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“And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.”

–Romans 8:28, NLT

One of the greatest challenges we all face in life is discovering our God-given purpose and identity. For most, it's a lifelong journey that can be both daunting and intriguing. The search usually begins somewhere around adolescence and continues up to the day we die.

God puts so much purpose within the human heart that we can't grasp it all at once. We would be overwhelmed if we could see up front all God has planned for us.

So each of us has a divinely implanted sense of purpose—a spiritual DNA, if you will. Hence, the reason for the incessant search. This could help explain why adolescent teens often become rebellious: The quest has begun.

Is it any wonder our hearts are always searching? Is it any wonder we sense there is more? Is it any wonder we experience divine stirrings and our hearts are restless until we each discover our purpose?

So how does one begin this arduous task? For most, it begins with the development of self-awareness. Self-awareness is the ability to assess one's thoughts, feelings and emotions in order to make good choices. It is the ability to discern what is going on in the inner life.

God wants us to understand ourselves, to find out what's happening within. That's why self-awareness is a necessary trait.

Many of the lessons we learn in life come from situations in

which God sets us up to see what's in us. Deuteronomy 8:2 bears out this truth: "Remember how the Lord your God led you through the wilderness for these forty years, humbling you and testing you to prove your character, and to find out whether or not you would obey his commands." God set the Israelites up for an accurate disclosure of themselves; however, much like us, they didn't get it. Self-awareness is a great gift.

What else might be needed? Input from seasoned saints. We can never be all God intends for us to be without strong people in our lives. He often uses relationships to take us to the next level.

Insight from the Holy Spirit is also an absolute must. Continually develop a personal relationship with the heavenly dove in order to see your purpose and identity clearly.

Have you started your search for purpose and identity? Or have you given up? It's much too early to quit. Remember, God has a unique purpose for your whole life.

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