong to God. We were created by God and in the image of God. Our character, our gifts, our bodily makeup have all been designed by God in love. God has put something in each of us that we need to act upon and not allow the desires to lay dormant within us. We need to take pleasure in it so we can be blessed and share it with others so they can be blessed.

 I have had times when I did not want to minister in dance for selfish reasons. When I did not minister, when I know God was calling me to minister, I felt a void. I did not feel complete nor content. My head was telling me not to minister but my heart was saying minister because the people need encouragement. It is not until I share with others that I come into full circle as to why God has made me a certain way and why I am the one to carry the mantle that He gave me to carry. It is through using my gifts that I understand the importance of my gifts and that I am given eyes to see certain needs in people that otherwise, I would not be able to see.

 God has called us to lead or take charge. Man is to serve as the king of the earth. What do kings do? They lead. They rule. They govern. They make life-changing decisions. They are problem solvers, providers, overseers, and inventors, to say the least. They hold responsibility for the lives of others. In the kingdom, we serve as kings with compassion and out of love.

 What we accomplish on earth is what we put into action and what God allows us to accomplish. God has given us free reign to do, to see, to think, to become as He leads us. God is preparing you for everything He wants us to be. He is preparing us for our 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)

**Chapter 1: Conclusion**:

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)*

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. I wanted to pursue all genres of dancing. In fact, my dream as a child was to be like Debbie Allen and pursue dance in the performing arts. At the age of sixteen, I worked a summer job and paid for my first ballet class at Malcolm X College. I had no experience with ballet other than what I saw on television. That ballet class really made me question my abilities as a dancer. I thought I could be like Debbie Allen, but I came to the realization that I did not have enough experience, knowledge nor exposure to dance in the performing arts. I did not know or understand ballet terminology like jetes or ton ‘dues. I did not know how intense a dance class could be. In my discouragement, I walked away from dancing in the performing arts but not from secular dancing. However, I was able to find another pathway to the performing arts. I joined a marching band called O’ Quinn Royal Gladiators Drum and Bugle Corps where I learned how to twirl a rifle or carry and twirl a flag.

 Upon entering college at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, I decided to make another attempt at taking dance classes. I was not a dance major, but I took dance classes every semester including ballet, jazz, and modern dance. 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. My dean could not tell from my college transcript if I was an engineering major or a dance major. All he knew was that I really enjoyed dancing. In fact, my dean encouraged me to continue to take dance classes as an outlet from my studies.

 After graduating from U of I, I returned to Chicago. Desiring to continue my walk with the Lord, I joined a church called Rock of Our Salvation Evangelical Free church located on the west side of Chicago. As my faith grew, I began to question whether I should be doing secular or any type of dancing. Although I had invested so much of my life to dancing, I was ready to give it all up to live for God. When I shared my interest of giving up dance with my worship leader, then said to me, “My sister, you don’t have to stop dancing, you just need to change partners.”

 What my worship leader said to me that day was a word from the Lord and a relief because although I was willing to make the sacrifice, I really did not want to. What I am hearing from God through my worship leader was that God did not want me to stop dancing but to start dancing for Him. I also was hearing that God was the creator of the dance and would be my new partner in my endeavors to dance. I did know what dancing for God would look like or consist of, but I knew I was ready to say yes to the call.

***1st Point: Discover You Call***

*“So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do.”*

*(1 Thess 1:11 NLT)*

 I am thankful that God uses people, experiences, and places to speak into our lives. God used my worship leader to let me know that I did not have to stop dancing but change partners. When I said yes to the call, I was also saying yes to a faith journey that would take me through as I was understanding my calling. That journey entailed learning more about the way that God sees me, getting to know God personally and learning how to serve in ministry. As I found my calling, I was finding strength, confidence, hope, wisdom, revelation, understanding and all the other blessings that are found and needed when you serve in God’s kingdom. In the process, God was transforming my heart. No longer was my life about living for me and dancing for my pleasure but was now about living for Him and serving others with my gifts. It is our choice to accept God’s call, but when we do, we will see how our call is connected to our identity, our relationship to God and having a servant heart.

