

## MESSAGE ONE

### SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Proverbs 3:5-7 (NASB)

<sup>5</sup> Trust in the Lord with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. <sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight. <sup>7</sup> Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and turn away from evil.

### MESSAGE GOAL:

This sermon will help people understand what destiny is, why it's important, and whether or not they are fulfilling it.

### INTRODUCTION:

Millions of people loved Seinfeld when it aired. A college drama department did a study to find out why Seinfeld was so popular. They determined that the reason was because of its plotless programming. Seinfeld just meandered haplessly from one scene, one circumstance to the next without connection. The drama department concluded that Americans who lead plotless lives prefer plotless TV programs.

There's a plotlessness that exists in many of our lives today. Often we move from one scene, one circumstance to the next without purpose. We wander from high school to college, from college to our first job. Then we're just dying to get married. Then we're just dying to have kids. Next we're dying to get them out of the house. Then we're dying to retire, only to find out that we're just dying – never having known why we were alive in the first place. But what would life look like if we all lived with a purpose, with a destiny? How would we act and think differently if we saw God's hand in the plots of our lives connecting one circumstance to the next in the tapestry of His will? Hope, purpose, and joy will permeate our lives if we begin to follow our destiny.

### SERMON POINTS:

#### 1. GOD HAS GIVEN YOU A DESTINY

- Destiny is the customized life calling for which God has equipped and ordained us, in order to bring Him the greatest glory and the maximum expansion of His kingdom.
- Every Christian must understand their destiny or primary purpose in life, which is to glorify God and make His name known. (Isaiah 43:6-7)

- Destiny always starts with the place of God in our lives. If we want to find our destinies, God must occupy the central place in our hearts, minds, motivations, and actions. (Deuteronomy 6:5)
- The heart of destiny is to serve the purposes of God. As we obey and serve the Lord, He will make His purpose for us clear. (Proverbs 3:5-7)
- The cross was Paul's identity and hope

#### 2. GOD'S DESTINY FOR YOU WILL LEAD TO A FULFILLING LIFE

- When people don't live with the sense that God has given them a divine purpose in life, they become depressed.
- Each member of the body of Christ has a unique role to play. But when some members don't fulfill their God-given destiny, the body cannot function. (Romans 12:4-8)
- When you know your destiny, you know your value in God's eyes.
- When you discover your destiny, you'll begin to live life like you never have before.
- Though persecution plagued the apostle Paul throughout his life, he frequently looked back to the destiny Jesus gave him on the Damascus Road and regained the confidence to keep going (Acts 9:3-6; 22:6-10)

#### 3. DETERMINE IF YOU'RE FULFILLING YOUR DESTINY

- We know that we are fulfilling our purpose by the impact we have on others.
- King David fulfilled his God-given purpose and impacted others.
  - "For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep." (Acts 13:36)
- We will all die and the only thing we will leave behind is the eternal impact we have made on others.

### SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

**GOD'S DESTINY IS WORTH PURSUING:** There was a little girl who asked her father for a nickel. He reached into his pocket but he didn't have any change. So the father pulled out his





wallet and all he had was a twenty dollar bill. His little girl had been a good girl so he said, "Sweetie, I don't have a nickel, but here's a twenty dollar bill." The little girl pouted and said, "But daddy, I want a nickel." The father tried to explain how many nickels the twenty dollar bill represented, but she didn't get it. Many of us are the same. We want a nickel when God wants to give us a twenty-dollar bill. We want our will so much that we miss out on God's perfect destiny for us – one that is worth much more than twenty dollars!

**GOD'S DESTINY REQUIRES SINGLE-MINDED FOCUS:**

When Yogi Berra and Hank Aaron played baseball against each other, they had a playful rivalry. During one particular game, Hank Aaron stepped up to the plate and Yogi, the catcher on the opposing team, tried everything to distract Hank. "Hey Hank, you can't hit. Your mama can't hit. And did you notice that your name on the back of your uniform is spelled wrong?" Well, Hank didn't pay any attention and he slugged the next pitch over the centerfield wall. After he rounded the bases and touched home plate, he looked back at Yogi and said, "Hey Yogi, just thought you might want to know. I didn't come here to read." Just like Hank Aaron, when we stay focused on our destiny, the voices that try to distract us become more and more silent.

