



Fruitful

ESSENTIAL KEYS FOR THE MOST
ABUNDANT CHRISTIAN LIFE

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Dedication:

To My Best Friend,

This book was only possible because of your hard work and dedication to being a faithful, God-honoring wife to me. I love you and God knows how thankful I am for you.

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Foundation:

Where We're Going

Something I've always wanted to do is create a practical resource that empowers new believers. This is why I developed this training and compiled it into one concise book. I want to give Christians the clearest, most helpful guide to living the fullest Christian life possible. This requires that believers understand what I believe to be some of the most essential teachings of the Christian faith. This includes the gospel message, our purpose in life, our position in Christ, and our process in time.

My goal is to teach you and empower you to live the best possible life this side of Heaven. This isn't about your best life now. This is about experiencing the fullest Christian life in preparation for eternity with God. God has more for you and I want you to walk in His abundant plan for your life.

I've come to realize that many issues for believers (and the church as a whole) result from the fact that they misunderstand key truths that are central to the Christian faith. We'll get to those key teachings in a moment. But first, I want you to know my heart behind this book.

The Origin Story

One of the most impactful series of sermons I've ever preached was titled "Abide" and it was communicated to my church's youth group. Most of the time I was preaching to myself, because those truths had yet to deeply penetrate my own heart. But, in spite of that reality, the overall consensus among our youth group was that this sermon series was the most enlightening and empowering set of biblical teachings that I had preached.

And, after processing this sermon series even deeper over the last few years, I realized that this collection of teachings was everything I've wanted in a complete resource for new believers. I had unknowingly developed a core faith training program for new believers.

Remember, I said that many issues for the Christian stem from a misunderstanding of essential Christian ideas. There are four ideas in particular that I believe have a tremendous impact on every individual's life, especially believers. These ideas are: the gospel message, our purpose, our position and our process. Let me briefly address the first issue.

Four Key Ideas

See, a misunderstanding of the basic gospel message can lead to many issues in a person's life. Think about it. Our view of God actually determines every single area of our life. Our view of God is like the thread that connects everything. How we live flows from how we view God. And, God is most clearly revealed in the person of The Son, Jesus Christ, (the second person of the trinity) through His death and resurrection.

Jesus and His saving work are the essential parts of the gospel message.

There is no good news of salvation without Jesus or His death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus is the gospel message of salvation. He is good news personified. So, if you misunderstand the foundation of your salvation and relationship with God, you'll end up spending much of your life confused, frustrated, and disappointed. Honestly, the gospel message becomes the lens through which you see this life.

Just as you'd look through a microscope or a telescope to see things as they actually are, so the gospel message of Jesus helps us to see our life and this world as they actually are. So, if you don't properly understand the gospel message, you'll see this life incorrectly because you're looking through a broken lens.

The second idea we have to unpack is this issue of our God-given purpose.

Every human being is created in the image of God for a divine purpose that God has determined. God, as the Creator, is the only one who has the right to decide the purpose of His creation. No one gets to decide the purpose of something except the creator (or inventor) of that thing.

We, as human beings are born into this world with an intended purpose, and without a correct understanding of our God-given purpose, we will inevitably waste our life. This is not only what many unbelievers are doing, but sadly, even many Christians across the planet today.

And yes, you can be born again, filled with the Spirit of God and still not fulfill God's purpose for your life. This is the sad reality for many believers, even myself at times. Purpose is not one climactic moment of an individual's life. Rather, our purpose is the accumulation of countless moments that we have chosen to be faithful to the Lord.

In other words, God's purpose for our life is the collection of every decision we made to honor Him throughout our life.

But, without a proper understanding of our inherent purpose, we will inevitably waste our lives and live frustrated, unfulfilled, bored, and even depressed. Why? Because when you use something in a way it wasn't intended, you accomplish nothing. And, the same rings true for our God-given breath.

Our life has an intended purpose. When we use our life for something other than its intended purpose, there will be nothing but frustration. Don't believe me? Think of the last time you tried using something against its intended function. You probably wasted time, energy or even money which left you frustrated because you accomplished nothing. Then, when you finally figured out its intended purpose, you wish you would've known that information from the very beginning.