*Your Call is Connected to Your Identity*

 How do you see yourself? Do you know your talents, abilities, interests, passions, weaknesses, or strengths? How does God see you? What does the Bible say about you? How often have you said or thought, “I have a destiny”? How do others perceive you? Do they see you as generous, helpful, or witty? Whether you were able to answer these questions or not, you are in the right place now because you are reading this book.

 Let me first say that your identity is in Christ. God knows you better than you know yourself as expressed in Psalms 139:1-16. God knows you because he created you. In His image you were created. God’s word says this about you: You were fearfully and wonderfully made. You are more valuable than many sparrows. You are children of God and heirs of God. God loves you as a perfect Father. God has crowned you with glory and honor as the pinnacle and final act of the six days of creation. You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. You are God’s special possession. **16**

 If God has not forgotten about the sparrow, He has not forgotten about you. Although we may not be able to tell one sparrow from the next, God knows each one intimately and provides for them all. How much more consideration does God gives to each of us. Knowing your interest, abilities, likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses is important because it is shaping you into the person that God designed you to be and enabling you to function with the purpose that God has uniquely place you in the kingdom to accomplish. Believe in you and how God has made you and how God sees you and the gifts He has given you. Your call starts with what’s God has placed inside of you.

 The desires and interest that you 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.

*Your Call is Connected to Knowing God*

 Your call is also connected to knowing God. For example, you cannot be a server in a restaurant without first knowing about the restaurant and how customers are to be treated. Similarly, you cannot operate effectively in your calling without first knowing about the one who has called you. When we come to know God, we become more connected in seeing the way He sees and hearing the way He hears and receiving with the way He receives. We become familiar with the heart of God.

 So, who is God? I have already expounded on the fact that God is love. There are so many other ways t0 describe who God is and His nature and character can be found in the Bible but on a personal level, God can also be describe based on what He means to you. When we experience God for ourselves, He works in and through us in unique ways to show us who He is and what He can do. In essence, this is how we derive our testimonies. Our testimonies stem from the marvelous works God does in us, through us and around us. Through our testimonies we can call Him the Creator, Eternal, and Sovereign (Lord over creation; control over all things). Through our praise and worship, we are to say that God is Spirit. In John 4:24, it says that God is Spirit and we that worship Him must worship him in Spirit and truth. God being Spirit describes the nature of God. He is a real being that does not exist in or through a physical body.

 At the same time, God is described in the Bible as being a person. We cannot physically describe what He looks like, but we can describe His characteristics based not only on His holy Word but from our own experiences of His faithfulness. We begin to see God not just as a Spirit but as characterized with personality. God has self-awareness, self-determination, intelligence, emotion, and a will. God is also characterized in Scripture as Life. He is referred to in Joshua 3:10 as the “the Living God.” God is also self-existent. God said to Moses as the burning bush, “I am that I am” (Exodus 4:14 NIV). God is perfect. There is nothing about him that needs to change. God is the “Everlasting God.” He is not limited by time and space. God is unity which represents one Lord as denoted in the Trinity (the unity of three persons, God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, as one Godhead).

 Other attributes of God are that He is good, gracious, merciful, faithful, holy, omniscient, omnipresent, and just. Without knowing God for yourself, you would not be able to view Him in the way He is being described. When you get to know someone more intimately, you begin to call them by other names that are more affectionate or more meaningful to you. God has many names, and you may have used some in your time of prayer as you have become more real to you. Here are a few names of God as describe in the Bible: Abba which means Father, Adonai which means Lord Master, Elohim, which means The Creator, El Shaddai which means God Almighty and Jehovah-Jireh which means The Lord, our Provider. Just in the description alone, you can sense how powerful and life changing a personal relationship can be with Him when you can see identify His character, describe His nature, and see Him as not just God.

