

## **FEARLESS PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE**

### **Reflection and Discussion Questions**

You get to decide how to use these questions. My intention is to pose questions that push each of us beyond the text of the book or a passage from Scripture, and get to know the Trinity better, more deeply, and with greater intimacy. My hope is we enter their dance, for all three of them have been at this deep relationship thing for eternity and now we're stepping into our invitation. Whether this is all new and your first step or you are a seasoned warrior whose steps are too numerous to count, God has a next step. He created us to be a part of their relationship and to move between God the Father, Jesus his Son, and the power and presence of the Spirit. Invite them into your reflection on these questions; encourage them to make it personal in the way our loving Father in heaven alone can do.

These questions and the resources listed here can be used with your couples' small group, a men's or women's group, or any type of Bible study. It is your choice. While this is a path to learning about your significance and purpose, it is but one. God is pretty creative; look around you if you have any doubt. What he'd like us all to understand, first and foremost, is that we were created to bring glory to God. And because we were made in his image, we have significance. But beyond these two perfunctory points he also has a unique purpose for each of us. He made us each unique, a unique blend of gifts and traits, past experiences, and situations we live in, and he'd like us to fill the unique role he has for us to play.

Finally, this discovery and use of our unique purpose requires fearlessness. The scariest thing I will see in my life is the deepest darkest corners of who I am; the good news is God is redeeming those areas of my identity. The next place to ask for

fearlessness is the moment we decide to step into who we are supposed to be and live out of God's purpose corporately and individually. Just the mention of this gives me chills realizing that one day you'll be standing next to me sharing what you have for the ensemble.

## Chapter 1

### Jesus: Perfect but So Much More

1. When we are honest with ourselves, do we focus on what Jesus did or didn't do? Why might this make a difference for us in the way we approach our relationship with Jesus?

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2. What do you find most amazing about the story of Jesus turning water into wine. Read John 2:1–12 and describe the situation in your words. What potentially was the bridal couple feeling? How about Mary, the disciples, or Jesus? What about the servants taking a sample from the clay jars to the master of the banquet; what do you think was coursing through their minds?

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3. Does this story shed any light on how Jesus wants to interact with us? How personal and deep does he want to get with us?

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4. Read Matthew 11:28–30 (MSG). How would your life be altered if you lived like Jesus encourages in this passage? Pause and think about where you are right now in life; what would be different? Now ask God to allow you to imagine three years from now, what it would mean to live like this in the future; what do you envision that would feel like and look like for you personally?

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5. How will you guard your heart against focusing on dos or don'ts versus going deeper with Jesus?

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## Chapter 2

### Abandoning the Yardsticks

1. When you consider the prospect of using a personality assessment, several questions may emerge. First, regardless of whether you have previously taken an assessment, what do you hope to understand about yourself or others from taking an assessment?

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2. In the event you have used an assessment before, which one did you use? What were the top two to four points you walked away understanding?

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3. Do you have a sense God is working to transform you in particular areas? You could be in one of three camps on this questions:

- A. Nope, I'm good and don't need transformation.
- B. Yes, he is actively working in the area of \_\_\_\_\_.
- C. I am open to this but really don't feel or hear anything.

The good news is for each of these groups of people God is at work, and this book and, more importantly, your exploration may be exactly what you need right now.

God doesn't rest when it comes to making us more like Jesus. What thoughts do you have about this thing called transformation?

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4. Have you asked God for help on this journey? Do you have others joining you at this time on your journey? What steps of obedience do you sense God would like you to make, if any?

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5. What barriers if any exist for you engaging in this journey?

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## Chapter 3

### Choosing the Right Self-Assessment

1. How familiar are you with the Christian gifts of Romans 12:6–8, and do you have any inkling what areas you are strongest in?

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2. Do you sense that God desires to bring you through a transformational process at this point in your life?

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3. Are there areas of your life, whether giftings or other traits, where you struggle or demonstrate weakness? Have you invited God into that space to work deeper, and if so, what has the result been? If you haven't asked Jesus in, what about doing that now? Remember he loves you and wants you to reflect the wholeness of his Son. What other thoughts have come to your mind or has God reminded you of as a result of this question?

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4. What do you sense God would have you know about your gifts, strengths, weaknesses, and particular wiring?

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5. What harm or good has come for you from other assessments you have taken through the years? Is there wounding or something that made you think less of yourself in your own or in God's eyes?

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## Chapter 4

### Our Purpose and Significance in God's Image

1. Special versus significant—what does this mean to you? How do you honestly believe God sees you?  

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2. What agreements do you cling to regarding your gifts that you need to let go of?  

