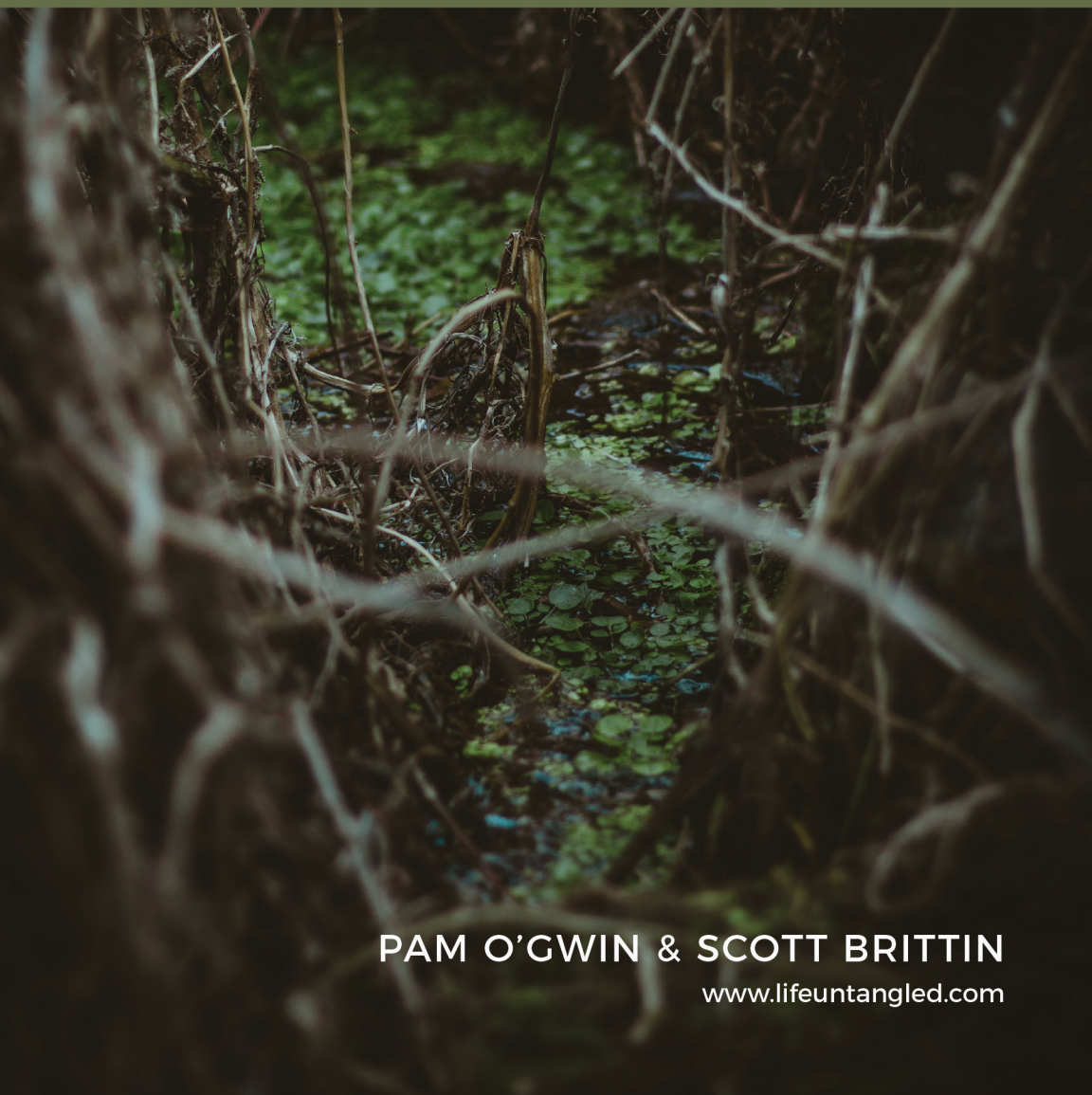




OUR DESIGN

UNTANGLING OUR CONCEPT OF OURSELVES



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www.lifeuntangled.com



INTRODUCTION TO LIFE UNTANGLED

Did you know God cares about all the big stuff and even all the little stuff in your life, because He cares about YOU? He knows your struggles, hurts, and 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 (NASB)

That first verse says to “lay aside”, or “let go”. You might be thinking, “I tried to let go, and I can’t”! 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 ebook series, we are looking at the amazing character of our Designer and the intricate beauty that He put into the Divine Design of all mankind beginning with Adam. We will see how Adam and Eve made choices that caused all of Adam’s descendants (you and I) to be born separated from God and how we learned to cope.

**NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE, HE
LOVES YOU, MESS AND ALL, AND
HE’S ON YOUR SIDE.**



ARE YOU SKEPTICAL OF GOD'S DESIGN?