 Apart from God we are nothing. God has given us purpose. He has done and continues to do everything to make it possible for us to have a relationship with Him. He also continues to work to help us fulfill our purpose in His kingdom. God has chosen us, predestined us, (“marked beforehand”), created us, accepted us, redeemed us (put in right standing) through Jesus’ blood, given us grace (abundance of love, grace, favor), and saved us. He has given us an inheritance (the kingdom of God and all of God’s wonderful promises and blessing). God has sealed us with his Holy Spirit (His stamp for security and preservation) and He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing.

 Before I was born, God had already predestined that I would dance for Him. All of my experiences as a child that included participating in a youth talent show, joining a dance club in high school, joining a band and learning how to twirl a rifle and a flag, taking dance classes every semester while in college, taking dance classes while interning for a company in Minnesota and taking dance classes after graduating from college was all a part of God’s preparation for what was to come as a ministry. It wasn’t coincidental that I was serving in a food line and a young Christian man caught my eye whereby what I saw was not the physical but the spiritual. It wasn’t anything share about Christ, but it was the life he was living that became a testimony to me. It was all part of God’s plan. God knew what it took to capture my interest and I would not have been receptive to someone preaching the gospel to me.

 All along, God was working on my heart. He was getting me to the place where I could understand that I had purpose and that I had already found my purpose before I even knew Him personally. The rubber did not meet the road until God spoke through my worship leader to let me know that not only have, I been received into the family of God, but God receives everything about me including the dance. Even though I had been dancing for myself all my life, God was saying the time was now to dance for Him.

*Your Call is Connected to Serving*

*“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. (James 2:14-17 NIV)*

 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 Christians but to serve in the kingdom.When I first started going to Rock of Our Salvation Evangelical Free Church after graduating from college, I only knew one person there and that was the person that invited me. I visited at least 6 churches before making the decision to make Rock my church home. When I was about to give up on finding a church home, I got a call from a male friend inviting me to the Rock. Once again, God was showing me his faithfulness even when I was not aware that He was with me.

 Initially, the congregation of Rock church was small, so it was very easy to get to know people. The founder and Pastor of Rock Church, Pastor Raleigh B. Washington, and his wife Paulette Washington, was a very energetic, ambitious, and outgoing couple who loved people. Pastor Washington put a lot of emphasis on racial reconciliation, fellowship, and discipleship. Pastor Washington made sure that everyone in the congregation was involved in the church. The church grew very rapidly as many people supported and embraced the vision. As the church evolved, I was able to sing in the choir, take a bible class, work with the children choir and the youth ministry while still taking dancing classes outside the church. As my faith increased, my desire to live and please God increased.

 I heard a TV evangelist say that “purpose will find you, serve the purpose”. I didn’t find the ministry of dance, the ministry of dance found me through the miraculous leading of God who spoke through my worship leader who then spoke to me. I was in a place where I was ready to give up dancing altogether because it no longer rights in my spirit. The movements on the outside were not aligning with how God was transforming heart.

 I wonder sometimes that if I had not found Rock Church how different my life would be today. If I had not joined the choir and met my worship leader, would I still be dancing. I did not attend Rock Church for no other reason than to find a church home. However, God positioned me with the right church and the right people so that my heart could be opened to His call. Getting involved in the church allowed me to find a community of support so that my faith could grow, but it also allowed me to use my gifts of singing and working with youth and find my calling which was to dance for the Lord.

**2nd Point: Embrace Your Calling**

*The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever.
Do not forsake the work of your hands. (Psalms 138:8 ESV)*

*Come As You Are*

*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. (Revelation 3:20 NKJV)*

 I know you have heard the saying, “God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things”. Well, that is my story. I started with very humble beginnings. The question that I needed answered pertained to what was I supposed to do next now that I accepted the call to dance for the Lord? I didn’t know how to dance in a way that would be pleasing to God. I could not consult with anyone because I didn’t know of anyone else who danced for the Lord. I didn’t know what type of dance garments to wear. I started as a soloist ministering in a black leotard and African wrap material.