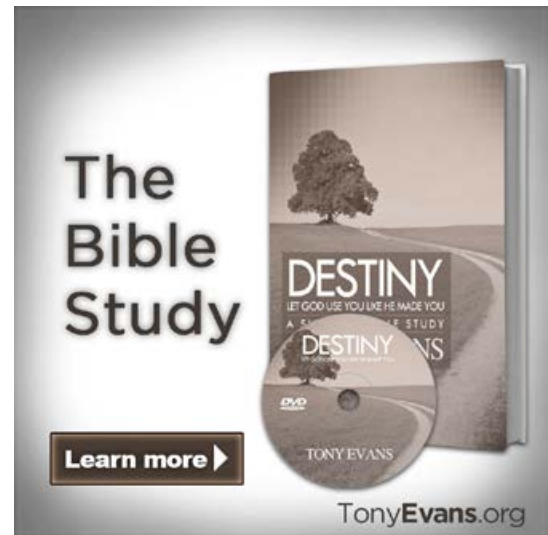
**QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO DR. TONY EVANS:**

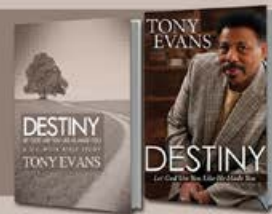
"Destiny is your customized life calling for which God has equipped and ordained you in order to bring Him the greatest glory and the maximum expansion of His kingdom."

"When you know what you're here for, there may be a lot of voices, but they don't distract you."

"At the heart of destiny is serving the purposes of God."

"If you disconnect your life from God, you disconnect yourself from your destiny."





## MESSAGE TWO

### **SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** Psalm 139:13-18 (NASB)

<sup>13</sup> For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. <sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; <sup>16</sup> Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them. <sup>17</sup> How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them! <sup>18</sup> If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand. When I awake, I am still with You

### **MESSAGE GOAL:**

This sermon will help Christians understand that God has uniquely designed them as His masterpieces to do good works.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

When you stand in your kitchen, you're surrounded by appliances. A refrigerator, an oven, a stove, a microwave, a toaster, a coffee maker, and others. All of these appliances were uniquely designed by the manufacturer to fulfill a designated purpose. The refrigerator will not heat up our food, the oven won't wash the dishes, and the toaster can't make the coffee in the morning. That's not what they were made to do. And if these appliances fail to accomplish the task they were designed to accomplish, then they have failed.

If men can do that with machines—design them to fulfill a designated purpose—God can craft people for unique purposes that will bring Him glory, bring others good, and advance His kingdom.

Let's look at Psalm 139 and Ephesians 2 to learn about how God, the master designer, has made each person to fulfill their unique destiny.

### **SERMON POINTS:**

#### **1. GOD HAS UNIQUELY DESIGNED YOU FOR A DESTINY**

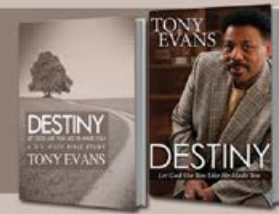
- God has woven you together intricately and uniquely to bring Him glory, bless others, and expand His kingdom.

- Learn how much worth you have before God by reading and meditating on Psalm 139:13-14: "For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

#### **2. GOD CREATED YOU AS A "MASTERPIECE" TO DO GOOD WORKS**

- Let's look closely at Ephesians 2:10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."
- God has designed you as a masterpiece
  - In Ephesians 2:10, the word workmanship means masterpiece.
  - The title masterpiece is reserved for the most glorious example of a certain art form, such as a poem, a painting, a sculpture, or a piece of music.
  - Masterpieces are also known as such because of the skill and expertise of their creator.
- God has prepared good works for you to do
  - The good works God has prepared for you are the biblically authorized activities that bring God glory and benefit others.
  - As you walk in the path of good works God has laid out, you will fulfill your destiny.
- God's masterpieces must be set apart (2 Peter 1:2-4)
  - In order for you to be the masterpiece God wants you to be, He must sanctify you and make you more like Jesus Christ.
  - God will continue shaping and molding you as His masterpiece over the course of your entire life.
- The Church works best when all the masterpieces function as they were designed to function. (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)
  - Christians shouldn't spend time and effort trying to be someone else.
  - Every believer has an essential role to play, no matter how insignificant or obscure it may seem.





