



# DESTINY

LIVING UNTANGLED



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# LU INTRODUCTION

**D**id you know God cares about all the big stuff and the little stuff in your life, because He cares about YOU? He knows your struggles. Your hurts. Your wounds.

He wants to show you the source of your mess (because we ALL have mess). And then, He wants you to trust Him to lead you to a place of healing and hope. He is eager to help you learn to depend on Him for ALL things!

Welcome to Life Untangled, where God's love meets our chaos!

We know that most people, even Christians, can feel bogged down and tangled up with the circumstances of life. The writer of Hebrews talks about how sin and emotional wounds have tangled us up so much that we're not able to run this race we call life:

*“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1-2).*

That first verse says to lay aside, or let go. You might be thinking, “I tried to let go, and I can't”!

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Letting go happens when we more fully understand the amazing gifts God gave us in Jesus, and the wonderful changes He made in us when we got saved.

In this new e-book series, you will see how we were not only designed to become His children through salvation, but to depend on Him as our actual source of life. We will discover our true selves, and we will see how doing life God's way is the best way!

No matter where you are, He loves you, mess and all, and He's on your side.

# WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM THIS E-BOOK?

In this e-book, the fifth in our “Life Untangled” series, we take a look at the life we have as new creations in Christ. As His children, God has given us everything we need in order to live an abundant life. He has provided a destiny for each of us that is more than we could ever think or imagine.

**God has given each of His children the ability to choose a life of rest over a life of striving; however, we do not always know what that looks like.** It is a life of rest, yet not passive. It is a very active life full of contentment, freedom, and peace. We have a choice. We can choose our version of destiny or the destiny God has for us.

**It’s time to run the race that is set before us!**

# HOW DID WE GET THIS LIFE

**E**arlier in the series, we saw how God, our Great Designer, chose us and made us. He wanted each and every one of us here so that He could have a relationship with us. He brought two imperfect people together to bring you into this world and carefully and with great love and detail created you. He did not make a mistake. When I stop and ponder the miracle of birth and the amazing capacity our bodies have to automatically function, I am blown away. He thought of everything. He created us with the ability to both receive and give love, and He created us with the ability to make choices.

It was that gift of free choice that gave us the ability to express love. It was that same gift of free choice that gave mankind the ability to choose his own way – a way apart from God’s gift of life. When Adam made his choice in the Garden, the rest of mankind was impacted forever.

Everyone born since Adam was born spiritually dead, disconnected from God. **But because God is loving, merciful, and kind, He did not leave us there. He sent a deliverer.** He sent the Redeemer. He sent Jesus to rescue us from our life in Adam and invited us into the family of God. If we accept this gift, we get a new life, a new identity, and a new destiny. Being reborn through our co-crucifixion with Christ means our old man is dead and a new creation has been born. This new man has the very life of Christ inside him, which becomes our new nature – our new power for life. We have our same personality, but with a new heart, mind, and (Holy) Spirit.

*“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (2 Corinthians 5:17).*

We’re going to see what it looks like to live out our new life – our new destiny. If we have received Christ we are no longer in Adam. We have been born again into a new family. We are righteous, holy, pure, and blameless and have been made complete in Christ. **It is our new birthright to live as a child of God. So let’s start living!**

# SO WHAT IS DESTINY?

It's not a destination, but rather a place – a place of inner peace that comes from knowing God and understanding our new identity. While our final destination is in eternity with God, our destiny includes what we are meant to experience today!