 It was a wonderful experience to learn that I didn’t have to fake it until I made it, but I could come as I was. It was good to learn that the church would accept me as a solo dancer dancing in a black leotard and an African attire. While I was getting my attire in order, I also had to address another concern. I did not know how to dance for God. Even with all those years of dancing, I was stunted in my movement. The only person who could help me was God. The verse in Revelation chapter 3 became very real for me during that time. It says, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.” (Rev 3:20 NKJV) Most people consider this verse to be for someone accepting Christ into their life for the first time. But it is for anyone. This verse let me know that I was not alone. I had a relationship with God, but I now needed Jesus to come in and transform my way of thinking, and every dead part of me so that my heart could become a heart of worship. No, I didn’t know how to dance for the Lord, but I was able to come to God in my disoriented state of awkwardness.

*Embrace Your Call Through Submission*

 When I first started dancing for the Lord, I realize very early that I was at the mercy of God. I only knew two scriptures about dance, Psalms 149:3 and Psalms 150:4. I still had a lot of secular music resounding in my head, and I didn’t have a vision for what I was to do in ministry. This was a good place for me to be in. I was in a place where I needed to surrender. Surrender is about completely giving up my own will, so that I could subject my thoughts, ideas, and deeds to the will and teachings of the Father. **18** I needed to surrender my will so that God could d0 His Will in and through me. I needed to surrender the music that I was listening to and spend more time listening to praise and worship music that I would minister to. I needed to surrender the way I was choreographing dances. Everything I needed had to come from God because I had very little to offer.

 I was also under the submission of my Pastor. As I shared my ideas with him, there are times when he told me to wait. An example was when I wanted the dance ministry to dance during praise and worship. My Pastor told me that the church wasn’t ready and that it would have to be brought in methodically. Even though I strongly believe that dance was the missing third cord in our time of praise and worship, the singers and musicians being the first and second cords, I had to trust my Pastor’s judgment. He knew the heart of the church. It took about 2 to 3 years before dance was introduce into the praise and worship time,

 I also had to make sacrifices. Sacrificing time to study God’s word in relation to what the song was saying. I had to sacrifice time to just be still before the Lord and allow Him to begin to give me visions of the dance. I had to sacrifice relationships so that I could be encouraged by people who wanted to live for God.

 I begin to seek God on how to dance for Him. The first song God directed me to minister to was “What a Mighty God We Serve”. As I practiced movements to the song, I learned that my time of practice was about coming before Him with my offering of praise and worship. My time of practice then looked upon as a time of dancing in His presence and a time of dancing before His throne. As I begin to look at dance differently, movements became easier and more fluid. God was crucifying my flesh. I no longer wanted to dance just for mere enjoyment or prideful reasons. Now, it was about worship. I was lifting my hands and moving my feet to express forms of praise as the song and Holy Spirit would lead me.

**Embrace the Call Through Trusting God**

*“God is not a man, so he does not lie.  He is not human, so he does not change his mind. Has he ever spoken and failed to act? Has he ever promised and not carried it through?” (Numbers 19:23 NLT)*

 From the time I started dancing for the Lord to the place I am now, God has been faithful. Because of God’s faithfulness it has help me to walk in faith and to trust that He would walk with me in the dance ministry. Even when I did not expect, God used someone to provide me with my first dance garment. After I saw how dance ministers were supposed to dress, I started designing some of my own garments. I did not have to worry about anything in the dance because God was making the provisions.

 As God was working in me through the ministry of dance, I began to develop a heart to pour into children. I had to trust that God could use me in their lives. As God was building my confidence, other people were interested in joining the dance ministry. Eventually, I found myself starting an adult and teenage dance ministry.