### 3. GOD WANTS YOU TO KNOW YOUR WORTH AND LIVE AS HIS MASTERPIECE

- God's masterpieces, and their destinies, are specially designed
- God has only created one you; therefore you are rare and valuable.
- God's masterpieces always carry the name of their Creator
  - Human masterpieces are also known by their creators (Handel's Messiah, Michelangelo's David, Bach's 5th Symphony)
  - God protects His masterpieces because they have so much value to Him.

"God has so constructed your uniqueness that He wants His name attached to you."

"You've gotta hold your head up high and think of yourself no longer as ordinary because you have now been designated by your Creator as extraordinary."

"Whatever God has for your destiny is valuable and we can't live without it."

#### SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

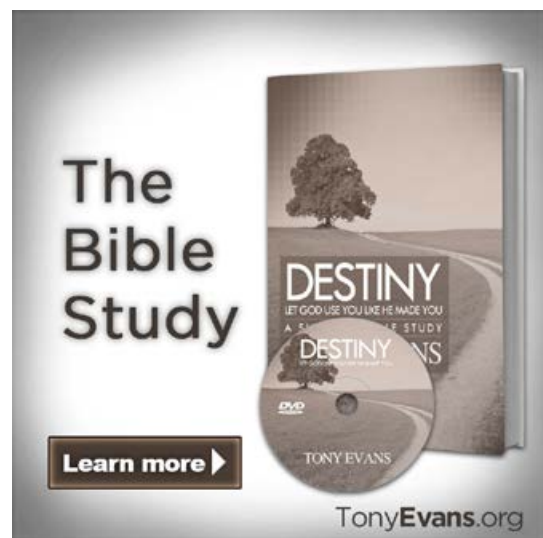
**1. GOD UNIQUELY DESIGNED YOU:** Too many Christians believe that they are "off the shelf" people. When we walk into a clothing store, we can choose from a number of shirts, belts, dresses, and pairs of shoes. But before these clothing items made it to the store shelf, they were mass produced in a large factory, likely with little attention to each individual shirt, belt, or sock. But God doesn't produce "off the shelf" people. Each person has been custom designed by His loving, sovereign hand. The fact that each person's finger prints are completely unique proves that God doesn't mass produce people. Let's start living with an awareness God has a perfect plan for each person He has uniquely crafted.

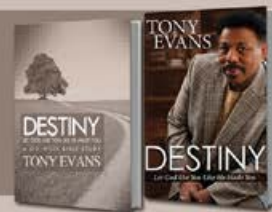
**GOD WANTS HIS MASTERPIECES TO LOOK LIKE HIS SON:** When you iron a shirt that is wrinkled, you have to add steam and heat in order to get the wrinkles out. And why do we iron shirts, pants, and dresses? Because we want to look good when we wear them. In the same way, God has to put us through the fires of refinement to smooth out the rough places and correct our flaws. We, as God's masterpieces, bear our Master's name and image. And when we fulfill our God-ordained destinies, God wants others to see Him through us.

#### QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO DR. TONY EVANS:

"God crafts unique people for unique purposes that will bring Him glory, bring others good, and expand and advance His kingdom in history."

"You're not an off the shelf saint. You've been custom designed, uniquely made."





## MESSAGE THREE

### **SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** Romans 8:28-30 (NASB)

<sup>28</sup> And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; <sup>30</sup> and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

### **MESSAGE GOAL:**

This sermon will help people understand that God uses our good, bad, and bitter experiences to point us to our destiny so He can fulfill His plan.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

A hammer and a chisel in the hands of a sculptor can turn a piece of stone into a work of art. With each blow, as the hammer strikes the chisel, chunks of stone fall away, eventually revealing a beautiful sculpture. Though the process of chipping away at the stone seems harsh and unyielding, the result is well worth the pain.

Likewise, when God gets His hands on our joyful and painful experiences, He can turn our lives into masterpieces that display His glory and channel His blessings to others. God will use our skills, training, and interests to help us discover our purpose in life. He will also turn our failures and sin into opportunities to form us into the people He created us to be. And even when we face injustice, persecution, and unbearable tragedy, God will transform our pain into a passion for Him—if we let Him.

Some of the primary tools God uses to help us identify our divine-designed destinies are our experiences. God is able to thread together the good, the bad, and the bitter experiences that life has taken us through to shape a beautiful masterpiece of destiny and to accomplish His purpose in our lives.

### **SERMON POINTS:**

#### **1. GOD USES ALL OF OUR EXPERIENCES TO BRING HIM GLORY**

- God sovereignly works through all of our

experiences to glorify Himself and achieve what is best for His children. (Romans 8:28-30)

- Through good, bad, and bitter experiences God prepares us for our destiny.

