

On Adventure with God Series Vol 1.



**GETTING YOUR
STORY STRAIGHT**

On Adventure with God Series

**GETTING
YOUR STORY
STRAIGHT**

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-J. R. R. Tolkien, The Lord of the Rings

PROLOGUE

"I wonder what sort of tale we've fallen into?"

-J. R. R. Tolkien, The Lord of the Rings

It's already been quite a journey for Frodo and Sam when the little gardener wonders this. Ever since they left home they've encountered more wonders and more dangers than they could have possibly imagined. There was a battle on Weathertop. The flight to the ford. The beauty of Rivendell. The dark mines of Moria, where they lost their beloved Gandalf. Their fellowship has fallen apart; their friends are now far away on another part of the journey. Into the shadow of Mordor they've come, two little hobbits and their cooking gear on a journey to save the world. It's at this point Sam says, "I wonder what sort of tale we've fallen into?" Sam could not have asked a better question.

He assumes that there *is* a story; there is something larger going on. He also assumes that they have somehow tumbled into it, been swept up into it. *What sort of tale have I fallen into?* is a question that would help us all a great deal if we wondered it for ourselves.

It just might be the most important question we ever ask.

CHAPTER 1

HOW STORY WORKS

Simply put, Life is a story.

You can't fully understand your own story or tale until you understand the story of God. His story defines the true characteristics of restoration and a glorious ending for all. Fact is... We all want it. We all need it! But, in the culture we live in, true restoration is not only illusive but often met with roadblocks, battles, struggle, and all too often the journey never looks like we thought it would in our own stories. These deterrents to living out a story authored by God come at many different times. Each season can look drastically different in each of our individual tales. Many good folks succumb to defeat, lies, dogma, and have often found themselves disqualified by the very piers they were depending on. Too often most christian institutions are more concerned about keeping the walls clean and the culture of christianity neat to see the process of restoration through if you are a misfit like me! This is why I have personally discovered that it is of utmost importance to understand the story of God, what His purpose is for us, and then begin to live out the story that has been so perfectly authored for each of us.

Life, you'll notice, is a story.

Life doesn't come to us like a math problem where you can give calculated answers to your situation through learned methods. It comes to us the way that a real story does, scene by scene. You wake up. What will happen next? You don't get to know-you have to enter in, take the journey as it comes. The sun might be shining or it may have snowed last night. Your friends might call and invite you to go on a trip. You might lose your job.

Life unfolds like a drama. Doesn't it? Each day has a beginning and an end. There are all sorts of characters, all sorts of settings. A year goes by like a chapter from a novel. Sometimes it seems like a tragedy. Sometimes like a comedy. Most of it feels like a soap opera or a bad dream. Whatever happens, it's a story through and through.

All of this is helpful to know because when it comes to figuring out this life you're living, we'd all do well to know the rest of the story and most importantly the Story of God.

Let's say you come home one night to find that your car has been totaled. Now, all you know is that you loaned it for a couple of hours, maybe to a friend or to your teenage son, and now here it is, all smashed up. Isn't the first thing out of your mouth usually, "What *happened?*" Right before, "I'm never loaning you my car again" or, "Your grounded!" In other words, "Tell me the story."

Somebody has some explaining to do, and that can be done only in hearing the tale *they* have to tell. If you are not careful now-you might jump to the wrong conclusion. If you posture yourself legalistically you lose the opportunity to restore, if you fail to listen you may never gain from their experience. In other words... Doesn't it make a difference to know that he wasn't speeding, that in fact the other car ran a red light? It changes the way you feel about the whole thing. Thank God, he's all right.

Truth be told, you need to know how the story began and then get the rest of the story if you want to understand just about anything in life. Jokes are like that. It may be a good joke but it's never gonna work if you just walked in on the punch line. "Then he said, 'I told you he was smart' Everyone else is in stitches and your like... What's so darn funny? I think I missed something. Everything including love affairs, layoffs, the collapse of empires, your child's day at school, our struggles, our victory's or the burdens we bear-none of it makes sense without a story.

CHAPTER 2

GO FIGURE

Story Is How We Figure Things Out!