 It was God that was drawing people to the ministry. As I trusted God, He guided me in how to lead a ministry. I had to stay before the Lord in guiding me. I thought about the fact that others may have been more mature than me, or older than me or even more experienced than me but it did not matter because God’s power was enabling me to choreograph, to lead, to teach, to pray, to have compassion, and to love. As the ministry was growing in number, I was growing in my understanding of ministry, in my ability to lead the ministry, in my faith, in my confidence and in my knowledge of God’s Word. In fact, scripture memory kept me grounded in my walk with God. Numbers 23:19 says, *“God is not a man, so he does not lie.  He is not human, so he does not change his mind. Has he ever spoken and failed to act? Has he ever promised and not carried it through?”* I believe every verse that God has given me and planted in my heart.

because I trusted God at His Word. It is in trusting God that I was able to dance as a soloist before an entire congregation. It is in trusting God that I was able to lead different age groups in the dance including the children, teenagers, and adults. It was in trusted God that I found favor with my Pastor, and he provided a budget for the dance ministry.

 I continued to have more reasons to trust God as He opened more doors. Because I also loved to sing, decided to take voice lessons at Dorolyn Academy School of Music. Through my voice teacher, I was introduced to Rosalyn Acevedo who not only headed a ministry called Divine Expressions Dance Ministry but she also overseeing Dorolyn Academy’s first dance program. As I got to know Rosalyn, she invited me to join her dance ministry. I invited her to participate in a dance that I choreographed about racial reconciliation using the song by Steve Green called “Let the Walls come Down”. This piece consisted of four dancers of different nationalities, African American, Hispanic, Caucasian, and Filipino. God was doing something big, and I am not sure I was ready. Pastor Washington loved the dance so much that he asked us to ministry at different churches as he delivered his message on racial reconciliation.

 As my relationship with Rosalyn developed, she invited me to join the first dance class that she taught at Dorolyn Academy. After the first dance graduation, Rosalyn asked me to become one of the dance teachers at Dorolyn Academy. This was a big step for me, but I rose to the occasion. During my service at Dorolyn Academy, I was able to teach the biblical Foundation of Dance, Tamborine Dancing, Ballet 1, Jazz Dance, Congregational Dance and Pageantry and Prophetic Dance. When I started teaching classes at Dorolyn, I invited members from the dance ministry at my church to take classes at Dorolyn Academy. As some of Rock’s dance ministers grew in their understanding of dance ministry, I was able to pass on some of my leadership. One of Rock dance member was able to take over and lead the children’s dance ministry at Rock. For about 10 years I taught dance classes at Dorolyn while leading the teenage and adult dance ministry at Rock.

 The dance ministry teams at Rock were being used by God to encourage the church through movement with expressions of God’s love, power, hope and salvation. The classes at Dorolyn Academy were being taught to activate and help developed students who felt called to the ministry of dance. As God was bringing the increase in these ministries, in number, in abilities and in spiritual understanding, my role was to continue to do my part and trust that God would do the rest. I had to continue to walk with Him and trust the work that He was doing in the people and the work He was doing in and through my life. I had to walk in humility, in faith, in love, in God’s strength, with confidence and not be afraid of the new. There were so many times, God reminded Joshua in the Bible to be strong and courageous. Joshua struggled with courage and possibly trust. Caleb and Joshua spied out the land of Canaan and returned to the Israelites with a report that showed that they trusted God. The other spies doubted God and were afraid. Through God’s strength, Joshua was able to lead the Children of Israel into the Promised Land, defeat the enemies, conquer battles, and stay true to God.

 God called me to the ministry of dance. You may also be called to dance or some other ministry. Whether you are called to usher, do church announcements, or preach or teach, serve as a missionary, or even prison ministry, remember that you are a vessel from which God’s love, power, wisdom and strength will flow. God has called you and will guide worked through you because God knows best. He will lead, protect, provide, open and close doors and bring the increase. You can’t doubt or walk in fear but trust Him.

**Stay Committed to your calling.**

*“but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” (Isaiah 40:31 ESV)*

*Committed to Walk Worthy of Your Calling*

 In 2007, God showed me that my time with Divine Expressions was coming to an end. At the same time, Divine Expressions time with Dorolyn had also come to end. This was a time of transition for not only me but also for Dorolyn Academy School of Music and Divine Expression Dance Ministry. I was asked by the founder and director of Dorolyn Academy to oversee the dance program. God was elevating me, once again, but I felt alone. No longer was I a part of Divine Expression Ministry which was a large part of my life at that time. We ministered together, we dined together, we traveled together, we had fun together, and we held each other accountable. I was also able to glean from dancers that had more dance experience and biblical knowledge than myself. I was not sure if I was ready to lead the dance program at Dorolyn Academy but the director, Dorothy, believed in me. It was an honor and a privilege to be asked and to serve in that capacity. However, after a year, I did not feel that that I was moving in the direction that God wanted me to go. So out of obedience to how the Holy Spirit was leading me, I stepped down from heading the dance program at Dorolyn Academy of Music.