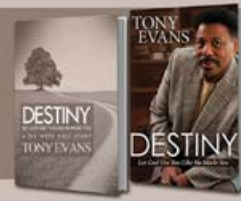
#### **2. GOD USES YOUR GOOD EXPERIENCES TO FULFILL HIS PLAN**

- Good experiences are the positive things that have happened as a result of God's will and your good choices.
  - God will use your good experiences, education, connections, family, etc., to craft you specially to fulfill our God-ordained destiny.
  - God took Saul's training as a Pharisee, sanctified it, and used it to prepare the converted "Paul" to craft the theological foundation of the church in the New Testament letters he wrote. (Acts 22:3)
  - God used Peter's trade as a fisherman to turn him into a fisher of men and a leader in the early church. (Matthew 4:18-20)
  - God used Moses's training in the royal Egyptian household to give him access to redeem God's people. (Exodus 3:10)
  - God used Esther's beauty to make her the queen so she could save His people. (Esther 4:14)

#### **3. GOD USES YOUR BAD EXPERIENCES TO ACHIEVE HIS WILL**

- Bad experiences are the mistakes, sins, failures, consequences, and regrets that have occurred because of your own choices.
  - God can take your bad experiences and turn them into tools to bring Him glory.
  - Peter denied Jesus three times but God used that failure to humble Peter and prepare him for ministry and to strengthen other Christians. (Luke 22:31-34)
  - You must learn from your failures and the consequences of bad choices and be humbled so God can use them for His good.





#### 4. GOD USES YOUR BITTER EXPERIENCES TO ACCOMPLISH HIS DESIRES

- Bitter experiences are the things that have happened to you, but that are not your fault, such as abandonment, abuse, neglect, injustice, and disease.
  - Joseph was born into a dysfunctional family, sold by his brothers, wrongly accused by Potiphar's wife, sent to jail unjustly, and forgotten. In His timing, God elevated Joseph to a position of influence. Joseph didn't let bitterness take over. He saw God's hand working through evil people and injustice to put Joseph in a position to save his family and his people (Genesis 50:20).
  - God was always with Joseph, enabling him to withstand the trials. As Joseph recognized God's sovereignty, he trusted Him and didn't allow bitterness to take root in his heart. (Genesis 39:20-23).

#### SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

**1. GOD USES OUR BAD EXPERIENCES:** How did God bring Peter back after he denied Jesus? When Peter was out fishing on the Sea of Galilee, he saw Jesus on the shore cooking fish over a charcoal fire. The Greek word for charcoal is only used two times in the New Testament—once when Peter was warming his hands over a charcoal fire when he denied Jesus, and the other time when Jesus cooked Peter's breakfast over the charcoal fire. God took Peter back to the place of his failure—to the charcoal fire where he denied his Lord—humbled him, and then told him to feed His sheep. Finally, Peter was ready to help others.

#### QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO DR. TONY EVANS:

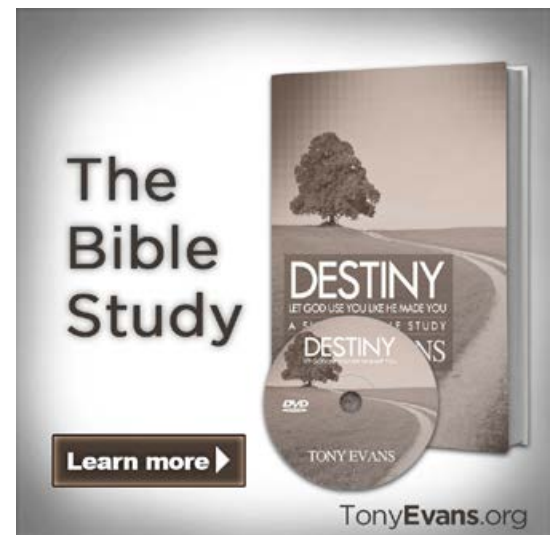
"Some of the primary things that God uses to help us identify His divine, designed destiny are our experiences."

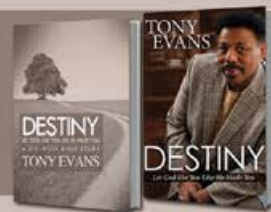
"God has the ability to take our mess and construct our miracles."

"One of the reasons many have not reached their destiny that they have not learned from their failures."