Nobody enjoys not knowing how to properly use something. My prayer is that by the end of this book, you'll have a fuller understanding of your God-given purpose.

The third issue we have to address is this idea of position. Before I define this word for the rest of this faith training, I have to clarify that this term only applies to Christians in the

way that I'm going to use it. So, if you're not a Christian, you can change that immediately.

But, this term "position" refers to a Christian's new standing before God. In simple terms, this word refers to a Christian's identity. This is who the believer is now because of Jesus. It is how God views a believer who is positioned in Christ through faith.

Too many Christians are trying to live for God when they don't even understand how God sees them now that they're positioned in Jesus. Listen. How we think God sees us will greatly determine how we live for Him. Period. And, as Christians, we have to understand that God grants us a brand-new identity in Jesus Christ through our faith because God is gracious.

And, what I've noticed is that much of the Christian's frustration, anxiety, depression, and other related issues, are deeply rooted in the fact that they misunderstand how God sees them. Many Christians appear to be withering trees because they have deep-rooted identity issues.

Not only do many believers (myself included) have a wrong view of their identity, but, in addition, we don't understand the nature of our identity. We don't understand how this new identity functions, and how its possible for us to be who God has declared us to be.

There is a process that God divinely orchestrated to make us who we are in Christ. And, if we can better understand not only who we are, but how we are who we are, much of our internal struggles and issues will be eliminated. I'm not saying that every issue will be resolved.

And, I'm not saying that this issue of identity is the root of every problem. But, much of our emotional and mental turmoil is related to the fact that we have an identity crisis. And, by the grace of God, your sense of identity and value will be dramatically improved by the end of this book.

The last idea that we'll unpack in this faith training is our God-ordained process.

God, in His infinite wisdom, has established a process that works. This process is how God trains and transforms His people into the image of Christ in order to move His eternal plan to completion. God has a perfect strategy to accomplish His divine plan and it can't be stopped.

Think about this for a minute. God has determined a process to grow a seed into a fully-developed tree. And, that is only one example in nature. These natural processes are at work all around our universe on a daily basis.

And, just as God has put in place a process for nature, He has put a process in place for His church. There is order and structure to the ecosystem of His global body. There is an intended direction and goal that we are moving towards. He has a strategy that includes many ordered steps.

If we can align ourselves with the rhythm of God's divine process, it will make our lives much easier. I've noticed that many Christians are experiencing unnecessary difficulty simply because they're out of sync with God's divine process. I find that I'm not in step with God's pace very often, and it makes for a difficult life.

And, just like me, many believers aren't submitted to God's process. Instead, they often go against the process of God by either going after an entirely different goal or by assuming a responsibility/role that God never gave them. Sometimes we have the order wrong. Sometimes we aren't playing our role in the process. And, sometimes it can be that we misunderstand the goal of the process that God is bringing us through.

Whatever it may be, to disrupt the process of God in our life will prevent us from experiencing the fullest life possible. His divine process is perfect and it leads to the most abundant life where we are most like Jesus.

By the end of this book, you'll have a deeper understanding of God's process for your life. This is a mystery worth searching out and God has made it known in His word.

I do want to make something crystal clear before moving forward.

I'm not going to foolishly claim that every one of your problems are limited to either of these four ideas. But, for the most part, I've seen that at least one of these key issues is at the core of most troubles for believers. I don't believe God has provided a way for us to avoid every single problem in this life, because trouble is a natural consequence of this broken world.

John 16:33 says, "***In the world you will have tribulation.*** But take heart; I have overcome the world."

Clearly, troubles and problems are apart of this broken world we live in. So, the fullest Christian life is not one that has few

issues. But, there are many issues that God desires for you to avoid. There are many thought patterns God intends to transform you out of. There are many addictions that God has made way for you to be free from. There are many emotional and mental troubles that God intends for you to conquer.

And, I'm convinced that whatever God has ordained for your life, specifically, this faith training will help lead you into that. God has more for you. If you want the most abundant, fruitful, God-honoring life possible, these key truths will certainly position you for that kind of life. There are levels to this training, so let's dive in.