 When I left Dorolyn, I felt a void. I had already separated from Divine Expression and now I was leaving my students and my music family. I was still thankful for my Rock family. However, I was in a place in my life of ministry where I was acquiring a deeper biblical understanding of the dance, and I wanted more but I didn’t know where to find it. I felt like the river of living water wasn’t flowing through me like it should. I was allowing myself to become stagnate because I was not focusing on the right things. Instead of focusing on what I didn’t have anymore, I should have been focusing on and being thankful of what I did have. God had already done so much for me through the ministry of dance. I should have focus on the great things God was doing at Rock Church through the dance ministry at Rock Church. I knew that God was still with me, but I didn’t know what direction to take Rock dance ministry at that point.

 I wasn’t sure what God was saying to me, but I felt like I was in a waiting period. In that waiting period I decided to branch out and attend dance conferences. I attended a couple conferences in Chicago and a dance conference in New York during the summer of 2008. That conference in New York was life changing. At that conference, I saw and experienced a whole new perspective on the ministry of dance. Dancers were dressed in real elaborate garments called priestly garments. Biblical teachings on dance were even more in depth and thought provoking than I had received and taught at Dorolyn. I felt that God had not left me but was doing a new thing in my life once again, through the dance. In God’s faithfulness, He was showing me the “more” that I was looking for.

 At that conference, I met one of the guest speakers and dance instructor, Dr. Pamela Scott. She was amazing. She connected me to her ministry, the Eagles International Training Institute (EITI) and from that point on my life and mindset about dance was never the same. In 2009, I graduated from an EITI course, dance year one. I was obtaining a biblical foundation of dance again, but at a much deeper level. I continued to take classes with EITI and just as this ministry is depicted, I was starting to soar like an eagle. God had taken me from starting a dance ministry in my church to joining the divine Expression ministry outside of my church to teaching dance classes at a music school and now to become part of an international ministry. where I could continue to grow, develop and serve in His kingdom, locally, nationally and internationally. I am still apart of EITI to this day, and the classes that I have taken have been challenging but have catapulted my spiritual growth and my development as a leader. I have also had opportunity to travel as a missionary ministering in dance in the British Virgin Islands.

 When it comes to our calling, we can never assume or feel like we have reached the peak of ministry. God always have more to show us, more to pour in us and more to experience and do in the God’s kingdom. He wants to take us from glory to glory. Our responsibility is stay put and keep alert. We must be in tuned to the move of God. We must have the eyes to see, ears to hear and the heart to receive what God is doing and how God is moving in our lives. Staying committed to your call means that you will stay in alignment with your God-given purpose by moving in the direction that God takes you. Transitions will occur. People will come and go. This does not denote that your season of ministry is over. God can have us in a waiting period because He is birthing something new. Isaiah 40:31 says, “but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.” (ESV) Being Committed means that you will continue to move forward in your spiritual growth and development with an attitude of servanthool.

(to be continued)

**Chapter Conclusion**:

 God is Calling You

 Every part of our life is valuable. We all have been on a journey to discover and embrace the purpose to which God has called us. Our interests, talents, gifts, abilities, likes and dislikes and strengths and weaknesses are part of our character. It is the way that God has created us to fulfill our unique purpose in His kingdom. God brings our purpose into fruition in His timing and when He thinks we are ready to receive. Sometimes it may require us being in the right place or around the right people, or in the right position before God can make assignment clear to us. God wants to work in and through you in ways you cannot imagine but you can only experience when you learn more about your identity, who God is and being committed to serving in the His kingdom.