"God has a way of taking our bad and making us better."

"If you have failed, don't make it a waste. Make it something God can use to take you to a destiny that benefits others."





## MESSAGE FOUR

### **SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** Isaiah 46:8-11 (NASB)

<sup>8</sup> "Remember this, and be assured; Recall it to mind, you transgressors. <sup>9</sup> "Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; For I am God, and there is no one like Me, <sup>10</sup> Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'; <sup>11</sup> Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.

### **MESSAGE GOAL:**

This sermon will help people understand how God orchestrates intersections to change their hearts and help them to faithfully live out their destinies.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The Israelites languished in captivity. The fierce Babylonians had invaded Judah, sacked Jerusalem, and taken most of the inhabitants back to their own country. But as most of the Israelites fled their homes, with little hope of returning, the king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, commanded his officials to find the best and brightest Israelite men to come serve in his royal court. These men, who worshiped Yahweh, would be forced to study the philosophy and religion of the Babylonians to worship their false gods.

But one of the bright young men taken to serve Nebuchadnezzar was Daniel. Daniel refused to eat the king's food and worship the king's idols and God blessed him (Daniel 1:8-9). Daniel gained the respect of the king and his officials for his wisdom, discernment, and resolute character (Daniel 1:18-20). And then one day, God orchestrated an intersection that would catapult Daniel to second in command over the whole kingdom.

In the second year of his reign, God gave King Nebuchadnezzar a nightmare that kept him awake at night. After the magicians and sorcerers couldn't interpret his dream, the king became so enraged that he planned to kill all the wise men in Babylon (Daniel 2:1-12). But Daniel stood up, trusted God, and volunteered to interpret the king's dream (Daniel

2:14-18). Daniel recognized the opportunity that God had given him to intersect the king's life and save thousands of lives. So Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream, gave God the glory, saved all the wise men, and was made prime minister in Babylon (Daniel 2:46-49)—all because of the intersections God had set out in Daniel's life.

God ordained intersections so that Daniel's life would come into contact with King Nebuchadnezzar. God kept intersecting the king's life with His truth and sovereignty until finally Nebuchadnezzar repented and humbled himself before the Lord (Daniel 4:34-37). Daniel played a major role in the God-ordained intersections that led to the conversion of the pagan king who ruled over them. As Daniel simply walked in obedience to the Lord, He directed Daniel's path and used him to direct the course of an entire empire. Daniel fulfilled his destiny as his life followed the twists and turns of God's will. And so can we, if we keep our eyes open, looking for God-ordained intersections.

### **SERMON POINTS:**

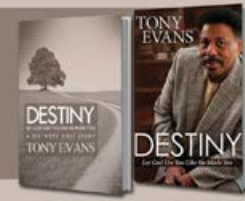
#### **1. GOD ORDAINS INTERSECTIONS TO LEAD YOU TO YOUR DESTINY.**

- Intersections are the points of connection that God orchestrates to lead you to your destiny.
- Intersections often come as you're doing the ordinary, routine tasks of everyday life.

#### **2. THROUGH INTERSECTIONS, GOD CAN CHANGE YOUR HEART.**

- Through the normal intersections of life, God changes our hearts and gives us a burning passion to walk in a certain direction.
- Saul's trip to recover his father's donkeys led him to Samuel who anointed Saul as the first king of Israel. (1 Samuel 9)
  - Saul wanted to turn back when he couldn't find the donkeys
  - Saul's servant suggested they find Samuel, the "man of God," to help them find the donkeys
  - Meanwhile, God spoke to Samuel and told him to look for Saul, the man from the tribe of Benjamin was on a journey to find his father's





- donkeys.
- God told Samuel to anoint Saul as Israel's first king.

"The way God leads us to our destiny is by crafting intersections."  
"Keep your eyes open for the intersections. They're all around you."

### 3. WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER INTERSECTIONS, GOD DESIRES YOUR FAITHFULNESS.

- Moses faithfully herded sheep for 40 years until he noticed a burning bush that didn't burn up.
- When Moses got close, he heard God's voice calling him to redeem the Israelites from Egyptian slavery. (Exodus 3:1-10)
- When God intersected Moses's life, Moses discovered his destiny to save God's people.
- God knows where He's taking us and He walks with us every step of the way. All He asks is for our faithfulness. (Isaiah 46:8-11)

"God is a God of the ordinary, not merely the extraordinary."