Do any of these ideas or thoughts sound familiar to you?

God really messed up when He made me this way.

Something's wrong with me.

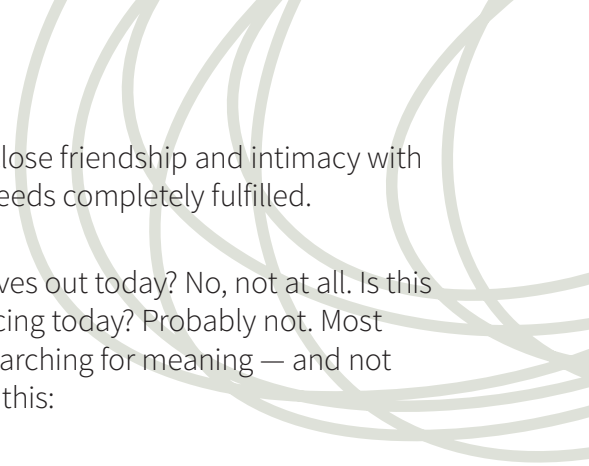
God skipped over me when He handed out the brains... or the looks... or the creativity.

My friend, if you've ever had thoughts like these, let me assure you of something: they are lies. While it may not feel true to you right now, God did do a beautiful job. He created a masterpiece when He designed mankind, and when He made you.

If you're skeptical, that's okay. All that's needed from you is to keep reading with an open heart and open mind.

In this ebook, we're going to begin exploring how God made us — more precisely, how He designed YOU. You'll see that the desires and wants and needs God built in us cannot be fulfilled or met by things. They can't be sufficiently fulfilled or met by people. Matter of fact, God's original design for us was that we would

**HE CREATED A
MASTERPIECE
WHEN HE
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enjoy and thrive in a beautifully close friendship and intimacy with Him. In Him, we would find our needs completely fulfilled.

Is this the reality that humanity lives out today? No, not at all. Is this the reality that YOU are experiencing today? Probably not. Most people today spend their lives searching for meaning — and not finding it. C.S. Lewis wrote about this:

“Most people, if they had really learned to look into their own hearts, would know that they do want, and want acutely, something that cannot be had in this world. There are all sorts of things in this world that offer to give it to you, but they never quite keep their promise.”

- C. S. Lewis, from Mere Christianity, pp. 135. Published by HarperCollins.

Lewis knew something important, something that is all too easily forgotten: you and I were carefully designed by a loving Father. As you begin to see how God built us, you'll see how amazing your design truly is.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM THIS EBOOK?

Many people struggle through life, being tossed, tangled and led by their own emotions. We are often trying to figure out how to live life in peace. This is because we have never understood how God designed us to function. **In this ebook, the second in our “Life Untangled” series, we will focus on understanding how God made us.**

You see, God designed us with the capacity to relate to Him, other people and the world in a way that would give us a meaningful, abundant life. God did not forget any of the details necessary for this life and He did not forget you.

Understanding how God designed you as a three-part person with a spirit, soul, and body is the foundation for living free from the struggles that weigh you down. God desires we experience fullness of Life in Him! Let’s learn more about that as we explore His Divine Design.

GOD MADE YOU WITH THREE PARTS

We're going to dig into this quite a bit later in the ebook, but in Genesis 1:26-27 it says:

“Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” (NASB)

And so He created us in His Divine image, male and female, image-bearers of God. In His male and female creations, God's strength and beauty can be seen. Now, the Bible is not entirely clear about what “image” means, but one thing we do know is that part of being made in His image is that we are spiritual beings. We also know He is a triune being: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In a similar way, God made us in three parts as well: spirit, soul, and body.

In Genesis 2:7 we see evidence of God's three-part design for man reflected in the account of our creation.

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (KJV)

There are some interesting takeaways from this Scripture. First, we can see that God used dust to form man’s physical body. That’s the first part. The “breath of life” God gave man can be translated as ‘spirit’ (according to the Hebrew and Greek). The final portions of the passage describes how the man became a living soul with a unique personality. Do you see those three parts? Man was designed as a spirit being, with a soul, living in a body.

YOU WERE HANDCRAFTED FOR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM!

Because of His great love for you, God designed you in such an amazing way that you have the capacity to be indwelt by the Creator of the Universe. You were handcrafted for relationship with Him!

He was so pleased with His design that He said VERY GOOD. Think about that for a moment. The Creator of stars, trees, animals, and flowers had said, “Ahh, these are good.” But then, when He had formed the first human, He said “very good.” (Someday, God will look at us and say, “You are very good and perfect!”)



GOD INTENDED GREAT THINGS!