**A Prayer: God is Calling You**

**Chapter #3**

**Run Your Race**

*”* Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, *let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith…” (Hebrews 12:1-2 NIV)*

During Apostle Paul’s outreach ministry, he would go where the people were. Paul would visit Isthmian games. The Isthmian games were well known by the Corinthians and consisted of athletes competing in footraces, wrestling, boxing, throwing the discus and javelin, the long jump, chariot racing, poetry reading and singing. These games were held in Ancient Greece, near Corinth in honor of the Greek god Poseidon**. 19** The Apostle Paul used athletic metaphor to encourage the church to win the race of the Christian life. He tells the church in Hebrews 12: 1 to “run with perseverance the race marked out for us”. That race, “marked out for us” was established and purposed by God. As we have been given purpose, we must not only discover our purpose but complete our purpose. In Hebrews, Paul, is using an analogy of an athlete’s footrace to our Christian race. The athletes who participated in an Isthmian footrace were surrounded by rows and rows of spectators, pictured in Hebrews 12:1, “as a great cloud of witnesses”. **20** They had to train, keep to a strict diet, and exercise self-control. As a result of their putting forth effort and controlling their actions, the athletes saw improvement over time. **21**

There are many believers including Noah, Abraham, Moses, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph who are listed as heroes of faith in Hebrews 11 because they bore witness to the power of faith and God’s faithfulness. They are examples to us of what it means to persevere in our faith in spite of all obstacles and of achieving great tasks through the help of the Lord. If we are to complete the Christian race, it is going to take having the attitude of an athlete. We have to have the willingness to run the race, endure the race and finish the race.

**1st Point: Take the Steps to Run the Race**

*Allow God to be your personal trainer.*

“…My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,
because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.” (Hebrews 12: 5-6)

 The race that you and I are running is a race of faith. God wants you and I to grow in our faith. He wants us to live for him, to trust him and to help in bringing those who don’t know Him to His saving grace. The purpose that God has called you to is not only about serving in God’s kingdom but also about being planted in a position where you can grow spiritually. Through your calling, God may be able to reach the unreachable. People who have a different perspective, vision or angle on life may not be attracted to church, per se, but attracted to what you in the church. As you step out in faith to serve in your calling, God is molding your character, maturing you in your faith, transforming your heart so you are becoming more like Him. For this to happen, you must stay the course in this race of faith.

 Know that you are not running alone because God is here for you. He is your Father, your ultimate partner in ministry, your friend, and your personal trainer. God knows of our potential to be drawn in by the schemes of the enemy. God knows of our potential to fall. God is not expecting us to be perfect. God does not expect you to serve in His kingdom alone. He is expecting us to depend on Him. It is out of an intimate relationship with him that you will be able weather any storms. It is in Him that you will be able to prosper. God says this in John 15:5, “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.” (NIV)

 God will guide you in everything you need to know and in everything you need to do. Proverbs 16:8 says, “Before you do anything, put your trust totally in God and not in yourself. Then every plan you make will succeed.” (TPT) Listen for God’s voice. Intimacy with God should bring us to a place of hearing God’s voice. God can speak to us in unique ways. He can speak to us through dreams, through people, situations, and through how the Holy Spirit moves in our thoughts, feelings, and senses. You must stay connected to the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit will empower you with wisdom and revelation and will enable you to speak and do things that you could not have done on your own. God will continue to establish you through the Holy Spirit giving you direction, guidance, teaching you, interceding for you and helping you fulfill the Will of God.

