



reflecting Jesus

BETA

God created me to reflect his glory
to the ends of the earth **04**

?

did you know...

the purpose of life is not about us!

We often think that life is about us—about our plans and dreams. Sorry to break it to you, but it's not. You see, the world was not designed to revolve around us, but around Jesus. So the purpose of our lives is all about Him.

our lives have an incredible purpose...

Amazingly, Jesus designed our lives to to reflect his own character—which is His own glory. This is the purpose of life for all human beings. And yours too. So whenever you meet people, God designed you to reveal Him.

reflecting Jesus is designed to bring us ever increasing joy

From what you see on TV, magazines, or on the internet, most people think that earning lots of money or becoming famous will make them happy. What God longs for us all to know is that happiness and joy is only found when we grow in reflecting His character.

God designed us to increasingly reflect His character for eternity!

Because joy is the consequence of reflecting God's character, it has always been God's purpose for us—and everything he makes—to reflect His character. For the rest of eternity, we will be learning to reflect His character. So our joy, and His, will continually increase.





the facts of his story

1. When God created our earth, who were you designed to look like? (Genesis 1:26-27)

2. Even after sin came into the world, what was God's plan for you? (Romans 8:29a)

3. What was it like for Paul to pursue God's plan for the people in Galatia? (Galatians 4:19)

4. What happens when you allow God to work freely in your life? (2 Corinthians 3:18)

5. What is the result of living a life that reflects the character of Jesus? (1 Peter 1:8-9 and Romans 14:17)



thinking it through

1. Which text that you have just read means the most to you, and why?

2. Is reflecting the character of God something you would really want to do? Why or why not? Is there anything preventing you from making the reflection of the character of Jesus the most important goal of your life?

how much is there to know about the character of God?

We often say that God is infinite. This means that there is no limit to God's greatness. We will therefore never get to the point where we can say, "I know everything there is to know about God". Let's try and begin to grasp the greatness of God by looking at the universe He has created.

Did you know that the sun is so large that one million earths could fit inside it? But there is a star called VV Cephei that is 1600 million kilometres in diameter. This means that it is 1220 times the size of the sun!

Now imagine that the thickness of this page is the distance from earth to the sun – about 150

million kilometres. Using this scale, the distance to the nearest star which is 4½ light years away would be a 21 metre high stack of paper. Again, using the same scale, the diameter of our own galaxy being 100,000 light years would require a stack of paper about 310 metres high.

And to the edge of the universe? Our stack of paper, each sheet's thickness being the distance from the earth to the sun, would need to be about 50 million kilometres high.

And what is contained within these spaces? Gerald Colvin brought a few interesting facts together to try and explain. The Milky Way is our home galaxy. A nearby galaxy, the Magellanic Clouds, is at just 170,000 light years away and has 15 billion stars. Around 2.2 million light years

away from us is the Andromeda galaxy, twice our size, with 250 billion stars. Further away still is galaxy M87 with 750-1000 billion stars. We have mentioned just four galaxies, but Colvin says that if Adam had begun counting galaxies at 100 a minute and was still alive today, he wouldn't be finished counting. (Adventist Review, January 11, 2007)

That's a big universe! And that's just the things we know today. Now here's the point to think about: if God created such a huge universe, and the universe is a reflection of His greatness, then we can begin to see that it is possible to learn new things about God's character forever. Therefore, we will continually be growing into the character of God forever!



habits for reflecting Jesus ~ journaling

Keeping a spiritual journal is a practical way to help you grow as a Christian. Indeed, many of the greatest Christians through history have kept a regular record of their spiritual journey throughout their whole lives.

what is a spiritual journal?

A spiritual journal is like a diary in which you write about your life with God. To begin journaling, all you need is a book with blank pages, and a pen.

It's often called a spiritual journal because we are writing about our spiritual life with God. However, this may not be a good way to describe it, because ALL of life is about God! We can't separate our life with God, with everything else we are doing. So when we journal, we are writing about life, and how God is in it with us.

You can use your journal to write down:

1. Important discoveries from your personal Bible study, prayer, time at church, or other Christian meetings
2. Prayer requests for others and God's answers
3. Questions and problems for God
4. Private thoughts and feelings about your journey with God
5. Helpful quotations or Bible verses that you

want to remember

6. Things you learn about yourself, God and life
7. Successes and thanks to God
8. Anything else that relates to your spiritual growth—its completely up to you
9. Explore a particular subject related to your personal journey. For example, how does God communicate to me?

Sometimes you may not be too sure what to write. When this happens, you can pray and ask for the Holy Spirit to bring to mind anything that is important for you to remember and record in your journal.

It is really important that writing in your journal should be something that you enjoy and is helpful. If it feels too difficult, you will probably soon want to give up. Also, for some people, writing ideas down on paper may not come naturally or easily. You may prefer to think more than write. Even though this might be true for you now, try and persevere for a while. If you can learn to enjoy journaling, it will be an invaluable help to you the rest of your life.

the benefits of journaling

1. Encouragement as you are reminded later of what God has taught you
2. Confidence in God as you see how he has

- led you over time
3. A growing resource of discoveries, texts, and quotations, that will not be forgotten
 4. A safe place to explore your feelings and thoughts that are too private to share with others

when and where?

Some people write in their journals at the end

of the day. Others write in it the moment a new thought hits them. Others do it regularly at their Bible reading and prayer time. So find a time that fits you.

Journaling is normally something very private—only you may ever see what is written inside. So find a quiet place where you can be in peace; quiet enough to hear the Holy Spirit as you read, think, pray, and write.



putting the pieces together

In “the facts of his story” we saw that 1) it has always been God's plan for you to reflect his character. 2) Even though sin has affected us all, God is working to restore us in his image in us. 3) Paul worked so hard for others in this work that he says it was like giving birth, but the consequences are always that we will 4) reflect the glory of God, and 5) experience joy.

In “thinking it through”, following the priority of God for you, and the example of Paul, you were encouraged to make the reflection of Jesus your own ambition for your own life.

In “habits for reflecting Jesus” we looked at journaling, a tool to help you keep track of your spiritual journey, which is a tool that can help you for the rest of your life.



pass it on!

Could you teach this lesson? Living what we have learned is great, but passing it all on to another is even greater! Someone once said, “You know when you have learned something when you can teach it to your grandmother!” Can you?



my time with God

1. What do you think about the idea that the purpose of life is not about us but about God?
2. Where does purpose come from and why?
3. Do you experience joy in your life? What is joy, and where does it come from?
4. What do you think happens if you don't think about the purpose of life at all and just focus on enjoying yourself?
5. Do you think that God has good purposes even though you may face huge problems? (Romans 8:28)
6. Do you have any dreams and ambitions still that you may need to give up if you are to live completely for God?
7. What do you think about spending the rest of your life and eternity to grow more and more to be like Jesus?



extra help

1. *It's Not About Me*, Max Lucado, Integrity Publishers.
2. “*Creation*”, Chapter 2, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, Ellen White, Pacific Press Publishing Association.
3. “Without a Wedding Garment”, Christ's Object Lessons, Ellen White, Review and Herald Publishing Association.