It is not just heaven. It's more than that. It is our soul journey. **It is a state of being where we are truly alive to be the person God designed us to be.** It is walking out our Ephesians 2:10 purpose:

*“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”*

Our destiny is to live in relationship with Him, to live in dependence on Him – not independent of Him. Remember how we were designed to live in relationship and in intimacy with him? That is the birthright that has been given to us as His child! We have a right to live totally dependent on Him! **He promised that He would give us everything we need for the living of life – and He made good on that promise.**

*“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust” (2 Peter 1:2-4).*

Peter was no different than we are. We all have the same gift of faith. We also have the promise of abundant grace and peace! His divine

power has granted to us everything we need for life and godliness. He has not left us lacking because Jesus is full and complete. He is God. **He is in us, so we too are full and complete.**

We have everything we need for our soul journey. If we have accepted Christ our spirit has been made new. We do not have to be concerned about our eternity – nothing can change the fact that we belong to God. Our body will one day be made new, and we will be with Him forever. But for now, the struggle is in our soul. That is why we call this life a soul journey. Our soul is where we think, feel, and make choices. It's those thoughts and those beliefs that guide us through life where our destiny is manifested.

We can believe and live according to our knowledge and effort or we can live according to God's leadership through His Spirit in us. It is our destiny to live from the influence of the Spirit in our soul. Here we get a chance to receive God's leadership and choose His way – not our own. We are in our own Garden and have an opportunity to choose life.

So let's take some encouragement from the life of Paul. He had a great zeal for serving God. In fact, Paul's self-proclaimed record was spotless! He worked hard and was a model Pharisee. He was performing his idea of destiny to perfection; however, it was not God's destiny for Him.

It was not bringing honor to God or true life and joy to Paul.

**To really experience joy, peace, intimacy with God, and contentment we have to be in sync with God's destiny for us.**

So what is His destiny for us?

Drum roll, please...



## **God’s destiny is that we live in relationship with Him – which results in abundant life!**

We are a masterpiece created by God and reborn in Christ. We get to walk out the good works that He prepared for us – He’s done all the heavy lifting! God has given us good to do. And the good happens when we walk out of our new identity in Christ in complete dependence on Him.

So, what does that look like?

### **The good life is found in the dependent life.**

We’re going to have highs and lows, joy and pain, great times and sad times. But we’re not going to really experience that abundant life if we do things on our own – apart from trusting God. He again calls us into that dependence on him and sometimes he allows adversity in our lives to bring us to see our need for Him. It’s not punishment – it’s an opportunity to experience His amazing life in us.

*“For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of our affliction which came to us in Asia, that we were burdened excessively, beyond our strength, so that we despaired even of life; indeed, we had the sentence of death within ourselves so that we would not trust in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead; who delivered us from so great a peril of death, and will deliver us, He on whom we have set our hope. And He will yet deliver us” (2 Corinthians 1:8-10).*

Paul had significant hardships, but he realized that he could not trust in himself to get through the challenges. He needed God. The only way Paul could survive and thrive was by depending on God for strength, encouragement, direction, and hope. He needed a deliverer, and so do we.

Our struggles do not necessarily look like Paul's, but we have them! Our first response is usually to try and handle our problems ourselves. This is a flesh response. I don't know about you, but that hasn't worked for me. God has something better for us.

**Remember, He designed us to depend on His way – not our way.** Sure, we put forth physical effort, but we need His wisdom and perspective to have clarity and internal peace in the middle of our circumstances.

*“Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.’ Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).*

Wow! That's not exactly what we hear in our world today is it? We may be used to hearing: stay strong, don't give up, find a way out! But according to this passage, He calls us into weakness! Our destiny is about depending on HIS strength in the middle of our pain and hurt. Paul really wanted his thorn to be removed. I'm sure some of you have things in your life that you just want God to take away. You want to be rescued from it. You want the pain gone. You want the problem gone. You just want to be free from it.

Sometimes God does deliver us from that. He does not always change our circumstances, but He always changes us if we will receive it. His grace is sufficient for me and for you because His power is perfected in our weakness. His strength is much greater than ours could ever be. So He's calling us to recognize our

limitations and allow Him to find the way and fight our battle. This is our destiny:

*“that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death”  
(Philippians 3:10).*

Paul earnestly wanted to experience the power of Jesus’ resurrection. This is a power that raises the physical body to life. That is some kind of power! This same resurrection power makes us a new creation in Christ by raising up a new man to replace our old man. It is His power that brings life to our soul – where we think, feel, and make choices! This power takes us from shame to honor; sadness to joy; grief to comfort; anger to forgiveness; and fear to peace. **This honor, joy, comfort, forgiveness, and peace is our destiny – the place God chose for our soul to reside.**

Paul also says knowing this resurrection power includes knowing about suffering. This type of suffering leads to the death of our old thinking and doing and brings us through Christ to the resurrection power of grace and truth, which sets us free!