The fella's all call them fish stories! It has always been evident to me that if you bring any two people together, soon they will be sharing their life stories. Women can talk for hours creating epic novels and men can accomplish short stories over brief periods of time with as little as a grunt or a scratch. A story happens when a child gets in his or her grandpa's lap, men around a camp fire on some adventure. Strangers stuck in layover in an airport. Simply run into any of your friends and it will naturally spark the conversations of... What you want to know about each others story. "How was your weekend?" May be a good question but, "Fine" is not a good answer. It's just not satisfying. You heard something about a struggle, or some good food, a victory, or a tragic loss. And you want to know more about that story.

Look at our fixation with the news or facebook. Every morning and every evening, in every part of the globe, billions of people read a paper, tune in to the news or access social media. Why? Because we humans have this craving for meaning-as Paul Harvey put it... We want to know "the rest of the story." We need to know what's going on.

Maybe our kids experience a health issue with one of our grandchildren, or our our friends experience a tragic accident. Somehow we don't feel as lost if we know what's going on around us. We want to feel oriented to our world and the people around us. When we turn on the news, we are tuning in to a world of stories. Not just facts but stories because story is the outflow of what is going on in the heart.

It is unfortunate that the world is spending all of its time developing a false or skewed narrative about our stories on social media? How we spent the weekend, where we have been, who we were with, or what we did provides a storybook for sure but it is devoid of relationship, depth, struggle, victory, and defeat because it lacks the narrative of love where we bear one another's burdens. Culturally this has turned our churches into entertainment centers that can provide the facade of "everything is good here" while filtering out the messiness of our real story.

Story must go far deeper than just entertainment. It must venture deeper than just our activities and achievements. It must bear and share the very depths of what is going on in the heart. More complete stories nourish us. They provide a kind of food that the soul craves. Stories help us identify what is the true reality of living because of what we find in someone else's story, something that will help us understand our own. When we lovingly bear another person's story, the reality of their story illuminates the reality of our daily story. Stories shed light on our lives and intrinsically link us together not because misery loves company but because when we are in Christ we are family.

We might know that life is a journey, but through Frodo's eyes, we see what that journey will require. We might know that courage is a virtue, but having watched it in one of our hero's, we find ourselves longing to be courageous. We learn all of our most important lessons through story, and story deepens all of our most important lessons. Our stories tell us who we are, why we are here, and what we are to do. They give us our best answers to all of life's big questions, and to most of the small ones as well.

This is why, if you want to get to know someone, you need to know their story. Yes! Their life is a story too. It, too, has a past and a future. It, too, unfolds in a series of scenes over the course of time. Why is Grandfather able to save so much on so little? Why was he abusive or what led him to drink? Well, let me tell you. He was raised in an era called The Great Depression. Tens of thousands of American men went without work and then were also impacted by World War II. He has lived and seen things in his story that impacted him greatly whether for good or bad.

I has been said, In order to give your life to another, We must tell them our story.

I expect all of us, at one time or another, in an attempt to understand our lives or discover what we ought to do, have gone to someone else with our stories. Tell me your story, and I'll try to help you make some sense of it.

You seem . . . stuck. Things fall apart. What does it all mean? Should you have chosen a different path after all? Did you mis

you're calling? Were you meant to take that job? Are you going to find someone to spend your life with, and will he or she remain true? What about the kids-are they headed in the right direction? Did you miss an opportunity in their lives, were you paying attention or all about you? When crucial moments happened, did you recognize them? Did miss your cues?

We humans share these lingering questions: "Who am I really? Why am I here? Where will I find life? What does God want of me?" The answers to these questions seem to come only when we begin to walk with the Lord in the cool of the day, when we hear and learn His story.

Seeing our lives as stories is more than a powerful metaphor," "It is how experience presents itself to us having been with the Father. After all Jesus did say... "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father!" He gives us the plot and a role to play. He gives us clarity about our story and the intended outcome! It is through the lens of Jesus and His finished work on the Cross that we must begin to find and reclaim our story.

CHAPTER 3

WE HAVE LOST OUR STORY

And here's where we run into a problem.

For most of us, life feels like one of those theater date nights and you and your wife arrived about forty-five minutes late.