"Most of God's intersections will come through your ordinary donkey-chasing."

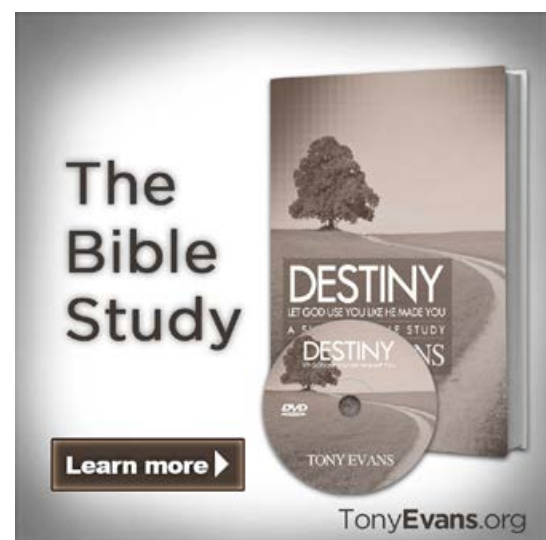
"If you would just be faithful chasing donkeys...God knows how to hook you up and connect you, at the right place, at the right time, with the right person."

#### SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

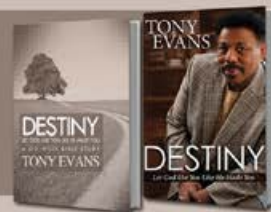
**GOD-ORDAINED INTERSECTIONS:** As we travel to and from work each day, we drive through many intersections. When we get to an intersection and the light turns green, we have the option to go straight, turn right, or turn left. How do we decide which direction to go? It all depends on our ultimate destination. Very rarely do we hop in the car and head out if we don't know where we're going. But often Christians set out on their daily journeys without knowing where they're going—without knowing their destiny. But as we faithfully complete the daily assignments God has given us, and as we keep our hearts and minds focused on Him, He will lead us to and through the intersections that will take us to our destiny.

**Be Faithful Chasing Donkeys:** Before he became king, Saul's father sent him on a mission to find his missing donkeys. So Saul and his servant set out. When they couldn't find the donkeys, Saul wanted to turn around and go home. But his servant wanted to seek the guidance of the man of God, the prophet of God, who was nearby. So why would the servant want to involve a prophet of God in donkey chasing? Saul's servant understood that God is the God of the ordinary. During this time, God told the man of God, Samuel, that Saul, the future king of Israel, would be coming his way. God orchestrated this intersection while Saul was just chasing his father's donkeys. Many of us stumble across most of God's intersections while we're chasing donkeys, while we're faithfully going about the ordinary tasks of everyday life.

#### QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO DR. TONY EVANS:







## MESSAGE FIVE

### SUGGESTED PASSAGE: Romans 12:1-2 (NASB)

<sup>1</sup> Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

### MESSAGE GOAL:

This sermon will help people understand how worship aligns us with God so we can discover our destiny.

### INTRODUCTION:

There was a businessman who had a demanding day ahead of him and was already late for work. He turned on the car, put it in reverse, and punched the button on the garage door opener. Nothing happened. He hit it again and again, a little harder each time. Still nothing. I've got to get out of this garage and make it to work in time for my big meeting, he thought. Frustrated, he put the car in park, pulled out his cell phone and called the garage door repairman.

When the repairman answered the phone, the businessman explained the situation and begged for help. "I can't get to my destination because I'm stuck in my garage."

The garage door repairman told the businessman to walk over to the garage door and find what looked like canisters at the bottom left and bottom right of the door. So the business man found the canisters. The repairman asked, "Are the red lights at the center of the canisters pointed exactly at each other?" The business man noticed that the red lights in one of the canisters were not in alignment. The repairman said, "That's your problem. When the red lights are not in perfect alignment, the door can't receive the signal to open." After the business man shifted the canister a little bit, the red lights matched up, the door opened, and he was off to tackle his busy day.

One of the reasons that people have trouble finding their destiny is because they are out of alignment with God—the only one who can give them their destiny. If Christians live misaligned lives, we won't get His signal. Let's examine how worship can get us into alignment with God and get God's message about our destiny.