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3. Are there other specific persons or people groups that you regard as being lower, less enlightened, or less deserving, or whom perhaps you mistrust or are cautious around?  

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4. What feelings do you hold for the gifting you sense you have? If the response to that is “I don’t know,” what do you sense God is asking you or telling you about this area? Another approach is to say the first thing that came to your mind when “gifting” was mentioned in the boook. Long ago someone illustrated this for me and said, “Don’t think of a pink monkey,” which immediately brought images of pink monkeys

everywhere. I'll ask again, what would you guess your gift is? Without judging your thoughts, blurt out your answer.

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5. What agreements or compromises have you made that inhibit your ability to move forward and deeper with God? *Provehito in altum* is Latin for reaching new heights and going deeper. Where is God calling you to do this? It could be a small group at church, going to church, or it could be a career change, going to seminary, that promotion, not taking the promotion. Everyone has a next step. What is yours?

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## Chapter 5

### Who God Says You Are

1. Read John 4:4–43, please pay attention to the number of days Jesus was in the region based on the text. Who are the characters referenced? What do we know about what each character was thinking? What is the significance of these details?

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2. Have you ever experienced a “big reveal” about some secret you have? How did it feel? If you answered no, what can your imagination provide you with regarding how you would feel?

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3. Who would you say you are? What constructs and concepts do you use to characterize yourself?

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4. Have you ever considered that your identity and story are part of something significantly larger? If so, what do you think that is? Do you have a sense of what God wants your part to be? If not, what has been the sticking point?

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5. Reread the prayer on page 68 in *Fearless Purpose and Significance*: “Jesus, as you and I walk together, show me more clearly how you made me, my gifts, who I am, and what role you want me to play in your grander story as part of your ensemble. And as we embark, walking together in more deeper intimacy, please use me to draw others into the story.” Have you prayed this? What was God’s response?

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## Chapter 6

### How God Wired You

1. On page 72 in *Fearless Purpose and Significance* there is a reference to a story by C.S. Lewis about the death of his friend Charles Williams and the effect that it would have on his other friend Ronald (J.R.R. Tolkien). What are the implications for you, your relationships, and the impact we have on earth?

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2. How does this story by C.S. Lewis relate to our wiring?

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3. When we consider Romans 12:4–8 and the expression of our gifts in measure to the grace that is expressed in us today, what does this mean to you?

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4. Do you know your top gift of the seven listed? What was your source of that, an assessment or some other means? How does this play out in your life?

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5. Within the context of our gifts there are three considerations we need to be mindful of:

- A. We should never consider our gifts as primary.
- B. The importance of viewing each gift or trait in the context of the integrated view (or how anyone operates in conjunction with others)
- C. We operate in the context of relationships.

What does each of these areas speak to regarding your specific gifting?

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## Chapter 7

### Attitude: A Different Animal

1. When you consider the spectrum of attitude, where do you think you stand (or if you have results from The CALL, what were the results)? What do you believe is the biggest influencer for you: DNA (predisposition), situation/circumstance, or choice?

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2. When you hear the “bell ring” as a news or other personal event occurs, what is your first thought? Are there agreements or refrains you make at that point? I say that because I have two that I battle with personally. One is “I don’t have time for this,” and the other is “This is too hard.” God has shown me how these are places where I step out of relationship with him and can make spiritual agreements that are unhealthy. Ask God to reveal if you make agreements and what they are.

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3. Is the concept of “denial” and the entire transition curve new to you? Does the idea that we process both favorable and unfavorable, seemingly positive and negative, events or news in a similar sequence make sense? Why or why not?

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4. How does the account of Jesus from Matthew 26 shape your view of life? How does this relate or contradict the Taoist story of the farmer?

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5. Please read James 1:2–8 and 12. How does this relate to the prayer at the end of chapter? How do you find this interrupting or enhancing your part of God's story?

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## Chapter 8

### Understanding Alignment and Discord Using The CALL Reports

1. Three key pieces provide the backdrop for us understanding ourselves; the first of these is that we were made to be in deep and intimate relationship with God. Did you pray the prayer that begins on page 110: “Jesus, whether I fully understand or comprehend what is meant by going deep with you, I want that. I admit, too, that my faith wavers here. I am afraid and don’t really want my life to be disrupted or exposed, or for light to shine in the darker corners. Help me with that, too, so that each hour and day I am deeper in love with you and my gratitude for your grace grows as I see your love and mercy even more powerfully.” If you didn’t say this prayer, why not? If you did, what did God reveal to you?