What was going through God’s mind when He first designed Adam? What was He intending for Adam — and for you? As we already saw in Genesis 2:7, God designed Adam with a spirit, which gave him the capability to connect with God. God also gave him a body and a soul, which allowed him to relate to the world (and soon, Eve!).

Genesis 1:28-30 describes what God did next:

“God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’ Then God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food’; and it was so.”
(NASB)

God gave Adam a purpose to live out (oversee and cultivate the earth). Then, He provided Adam with everything he and Eve needed to experience and live out life. God supplied all that his kids needed: companionship, love, acceptance, worth, security, and physical needs. Adam and Eve were completely able to express and live out their Creator-given purpose in this world.

What can you know for sure about God's intent towards you?

God said, “I wanted YOU.”

You were chosen by God. He wanted you specifically, the person reading this book, here and now. Did He NEED you here? No, not at all — He is self-sustaining. He wanted you and me so much that He prepared a beautiful world with everything we would need and then brought Adam into it and subsequently us.

**YOU DELIGHT
HIM JUST
BECAUSE
YOU ARE HIS
CREATION.**

He brought you here to have a relationship with you and to enjoy you. You delight Him just because you are His creation. The first man and woman were created from scratch, but from that time on, He brought two imperfect people together to bring another life into an imperfect world so He could be in relationship with you.

“You formed my innermost being, shaping my delicate inside and my intricate outside, and wove them all together in my mother’s womb. I thank you, God, for making me so mysteriously complex! Everything you do is marvelously breathtaking. It simply amazes me to think about it! How thoroughly you know me, Lord! You even formed every bone in my body when you created me in the secret place, carefully, skillfully shaping me from nothing to something.” Psalm 139:13-15 (TPT)

God made you one-of-a-kind.

You are entirely unique, created with special intent and purpose. Beginning with Adam and Eve, we are all uniquely designed. You

have a unique blend of personality, character, experience, and perspective. God saw it all, liked it, and is fully committed to you.

*“You saw who you created me to be before I became me!
Before I’d ever seen the light of day, the number of days you
planned for me were already recorded in your book. Every single
moment you are thinking of me! How precious and wonderful to
consider that you cherish me constantly in your every thought!
O God, your desires toward me are more than the grains of sand
on every shore! When I awake each morning, you’re still with
me.” Psalm 139:16-18 (TPT)*

God designed you to find complete fulfillment in Him.

We all have obvious physical needs such as food and air and water. However, we also have deep emotional needs. We need to be loved, accepted, worthy, significant, and secure. Try as we might to meet those needs on our own, we will always fall short and be disappointed. God is the only One who can fully and completely meet them.

**WE NEED TO
BE LOVED,
ACCEPTED,
WORTHY,
SIGNIFICANT,
AND SECURE.**

“The Lord is my best friend and my shepherd. I always have more than enough.” Psalm 23:1 (TPT)

God wired you for community.

God knew that we would need community. In fact, He said it was not a good thing for man to be alone. This is obvious today more than ever, as technology companies the world over attempt

to create meaningful connections for an increasingly lonely generation. You know that desire, don't you?

“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone...’” Genesis 2:18a (NLT)

God created you with a need for purpose.

God also deposited a desire for purpose into you; it beats deep in your heart. After all, God prepared work and purpose for Adam by creating the animals, even before their caregiver Adam had been created! That's how 'on top' of things God was — and it was all for Adam. You need purpose — and God has a purpose for you that is as unique and special as you are.



CONNECTING WITH GOD, EACH OTHER, AND THE WORLD.

As we established earlier, God made us spirit, soul and body. We are a three-part whole — three distinct parts with unique functions. We relate to God through our spirit, to others through our soul, and to our world through our body! Note how the following verse clearly affirms your wholeness while still identifying the three individual pieces.

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NASB)

You were designed a full, complete person with a spirit, soul, and body. Let’s take a few moments to explore this more fully. We’ll dig into what God’s Word tells us about each part. Additionally, we’ll highlight the areas where struggles commonly surface, then examine God’s answers to those issues.

Your Spirit

Have you ever noticed how, when you describe someone, you tend to focus on external appearance? It’s very common. We might say, “she has red hair” or “he’s very tall.” **God, however, says that we are first and foremost spirit beings. Our spirit determines our true identity. It is the spirit that holds the breath of life.**

Yes, we each do have a physical identity (she has red hair, he is tall, etc...). Each of us also has a soul identity (that's the personality). **But one's core identity is in one's spirit.** When God came to walk with Adam and Eve, He related to them through their spirit. This is how we connect to God, spirit to Spirit, for our all-sufficient life source and true happiness.

Your Soul

As we stated earlier in this ebook, we primarily relate to others through our souls. It is the home of your personality. Generally speaking, your soul is made of three different facets, or aspects. There's the mind (your thinker), the emotions (your feeler), and the will (your chooser).

