

God Wants You to Find Your Mission

Participant's Guide

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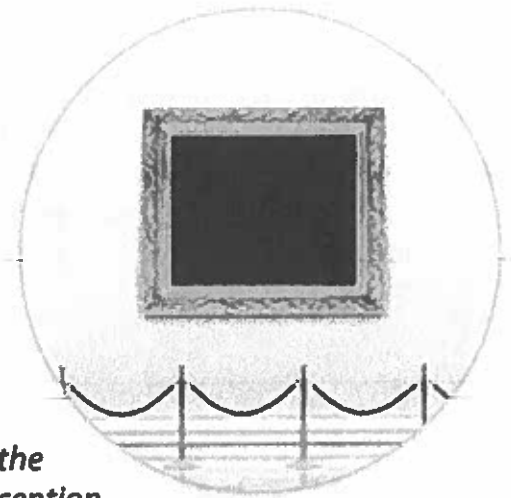
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Adopt the same attitude as Paul: "I am not an important person, but I have an important job to do."

One of the greatest gifts God has given us is the opportunity to start again—and without exception, we all need a fresh start from time to time. The apostle Paul certainly did. When we look at him from this side of history, most often we only see the good that he did. He wrote most of the New Testament, he started churches throughout the world, and he helped shape human history. We call him St. Paul, and many churches are named after him, but the fact is that there was a time in his life when he was anything but a saint. In those days his name was Saul, and he was, in fact, quite a rascal.

Scripture: Ephesians 3

Based On: "You Are God's Masterpiece," by Steve May, PreachingToday.com



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Part 1 Identify the Issue

By the apostle Paul's own admission, he was an enemy of God and of the church. He persecuted Christians and did all he could to stop the growth of the church. Then, suddenly, his life changed. He was walking on the road to Damascus when a bright light from heaven blinded him and a voice spoke to him, saying, "Saul, why are you persecuting me?"

He asked, "Who are you?"

The voice responded, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, the one you are persecuting."

From that day on, Paul was a new man. He wasn't perfect; he still made mistakes and committed sins, but his life took on a new direction, and the world hasn't been the same since.

You can change just as dramatically by adopting the same attitude as Paul: I am not an important person, but I have an important job to do.

Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching Point One: Live with a sense of purpose.

Teaching Point Two: Live with a sense of humility and wonder.

Teaching Point Three: Live with a sense that God's love is your life.

Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Action Point: To begin to understand God's love, we need to meditate and contemplate. Meditation is thinking in a specific direction; contemplation is thinking for an extended duration. That's how you get immersed in God's love. Think about it intensely, and think about it extensively.

This week, read a Bible verse or passage that reaffirms God's love for you. As you read, pray, "God, make these words real to me." Ask yourself, "How would knowing that I am loved by God affect what I think about myself? How would it affect the way I respond to insults or criticism? How would it affect my need for recognition or approval? How would it affect my life's work?" Then pray, "Lord, make your love real to me," and think about times that you have experienced a special touch of God's love through his mercy, through

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a spiritual blessing, or through the ministry of one of his people. Say, "Lord, help me to know always what I have known in the best moments of my life—that I am your beloved child." This is meditation and contemplation. It's not a snappy 60-second formula; it's a lifetime process. The longer we meditate on his love, the deeper we are rooted in it, the better we understand it, and the more we experience it.

—*Study by Steve May, with JoHannah Reardon*