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2. The second point of our discussion is that even our strongest assets, when overused, can become detractors relationally and spiritually. Have you seen cases or circumstances of this in your life? Please explain.

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3. The third point is, where are you today, right now, in this moment? Where do you stand relative to Paul’s words “My grace is enough; it’s all you need” and the passage

from 2 Corinthians 12:9–10? Is this true of you, and can you rest in contentment in this place? Why or why not?

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4. The chapter asks, what is burning in your heart? Take a moment to write a response here. Have you shared that with God or others?

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5. In our quest, God would have us enter his story and play the part he’s uniquely made us for. Where are you in that journey? Are you spreading this message to your children, your family, and the world? Share an example of this currently playing out in your life. If one escapes you, is there some barrier?

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## Chapter 9

### Points of Alignment

1. Have you ever considered the unique blends of personality and gifting that YOU possess as things of beauty? What are a couple of your gifts, and how does the blending yield more beauty?

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2. Whether from previously taking The CALL or after reading the descriptions, what combinations of gifts do you possess? What is the significance?

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3. When you consider the story from John 8, what implications for yourself do you see?

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4. What considerations are raised when you reflect on your overall traits and gifts in regard to the Urgency/Rapport Matrix?

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5. Take time this week to find a quiet space each day and pray the prayer at the end of the chapter. “God, please reveal the beauty and complexity of my combinations of gifts and traits, and show me the beauty of how I am made. What would you like to tell me about myself and why my unique combinations are so important to your ensemble and your broader story? Give me vision of how you want to use my gifts and traits. Finally, Jesus, teach me to fearlessly live out my purpose and significance today.”

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## Chapter 10

### Points of Discord

1. Before stepping into specifics, has the mere mention of disharmony or tension raised ideas in your mind or perhaps even created stress? What specifically prompted this reaction?

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2. It is possible for someone not to possess any internal tension from their traits and gifts; this is unusual compared to the norm. What thoughts does this bring up for you?

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3. Do you possess strong pull with either urgency or rapport based on some concentrations of traits or gifts? How does this show up in your life?

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4. Does your unique blend of gifts and traits look more like the geysers bubbling under the surface of Yellowstone, or is it more like Old Faithful erupting on a regular basis? Why might this make a difference?

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5. What is God showing and telling you about these areas of your life?

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## Chapter 11

### The Way to Transformation

1. How does the idea that “the trailhead for personal transformation . . . is marked with suffering” strike you? Do you believe this to be true? Has your experience borne that out?

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2. Have you experienced crucible moments? What fruit was come from them?

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3. In the midst of hard or challenging times how has God and his Word been a lamp for your feet and a light on your path?

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4. Tim Keller’s quote, starting on page 155, sheds a different light on suffering. How does the Christian view provide comfort for you in the midst of hard times?

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5. Read James 1:2–8 (MSG). Please write in your own words about what God is doing in your “tests and challenges.” Now think about your current tests and challenges, or perhaps one from the past if everything is currently going well; what is the work God is doing in you during this time or trial?

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## Chapter 12

### Special Needs and Cognitive Challenges

1. Why is it imperative to have a chapter like this in the book?

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2. What does Josh's story mean to you? What insights did you glean from reading it?

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3. What biblical truths are revealed in Josh's account that might challenge our conventional notions about spiritual gifting?

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4. How does this chapter potentially alter your ideas about significance?

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5. Can a chapter like this make you do something different vocationally, with the people you work with, or even alter your view of “the other”? Please elaborate.

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## Chapter 13

### Living in Purpose and Significance Today

1. Building on the discussion of Romans 12:1 (MSG), does your life reflect one of living for God? What does your imperative look like? What is your service offering?

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2. How did you respond regarding the question of where you are in your relationship with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit? What is your next step in this area?

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3. Do you have someone to connect with regarding your next step? Have you shared changes you've experienced or the nature of your next step?\*

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4. Which BHAG dominates your life—a big hairy audacious goal or a big hairy audacious God? What does this mean to you at this point in time?

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5. What unforced rhythms of grace is Jesus asking you to learn and walk in right now?

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\*We are very serious about helping and supporting you if you are alone in this journey.

Contact information is included in the book and on this website.

## Chapter 14

### Living in Purpose and Significance with Others

1. How does the imagery of the ensemble impact how you feel about being involved with other Christians? Is this something you have practiced in the past or currently practice?

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2. How does the mandible idea fit into your personal walk with God?

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3. Do you live and feel like the priest Peter describes in 1 Peter 2:5? Why or why not?

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4. What old names and identities is God calling you to let go of?

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5. How does Ephesians 4:2–7 (MSG) change what you will do next?

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