 When I initially started in the ministry of dance, God was my ultimate teacher, my ultimate choreographer, my ultimate encourager, my ultimate leader, and my ultimate partner. I had no one to model after and no one to help me plan the ministry other than God. He was carrying me through the process. God gave me time and room to mess up and to grow. As I grew in my relationship with Him, my eyes were open to how to dress more appropriately as a minister of dance. God gave me visions for choreographing dances. It wasn’t me leading the ministry but God leading the ministry through me. He gave me the words and ideas of how to lead. He enabled me to dance in a way to glorify Him. He brought other experienced dancer leaders into my life to encourage me, to help me and to speak His Words to me through them. Some of the things that were said to me were not always easy to hear but I needed to be challenged. God was using them to push me to a higher level in my understanding of my calling and in my understanding of what God requires of me. When I was asked to lead the ministry, I was really being asked to be more transparent, to pray more, to love on people more and to go deeper in studying and understanding God’s Word and to teach God’s Word. It wasn’t about a title but about taking the steps to become the leader that would be able to carry God’s glory to others. Choreographing dances was not just about modeling and teaching movements, but it was about receiving and delivering a message from God that would be conveyed through movement. As dancers learn the choreography, they were not only being discipled through movement but becoming copartners in the preaching of God’s word through movement.

*Be willing to undergo training.*

“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.” (Heb 12:11 NIV)

 When it comes to living out your purpose, God has called you to run a marathon race and not a sprint. A marathon runner cannot run a marathon if that runner does not train. A marathon race is a sport about endurance and requires training, good health, and mental resilience. In a marathon, you need to pace yourself. If you run too fast, you will tire yourself out and if you run too slow you may give up. You must keep energy, patience, and passion in reserve for the many miles of running to come. You must be prepared with your own bottle of water and have more than one pair of shoes, handy, if you are running a long distance. You also must make sure that you get enough sleep or rest and consume good nutrition. Moreover, a marathon runner must be self-disciplined enough to wake up early in the morning as well as disciplined enough to run during uncomfortable or inconvenient situations, including running while in some pain. Marathon running is a sport of willpower. There is no room for doubt.

 You cannot fulfill your purpose if you are not willing to run the marathon. God is such a gentleman that He does not force us to do anything. Living for him and serving in His kingdom, is a choice you make. When you choose to say yes to doing His Will, and yes to His ways, then can He take hold of your steering “will”. You must first be willing to seek God. In fact, when you are serving in God’s kingdom you desire to seek Him. You desire more of Him because He is your source of activation for serving in His kingdom. He instructs and guides you on how to serve. When you choose to say yes to His will, you acquire a hunger and thirst for all the things that pertain to Him. You want to spend time in prayer. You want to spend time in His presence. You want to study His Word. You receive understanding, knowledge and wisdom that inspires you to live for Him. You want to make a difference in the kingdom for the cause of Christ. Your time of praise and worship becomes more meaningful to you. You become more connected with the Holy Spirit. You have more depth to your walk and your service. You are standing on biblical principles. You are seeing and experiencing more because you are surrendering more of your life to Him.

 We also must be willing to do the work of our calling. Work that can entail investing time in developing relationships, demonstrating acts of love, studying the word with others, using some of our funds to help others, opening up our homes to others, and teaching or mentoring others.

 When God called me to lead the dance ministries at my church, to teach dance at Dorolyn, and eventually teach for EITI, there was work involve. I spent much time praying for myself and praying for others. I was not always confident about leading and I had to pray for strength and confidence to lead, to teach, to choreograph and to make the right ministry decisions. I had to be the shepherd to the sheep in the ministry or the dance class. I prayed for them and with them and watch over them as they develop as dance ministers. I had to study the word to be able to teach them with knowledge, wisdom and understanding that I was receiving from the Lord.. For me to pour into others, my cup had to be filled. As I sought God, he continued to fill my cup with everything I needed to oversee the ministries and teach the classes. God continued to give me choreography and birth new ideas in me. He still uses me to choreograph songs and help with the church’s dance ministry team.

(To be continued)

 **Support C: Walk worthy of your calling**

**Second Main Point: Endure Your Race**

 **Support A: Move away from hindrances**

 **Support B: Resist and Avoid temptation.**

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

**Third Main Point: Finish Your Race**

**Support A – Avoid Being Distracted**

 **Support B: Stay Connected to the Vision** (Habakkuk 2:2-3 NKJV)

**Support C - Fix Your eyes on Jesus**

**(to be continued)**

**Chapter 4**

**“…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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