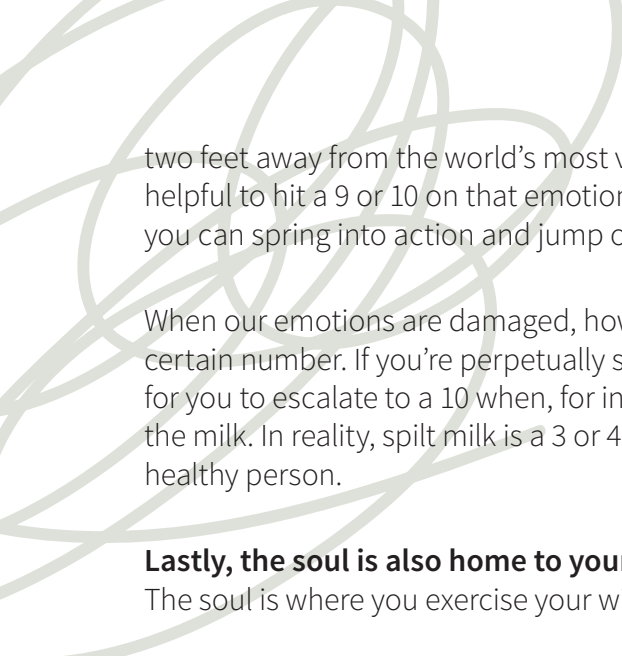
The soul is where thinking happens. It's the seat of reason, logic and memory. In our minds, we store information, whether accurate or inaccurate. Consider how having inaccurate information about God, ourselves and others can affect us. That's why having a right and accurate concept of God is so important!

The soul is also home to our emotions.

God created emotions, so they are neither good nor bad. What we have to understand about emotions is that, while they are real, they do not determine truth. Emotions, however, act as an indicator—think of your feelings like the dashboard on your car, which tells you how things are operating and warns you if something is wrong.

Our emotions should fluctuate, from 0 to 10, for example. If you were walking along a path, turned a corner and suddenly you were

**YOUR SOUL
IS MADE
OF YOUR
THINKER,
YOUR
FEELER,
AND YOUR
CHOOSEER.**



two feet away from the world's most venomous snake, it would be helpful to hit a 9 or 10 on that emotional scale (e.g., extreme fear) so you can spring into action and jump out of the way.

When our emotions are damaged, however, we get stuck at a certain number. If you're perpetually stuck at 6, it doesn't take much for you to escalate to a 10 when, for instance, your toddler spills the milk. In reality, spilt milk is a 3 or 4 out of 10 in an emotionally healthy person.

Lastly, the soul is also home to your ability to make decisions.
The soul is where you exercise your will.

Adam was designed with the ability to make his own choices. God, desiring a loving relationship with His creation, endowed him with this ability! True love allows a choice.

Imagine you are married, and you could force your spouse to love you. Would your spouse really love you? Would you enjoy that kind of "love"?

Having a choice gives you individual value, and means you're actually not obligated to give or receive what you don't want to. God created us this way, so that we can actually experience freedom. True freedom implies choice.

Your Body

Just as our spirits are how we connect with God, and souls are how we connect with others, our bodies are the way we connect to our environment.

**HAVING
A CHOICE
GIVES YOU
INDIVIDUAL
VALUE.**

The body is your earthly dwelling place, and it houses your soul and spirit. Some call it your “earth suit.” It’s the visible part of your being. Every sound, touch, look, smell, taste is taken into your body through your senses. Then your mind tries to make sense of it. This is by design. Through your senses, your body experiences the things of your physical, material world. In addition to your physical senses, the body’s other functions include speech, emoting, and action.

WHAT'S NEXT?

God designed each of us as spirit, soul and body.

He designed us to walk with Him, every step, day by day, trusting, listening, enjoying. He designed us to depend on Him and experience His love, care and provision. **He designed us with needs that go unmet when we don't depend on Him.**

When we look back at the Garden of Eden, we see how God created Adam and Eve. He breathed life into them. And they walked with Him every day, hanging out with Him, learning from Him, and really getting to know Him. Until the Fall. But up until that point, they had depended on Him for all their needs — and God fulfilled them. They were not self-sufficient — they didn't even know the meaning of such a concept!

**GOD
DESIGNED
US TO
DEPEND
ON HIM.**

Maybe there are days when you feel like the way God created you isn't good, much less very good. Realize He has created you with the capacity to experience intimacy with Him. Ask Him to show you the perfect, tender thoughts He had when He formed you in your mother's womb.

God's Divine Design for humankind was intimacy and relationship with Him. It was perfect. But something messed that up, didn't it? That's why Jesus went to the Cross. But first...

In our next ebook, "The Fall: How We Got Tangled", we look at how it all got messed up.