Another example of Paul’s desire is found in 2 Corinthians:

*“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh”  
(2 Corinthians 4:7-11).*

**Jesus is the treasure.** We are earthen vessels. Whatever we endure in our life, God is there and He's with us. He gives us life. He loves us through it. He cares for us and goes before us. When we depend on Him we can experience all that because we can be "afflicted but not crushed." We can wait for Him to work it out even if He has a different solution than we wanted.

I realize this can paint a little bit of a gloomy picture of destiny. But, like Paul, I do not want you to be unaware. Life can be hard and painful, but God lavishes His love, wisdom, and peace on us in the middle of it – if we receive it.

There's certainly a tremendous amount of joy in our life with Christ. You know, He's smiling over us and we are the apple of His eye. **He wants us to enjoy him in the fullness and in the freedom of who He is and who we are.** He wants us to live out of our talents, gifts, and abilities that He's given us. He's all about that. Life is about the highs and the lows – the joy and the pain. All of that is part of our destiny.

Sometimes we have the mentality that, *If I do the right thing for God, He's going to make my life trouble-free.* That is not true. He does, however, make our path straight when we depend on Him:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

# GOOD THEOLOGY, RIGHT? BUT PRACTICALLY SPEAKING...

**W**hat does this look like in everyday living? Simply put, it is trusting Him. Seeing an obstacle and allowing God to make it an opportunity, receiving clarity and wisdom, and experiencing His power to walk in His way instead of our fleshy coping way. Simple – but maybe not easy.

It is not easy because it means we have to admit our weakness. Yuk!

**No one wants to show weakness or vulnerability, but that is the doorway to destiny of abundant living.**

First, where do the obstacles come from? There are generally three sources. Our enemy Satan, the current world view, and the messed up way we think. Let's briefly discuss these.

Satan wants us to believe that he has power and control that is too much for us to withstand, but that is not true. Satan has been defeated (Hebrews 2:14). Yes, God released him and he does roam around, but his only power is deception. Also, he only has power if we give it to him – because God has already defeated and defanged him, if you will. The only way he can influence us is if we believe his lies over God's truth. His weapons are doubt, condemnation, and confusion.

We are not in a power struggle with Satan. Rather it is a Truth struggle. Satan is a liar (John 8:44) and Truth sets us free. **If we are not experiencing freedom, we are not believing Truth!**

The second obstacle is the world system. Our culture pushes us to perform for value, to be independent, to strive, to be strong, never back down from a fight, to fight for fairness, success, and productivity. God says we are valuable because He made us. God designed us to be dependent on Him for strength, wisdom, love, acceptance, and value. God invites us to rest in Him (spiritually and emotionally) as our feet keep moving in our work and play. God wants us to receive and share His love, not manipulate and try to earn love. God calls us to forgive and let Him dole out “fairness and judgment.”

### **God calls us to a humble confidence – not arrogance and pride.**

The last obstacle is our own thought process. All of us have believed lies about God, life, and ourselves. **When our concept of God is skewed, trusting is hard.** We took a deeper look at this in our e-book, *The Designer: Untangling our Concept of God*. What we believe about life has been tainted by various worldviews and religious ideas. The most powerful place of struggle is in the beliefs we have about ourselves.

These beliefs fall into two categories: an inferior self-image or a superior self-image. If we believe we are not worthy for God to speak or direct us, we will not be able to step into this opportunity and experience our true destiny. If we feel like we have “got this life thing” we will not see our need for God and live from our own adequacy – which is not sustainable. This is an idea we more fully unpack in e-book 2 of our series, *Our Design: Untangling our Concept of Ourselves*. A false sense of who we are is a strong obstacle to living out our destiny.