### SERMON POINTS:

#### 1. YOU RECEIVE YOUR DESTINY THROUGH WORSHIPING GOD

- You will receive your personal destiny as you connect with God through worship. Destiny always starts with the place of God in our lives. If we want to find our destinies, God must occupy the central place in our hearts, minds, motivations, and actions. (Deuteronomy 6:5)
  - The Lord spoke to the apostles and set Paul and Barnabas apart for His purpose while the apostles were worshiping the Lord. (Acts 13:2-3)
  - God often gives Christians guidance as they practice spiritual disciplines, including worship, fasting, and prayer 9:3 9:3-6; 22:6-10
- Worship is positioning yourself in alignment with God so you can hear from Him
  - When you worship God, you acknowledge who He is, what He has done, and what you trust Him to do in the future.
  - When you abide in God's presence each day, He speaks.
  - The Lord wants to give you guidance, but you must remain in a position to hear Him.

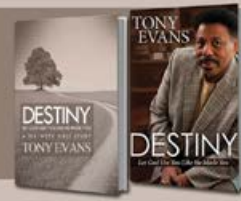
#### 2. YOU WILL HEAR GOD'S DIRECTION WHEN YOU WORSHIP

- When your inner ear is in tune with God, you can hear the voice of the Holy Spirit guiding you.
- To get back into alignment with God, we must begin living in submission to God, which is our daily act of worship. Then we will be able to understand God's perfect will and see His will being worked out in our lives. (Romans 12:1-2)

#### 3. THE HOLY SPIRIT PLAYS A CENTRAL ROLE IN YOUR WORSHIP AND DESTINY

- King David fulfilled his God-given purpose and impacted others.
- The Holy Spirit helps you understand God's Word and its application for your life so you can see God moving in your life. (John 14:26)
- As the Holy Spirit works in your lives, you will





begin to worship God and position yourself in close proximity to Him.

- As you worship God, the Spirit will help you to trust God's sovereign control over your life.
- The Holy Spirit will direct you in the way you should go by using your gifts, talents, passions, and experiences.

### SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

#### HEARING GOD'S DIRECTION THROUGH WORSHIP:

Everyone who has a TV probably has a satellite dish of some sort. When the dish picks up the frequency, you get a picture and you can see your favorite TV show clearly. But when the signal is interrupted, though the signal has been sent, your dish doesn't pick it up. And you can't see anything on your TV. Likewise, God wants to give you the next steps toward your destiny. But He wants to know that you're in a place to receive His message. That means you must remove yourself from the static of this world order, from people who deny the spiritual framework of biblical truth – from materialism, distraction, and busyness.

### QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO DR. TONY EVANS:

"When we abide in His presence, He speaks."

"God wants to show you the next steps toward your destiny, but He wants to know that you're in a place to hear Him speak."

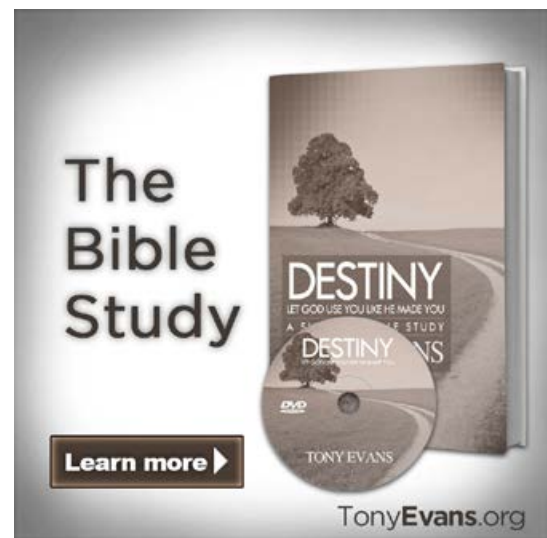
"You must remove yourself from the static of this world order."

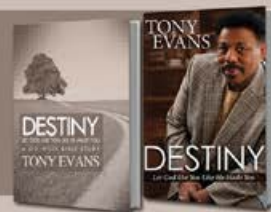
"You can't have clarity from heaven if you're listening to voices on earth."

"Many people don't understand or are confused about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. His job is not only to teach the Word, it's to lead us in its application in our lives."

"Don't just go to church. Go to worship."

"Stay close to Him. Keep ministering to Him. He knows exactly where He's taking you."





## MESSAGE SIX

### **SUGGESTED PASSAGE:** Jeremiah 29:11-14 (NASB)

<sup>11</sup> "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. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. <sup>14</sup> I will be found by you," declares the Lord, "and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you," declares the Lord, "and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile."