You feel pressed because you weren't able to get your Popcorn and the people around you always have more than they could ever consume. Now this date night narrative begins to look too much your own. You always feel like something is missing in your storyline, Something important seems to be going on . . . maybe. I mean, sometimes good things do happen to you, sometimes even beautiful things. Maybe in your story you meet someone, fall in love. You find that work that is yours alone to fulfill. But tragic things happen too. You fall out of love, or perhaps the other person falls out of love with you. Work begins to feel like a punishment. Everything starts to feel like an endless routine and Here is where we run into the problem.

If there is meaning to this life, then why do our days seem so random? What is this drama we've been dropped into the

middle of? If there is a God, what sort of story is he telling here? No wonder we keep losing heart.

We find ourselves in the middle of a story that is sometimes wonderful, sometimes awful, often a confusing mixture of both, and we haven't a clue how to make sense of it all. It's like we're holding in our hands some pages torn out of a book. These pages are the days of our lives. Fragments of a story. They seem important, or at least we long to know they are, but what does it all mean? If we only could get the inside edge on the rest of our story.

Well, here ya go!

Scripture is full of imperfect, fearful warriors and champions—men and women who didn't quite fit in. In other words, it is chock-full of stories about people who aren't so very different from us. I like to call them Misfits and they are the mode of transportation God has used throughout history to tell His story so we wouldn't be so afraid to tell ours.

We each struggle with failings or shortcomings—our own reasons for feeling like a misfit. We may have ways of thinking or patterns of behavior that make life challenging. We may be struggling with physical limitations, learning challenges, or mental illness. We may be socially awkward, painfully shy, or seemingly too outspoken. Any number of factors can make us feel and appear different. While the world confines us to the bench. Our Father has fashioned us to have the most impact on each other from the bench.

CHAPTER 4

HITTING HOME RUNS FROM THE BENCH

Your World Series Story.

One of the most common threads or tales amongst folks who live in constant struggle is the loss of hope. It can be evidenced in those who have been beaten into a corner by various life circumstances and it is even more prevalent in those who seem spiritual but are conditioned to cover up. They isolate the struggle in their life by countering their story with a false narrative giving the appearance that everything is ok on the outside. After all, we would never want to be the one who sucks the air out of the room when everyone else's false narratives are so amazing and triumphant or so it would seem. The truth of the matter is that we are all a hot mess whether your mess is messy or it's really neat mess, (desirable) in its form.

In both circumstances it is not hard to identify an evident loss of hope and a lack of understanding about what the Father is authoring in their story. Some wear the struggle openly and

others who are more spiritually adept run around bound up like a hound dog trying to pass a peach pit.

The most simplistic way to regain hope, and understand your purpose, the most profound method for getting unstuck and experiencing peace in your life is not only found in the story of God but His story by design has authored a story for each of us that yields the same glorious outcome that we see in the life of Christ. Another way to put it and begin to understand it is by recognizing our position. We are in Christ!

Let me pose this question in light of the simplistic answers. How do we understand our purpose and regain our hope when the struggles are real and ever with us?

Our part is to abide and rest in Him!

1 John 2:24 KJV

Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

How many times have heard you about the redemptive work of God even from your earliest beginnings? Would you characterize your walk as hit and miss? In other words you have taken a swing at a walk of faith but, feel like you can't hit the ball! We often feel this way because the wrong person is stepping up to the plate! It is important to understand that the home run has already been hit! Jesus knocked it out of the

park and He did it for us! He continues to do it for us even though so often in our story, when we get to the plate we have a tendency to strike out! I only need to simplistically abide in Him. When we hear "Batter Up" if we abide in Him, we step up to the plate as Him and in Him, and then we knock it out of the park every time! The Son remains in me and I am grafted in Him! Simple, just abide, just rest on the bench. Become someone who doesn't just know a home run hitter, or has heard about a home run hitter, but continue in the home run hitter! Continue on in the Son and in the Father.

1 John 2:20,24,26-29 KJV

20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things

24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

26 These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

Do not be seduced into a cultural christianity that would have you in pursuit of a special anointing or epic story. You already have both! Don't live in the fear or the belief that just because most of your story has been in the dugouts that you've never

hit a home run. We have already received anointing and it abides in us even when we are in the deepest dugout. In fact, It allows us to navigate life from bench to bench, where so often there are difficulties and tension. The things that appear to be set backs are the training grounds where we learn how to rest, anticipate with hope, walk in peace, and watch the home runs being knocked out of the park.