So, what do we do?

We ask God to show us the obstacle and it’s source and we take a moment and simply ask Him to shine His light on truth. By faith we step into truth. Truth sets us free. Truth gives life. Truth brings

intimacy and peace and comfort and clarity. **Truth leads us to the abundant life.**

How can we encounter God in these struggles? How do we go from an obstacle, pain, fear, or adversity to an opportunity to experience God? We simply ask.

We ask Him to remind us.

He indwells us. He guides us through life and teaches us and reveals Himself to us in many ways. He wants us to experience Him in our trials. Then our thoughts can begin to move from our problem to His solution. Our thoughts then can be focused on this opportunity to experience and have intimacy with Him versus always focusing on the obstacle or the problem.

He wants to be with us as we trust Him in these opportunities. He's encouraging us and calling us and wooing us into this place of relying on Him versus relying on self. We all want to feel God's presence. We all want to experience His presence on our journey.

We get that opportunity to exercise faith and trust in Him for all things. In heaven we won't have to exercise faith and trust because we will be seeing Him face to face. But here on earth we can't see Him physically face to face. And sometimes we don't think we see Him in circumstances. But this is our chance to walk in faith and trust him knowing that He is with us. He will never leave us. He will never forsake us. This is our chance to experience intimacy with him in the middle of our adversity (Hebrews 13:5).

Jesus says:

*"Come to me all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me. For I am*

*gentle and humble in heart and you shall find rest for your souls.  
For my yoke is easy and my load is light” (Matthew 11:28-29).*

Paul says:

*“We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God. And we’re taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:5).*

How do we take thoughts captive? We stop. In Romans 12:2 Paul says:

*“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”*

When obstacles come and the lies and false beliefs start raising their ugly heads, God calls us to pause...wait. It's that moment to stop, ask, and listen. *What do I believe about myself? What are the lies I'm believing about me? and What do I believe about God right now?* **When the pain comes, the hurt comes, the rejection comes: take the thought captive and ask: Lord, what are you saying to me about me? What are you saying to me about You?**

It is here that God renews our mind and transforms our thinking from lies to truth. This is our chance to process through the lies to the truth. So many times we have ruts in our thinking and God wants to change that.

Ask Him to make this knowledge your reality. Ask Him for help in seeing and feeling your divine nature. Everything we need for the living of life is in us – now! **He has already equipped us for our destiny!** You can live out your destiny today, no need to wait! If this is not something you are feeling, it means you may not yet believe what you know. Trust in what He says and allow your feelings to catch up.



# WHAT'S NEXT?

**G**od has given us new life. We are new creations. I know we do not always know this, believe this, or feel this. Remember, it is a journey. God will reveal to you what you are ready to hear in His perfect timing.

Give yourself grace. When God shows you a truth, celebrate it! Some of us beat ourselves up and think, *I should already know this or I know this why can't I get it.* To that I say, *relax.* We don't know what we don't know. Be patient with yourself and enjoy God's revelation as He uncovers the mystery.

I encourage you not to compare your journey to someone else's – that is usually not life-giving.

Remember:

*“For I know the plans that I have for you’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope’” ( Jeremiah 29:11).*

Our plans are different. The details are different. Our God is the same. Underneath our unique circumstances we can all experience the love, acceptance, worth, and security we receive from God in every step of our destiny.

*“See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity... So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants” (Deuteronomy 30:15,19).*

You see, **God always had a plan. His plan was to bring you into this world to have a relationship with Him and to walk in**

**newness of life in whatever He brings your way.**

Embrace all that God has provided for you in Christ, and step into your destiny today!

In our next e-book, *My Story: Living the Untangled Life*, Pam will share her personal journey of how she discovered God's destiny for her life.