### **MESSAGE GOAL:**

This sermon will help people understand how worship aligns us with God so we can discover our destiny.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

After seventy long years in exile, the Israelites had nearly lost hope. As they lived under pagan kings in a foreign land, they wondered if they would ever get back home. And even if they did make it back to Israel, surely it wouldn't be the same. The houses they had left would probably be in shambles and the crops they had spent so much time planting and energy harvesting would likely have been overtaken by weeds and ravished by hungry beasts. How could they keep hoping that their lives would get better when for seventy years, they had only gotten worse.

But then the prophet Jeremiah reminded the Israelites that their time in exile was almost up (Jeremiah 29:10). But first, God had to discipline His people for worshiping idols and for neglecting the Sabbath year for 490 years (2 Chronicles 36:20-21). They bowed down to other so-called gods and refused to give the land rest each seventh year, as the Lord had commanded them (Exodus 23:10-11). So God sent the Israelites to an idol-worshiping nation and gave the land of Israel the seventy years of rest it had missed during the 490 year that the Israelites had disobeyed God's command.

But the time had finally come for them to return. So God sent Jeremiah to remind the people that God didn't hold a grudge. Though they had disobeyed Him, they had received His punishment and now God planned to restore them—to give

them hope for the future. God wanted His people to draw near to Him in humility, call on Him, and receive His guidance daily (Jeremiah 29:11-14).

The banished Israelites had forgotten their God was a God of hope, restoration, and grace. With Him on their side, their future could only get better. And Christians today have that same hope. As we worship God and listen for His guidance, He will lead us to our destiny. And even when difficult days come, we can always live with hope because the Lord walks with us each day.

### **SERMON POINTS:**

#### **1. BEGIN TO LIVE WITH HOPE AS GOD REVEALS YOUR DESTINY.**

- Hope is a joyful expectation that tomorrow will be better than today.
- Even when circumstances seem dark and confusing, God has a destiny for you.
- God will use both affluence and struggles to direct your path.

#### **2. IN DIFFICULT TIMES, HOPE IN GOD AND HIS DESTINY FOR YOUR LIVE.**

- God gave a future and hope to Israel in the midst of their bondage in Babylon, their bad economy, and despite their bad choices. (Jeremiah 29:11)
- God told His people that they would find Him, and their destiny, if they searched for Him with all their hearts. (Jeremiah 29:12-13)
- You don't have to find your destiny—you just have to keep your eyes fixed on the Lord and He will guide you to your destiny.

#### **3. LIVE WITH HOPE AS YOU FULFILL YOUR DESTINY.**

- Begin to live out your destiny today.
  - God often uses your mistakes, sins, and heartaches to take you to your destiny.
  - If you're still alive, you have a future and hope. God restores what our mistakes have broken and He often makes people more useful at the end of their lives than at the beginning. (Jeremiah 29:14) God will use both





affluence and struggles to direct your path.

- Trust God as you fulfill your destiny
  - Even though Samson let his passions get the best of him and disobeyed God, he is in the Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11 because he trusted in God.
  - As Samson trusted God at the end of his life, he fulfilled his destiny. (Judges 16:28-30; Hebrews 11:32)

### SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

**DESTINY LOOKS FORWARD:** When we're driving in our cars, we don't spend a lot of time looking in the rearview mirror – a small piece of glass that gives a limited view backward. Instead, we spend most of our time looking forward, through our windshield, which is a much bigger piece of glass that shows us where we're going. Likewise, Christians must keep their eyes focused on God as He leads them to their destiny. Remember: where we're going is much better than where we've been. That truth gives us hope!

**Focus on God And Fulfill Your Destiny:** When a baby is breach, her head is up. The doctor has to go in and turn the baby around and point the little head down. But when her head is in the right place, it's time for a delivery. When Christians live with their minds and thoughts focused in the wrong direction, they can't find their destiny. And without a purpose in life, it's easy to lose hope. But when we allow the Great Physician to turn us around, even though the process may feel painful, we become ready to walk with purpose. When we fix our minds, thoughts, and worship on God, He will deliver us to our destiny.

### QUOTES ATTRIBUTED TO DR. TONY EVANS:

"Even in the dark places, God has a plan for you."

"The good news is you don't have to find your destiny. You just have to find God and He will give you your destiny."

"You have value before God so you have a destiny."

"God is a junkyard specialist. He can take things that have been thrown away and turn them into masterpieces, demonstrating their awesome value."