Whether you wear your struggles openly or cover them up, we are all in the same mess and all affected by sin. I am gradually becoming more satisfied with winning the game while being a bench warmer and the guy that couldn't hit a home run if his life depended on it!

Is God calling you to abide in the dugout or are you more worried about getting up to bat! I can always understand God's purpose and see it unfold in my life better from a place of resting and abiding in Him! You are already an Allstar, you are already going to the World Series, and the story goes...

You won!

CHAPTER 5

COMPARISON

Sharing Story is Different from Comparing Story.

Philippians 2:3 KJV

[3] Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

2 Corinthians 13:5 KJV

[5] Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

David wrote: "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well" (Psalm 139:13-14).

Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." (ESV)

Through the years I've learned one valuable truth: A measuring stick will get you stuck. Comparison is the devil's tool that's kept many of us from stepping into our God-given destinies. Furthermore the enemy uses comparison to diminish the work that he is doing in others because it looks different from our own venue.

For about a year, I hung out on the story of Moses by the burning bush. I listened to Moses argue with God about his insecurities and pondered God's responses to all his questions and quandaries.

When looked at the story of Moses in Exodus 3 He hadn't gotten very far in his story, he was an insecure, and a stuttering recluse. I came to realize that we were kindred spirits. He complained he was not good enough and begged God to pick someone else to address the Pharaoh and lead the Hebrews out of Egypt. Specifically, he whined he was not a good speaker, even though centuries later in the New Testament, Stephen recorded Moses was "powerful in speech and action" (Acts 7:22b, NIV).

So how do you think Moses came up with the idea he was not a good speaker? Here's what I think. I think it happened because Moses compared himself and His story to other people he thought we're good speakers instead of realizing that God uses bad speakers to manifest his glory.

Comparison opens the door for sabotage and lies that steal our personal confidence, stymies everyone's courage, and it diminishes the work that he's doing in others when it looks differently than the one he does in us.

Comparison puts up roadblocks along my path and the paths of others towards fulfilling our God-given calling by setting an undefined standard of approval and acceptance.

Aren't you glad God uses folks like Moses?

CHAPTER 6

LOST BY MISTAKEN IDENTITY

Getting with the Right Coordinates for the Narrative of Your Story.

Wrong information can get you lost very quickly in life. Especially if you aren't sure of who you are or you don't understand the purpose you have been given.

I know my own road to failure and every stop I made along the way. I know it so well I can drive it in the dark, backwards, with my eyes closed. Some folks provide perpetual reminders of the roads I've traveled and where I have made wrong turns. It's like they have hacked the location services of my phone or GPS and think they know where I'm going next.

Those geocaching and maps in the wrong hands have added turbulence to my travels, my story, and life and the waypoints all come in the form of shame, guilt, doubt, fear, embarrassment, insecurity, humiliation, resentment, regret, and you get the picture.

Now, I like being mistaken for certain things for instance, being too young to have grandchildren or, I like being mistaken for being a mountain of a man because I am in many ways and in others I'm really not but, what I absolutely despise is the inability of many folks in Christianity to see each other through the lens of Jesus. There seems to always be a bad detour or a dead end offered by those who don't want to really understand or discover the journey that the Lord has us on.

For instance, being mistaken as someone not worthy of being used in God's kingdom is not only unbiblical but it's a contradiction to the command to bear one another's burdens in love. You can also contrast that perspective with those who will flatter you with empty characterizations of who they think you are but nevertheless they are the type of descriptions that feed my ego and pride or validate my status among the spiritually elite. My flesh gravitates to the glory in self generated accolades because it makes me feel better about myself. This is why when I dialogue with others that I tell them that I thank the Lord for them and leave it at that.

Now, both instances whether negative or positive have the equal power to superficially shape what I believe about myself and my identity? Even the most positive characterizations I'm given, or award myself, have the power to define or disillusion my identity. The truth is, I can be a victim of not understanding who I really am in either direction, and have often lived in a state of mistaken identity during certain times throughout my life. Many of us have painful proof of this and it causes us to become professional in the business of marketing ourselves.

