

Vanessa
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PURPOSE

an e-book about finding who you are meant to be



FINDING YOUR PURPOSE

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”

I Corinthians 9:27

When was the last time you pulse-checked your purpose? Are you 100% sure that it is alive and well? Sometimes, without noticing, we can lose sight of the reason we are running our race. Whether it is the race of your faith, your career, or your leadership, purpose is an important part of not becoming disqualified. In the text above Paul recognizes that sometimes even after having preached to others, shown off, or felt like we've "arrived" we can lose track and become disqualified for the prize. How many people do we know that start big projects, and talk about lofty dreams, but never get there? How can we keep from becoming one of them? If you play close attention to the verses above, there are a few things that give us insight into keeping our purpose alive and making sure we cross that finish line. Throughout this journal we'll take a look at each of these things. Then, I encourage you to take time to fill out the questions at the end of each chapter.

You may instinctively know this, but your purpose is not something that can be told. There is no book, preacher, or person that can flat out tell you everything you need to know about fulfilling your calling in life or what you should do with your talents. However, you can be pointed in the right direction. Sometimes it's not about being given the answers but about being asked the right questions. And that is the target behind this book. By the end, you won't have all the answers but I hope that you will have a good idea on how to get started. My aim is that you would begin asking the right questions and follow it up with a diligent pursuit of the answers. As you write to yourself, I dare you to be brutally honest in your answers; and when you aren't sure of the answers, I hope that you pray, question, think, research, and dig deep inside yourself to discover your purpose.

With Love,

Vanessa Gracia Cruz

FIND YOUR "WHY"

"All the runners run, but only one gets the prize"

Everyone wants to do something. Everyone wants to be successful and reach their dreams. But truthfully, we know that not everyone gets there. Most people, in fact, die without having ever accomplished their goals or finding their purpose. So what makes you different? What drives you? How will you make sure that you get your prize? Before you ever set out to fulfill your purpose you'll need to find the determination it takes to win. You need to be resolved not to let

anyone or anything stop you.

You'll need to get passionate.

So, in the following pages, or in your own journal, ask yourself:

What am I passionate about?

What are the things that get me out of bed in the morning?

What are the reasons that make me want to succeed?

FIND YOUR "WHO"

The people I am passionate about are:

FIND YOUR "WHAT"

The causes I am passionate about are:

What are the changes I want to see in the world?

What am I passionately against? What breaks my heart?

What's my prize? What does success look like for me?

Where do I want to be at the end of my life?

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NOTES:

RUN LIKE A WINNER

"Run in such a way as to get the prize"

Once you've identified what moves you and what your "prize" is, you can then identify what it takes to reach that prize. How do you have to run or behave? Who do you have to become in order to fulfill your destiny? We learn from this passage that "everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training." We can't just sit around and wait for things to happen, we'll need to train and acquire the necessary skills to obtain our goals. So, what kind of training does your specific prize require? You may have to research other people who have reached similar goals or you may need to dig deeper into the field.

You may need to ask around or enroll in some classes. As you do, answer these questions about your prize:

What would I need to accomplish this year in order to reach my prize?

What resources would I need to acquire in order to reach my prize?

What skills would I need to develop to reach my prize?

Where can I learn these necessary skills?

Who has reached a similar prize to the one I am striving for?

How can I learn from them?

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A LASTING CROWN

"They do it to get a crown that will not last, we do it to get a crown that lasts forever"

Just a reminder: we are talking about purpose here. We aren't talking about all the things you'd like in your life or wishes on a star.

Purpose is deeper than that. It's a God-given appointment to do something bigger than ourselves. In John 15:16, Jesus says, "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you." See, you may want simply to make a lot of money or be your own boss but if that's all you're thinking of, you're missing the big picture. Whether you realize it or not, you have been chosen and appointed by God to do something BIG. Something epic. Something that won't just benefit you but everyone that surrounds you. His will is that your purpose would have a lasting effect. That's what it means when he says, "your fruit should abide." When we begin to think this way, God gets behind your plans and begins to root you on. At that point, when you ask Him for things, "he may give it to you." So that instead of temporary riches and false gain, you'd have something that lasts forever. So, take a minute to think outside the box and ask yourself:

Are my plans bigger than just myself?

How can I make sure what I do will give fruit for others besides myself?

Am I aiming for a temporary crown or a crown that lasts forever?

Have I prayed about God's will being done through my purpose?

Am I sure that this is something God appointed me to do or is it possible what I think is my purpose is only a distraction?

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THE RIGHT DIRECTION

"Therefore I do not run like someone without a goal, I do not fight like a boxer beating the air"

If we are going to go for the prize, we've got to make sure we're going in the right direction, and being intentional about what we do. Imagine a trained fighter throwing punches to the air instead of ever hitting his opponent. That's how silly it is to waste your energy on things that will not eventually lead you to your purpose. Too often, we fill our lives with a lot of activity, failing to realize that activity does not always equal productivity. Sometimes, we need to learn to cut things out, rearrange our priorities and become a bit more intentional. We should constantly ask ourselves, are all of the things we are doing in our life adding up to the final goal? Or are we wasting valuable energy like a boxer beating the air? Let's write about it:

Am I wasting energy on something that distracts me from my final goal?

When was the last time I evaluated my priorities and organized my time?

In the average week, how much time do I dedicate to intentionally carrying out my purpose?

Is that enough? Or should I re-evaluate my schedule?

What are some things I can delegate (ask someone else to do) so that I can have more time to focus on my goals?

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OWN IT

"I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave"

In this verse, when Paul says he “strikes a blow to his body” he isn’t talking about self-mutilation. He’s speaking figuratively about discipline. When it comes to fulfilling our purpose, none of the other things we’ve gone over so far matter if we don’t have the discipline to follow through to the end. And in order to follow through, sometimes we will have to “strike a blow” to some of our wants and comforts along the way. It’s similar to when we have a physical goal for our bodies. If we have a goal to get into better shape, we can’t just eat what we want and work out if we feel like it. We have to make our bodies our slave and learn to put mind over matter. In short, you won’t always want to do what you need to do to accomplish your purpose.

Sometimes it will be hard and you’ll want to quit. Sometimes you’ll have to sacrifice sleep or hanging with friends in order to get where you need to be. Whether we like it or not, laziness disqualifies us from reaching our prize. If you aren’t willing to persevere and work harder than everyone else, you’ll end up as one of the people who run the race but never get the prize. Discipline separates the winners and losers. So, you’ll need to ask yourself: How far are you willing to go to fulfill your purpose? Because you will only get what you put in. Whether or not you win is up to you!

How far am I willing to go to fulfill my purpose?

How will I need to step out of my comfort-zone?

How determined am I to get my prize?

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FINAL THOUGHTS

If you've reached this far, I hope you have a better grasp on how to fulfill your purpose. I hope you have challenged yourself and resolved to be someone who makes it to the finish line prize in hand. I recommend you take this the extra mile, and go beyond just filling out this journal. Take everything you learned and put it into action! Don't sit back and waste another year or another day. Set short-term goals that will inch you closer to reaching your dreams. Tell your friends about your goals and ask them to hold you accountable. Make concrete plans and don't allow yourself to flake out on them. Challenge yourself daily. Most of all: never give up! Even in the most difficult moments, remember what it says in Galatians 6:9: "Never get tired of doing what is right. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up." Even if you're tired know that the right time could be just around the corner and if you haven't given up you'll reap a harvest of blessing. If it's still unclear continue to ask God for answers and to help you define your purpose day by day. I believe that with His help you can and will fulfill your purpose.

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