When I am mistaken for my age, it makes me think that I've unlocked the secret to longevity or that I am the picture of health when I know I am not! I always have the potential to become an idolatrous commodity that I work hard to sell in order to keep the compliments flowing and my stock rising.

In contrast, when I am referred to as a liar, adulterer, or a failure, it reminds me of my sin and incites deep emotions that range from guilt and depression, to rage and vengeance. It also spurs me on to contradict the negative names attributed to me.

If I am not careful, instinctively I become my personal PR man. In fact, it is painful proof of a sinister system of checks and balances.

I'm so glad God agreed with me!

In His economy, I am bankrupt. I am every label that has been attached to me: idolater, liar, adulterer, coveter, thief. The collateral I have collected is worthless against my debt. I have boldly labored as the sole proprietor in my own corrupt marketing business. I write checks as if I have endless resources. But in reality, even when I think I'm in the black I am completely in the red—broke and working a dead-end job selling a worthless product. Furthermore, because of my bankruptcy, God sent Jesus as my substitute, not only to pay my debt in full but to make a deposit of righteousness that will never run out.

All the titles we spend a lifetime trying to make or break, Jesus says “charge them all to me.” He announces his one job in Luke 4: to set the captives free. Free from our foolish attempts to fool ourselves and others. Free from the bondage of business gone bad. Free from the mishaps of mistaken identity. Free from the rise and fall of our stock. Free from the terrible titles we achieve in public or private. Free. He provides permanent labels of identity for us like; forgiven, righteous, accepted, beautiful, and beloved forever—no matter what. For me, being given His identity also gives me mine and declares exactly just who I think I am but how I roll!

CHAPTER 7

IN HIS GRIP!

You are a participant in the story of God.

The one thing that I finally get and am most appreciative for as I adventure with God is that God's love for us, approval of us, and commitment to us does not ride on our resolve or performance but on Jesus' resolve for us. The gospel is the good news announcing Jesus' unfailing devotion to us despite our erratic and unstable devotion to Him. The gospel is not a command to hang on to Jesus; it's a promise that no matter how weak and unsuccessful our faith and efforts may be, God is always holding on to us. We are in His grip! So much so, that the righteousness that comes through His faithfulness is finally allowed to free me from passing the kind of perpetual judgment on myself that leaves me chained to my sin and living a false narrative.

Our chains are broken, we've been set free! This is the proper lens to see the narrative of your story through. You are a participant in the story of God.

CHAPTER 8

YOU HAVE TO BE A BOY TO BECOME A MAN

You're the apple of our father's eye.

We begin our journey into sonship by looking backward, to what our lives as boys were like, and, more important, what they were meant to be. For so much of the way we now approach life as men was set in motion in our youth—some of it for good, and some not so good. We want to recover what was good, and find healing for all that was not.

Boyhood is a time of exploration and wonder, and to be a boy is to be an explorer, from the time when the little guy figures out how to crawl up the stairs (he is gone in a flash), to the time he discovers that if he jumps over the back fence he can get down to Johnny's house, where they have a secret fort. When God set Adam in the Garden of Eden, he set his son in a world that was, at the very same moment, safe and secure yet full of mystery and adventure. There was no reason whatsoever to be afraid, and every reason to dare. As Mark Twain said, "There comes a time in every rightly constructed

boy's life when he has a raging desire to go somewhere and dig for hidden treasure." (How many of you, when you were a boy, thought there was treasure buried somewhere in grandpa's backyard, or stowed away in your grandparents' attic?) Evil is—for now—held at bay. Such is the world God intended for the boy. And that world is created under the sheltering strength of a father who makes you feel safe. For this is the time in life when we were meant to come into the knowledge that we are the Beloved Son, the apple of our father's eye.

CHAPTER 9

YOUR STORY AIN'T BROKE AFTER ALL!

I am a misfit and I belong to other misfits!

When I wrote this; a storm was brewing! I looked outside my office window, the wind is blowing, it was dark, and raining hard but, I was at perfect peace and aware that God was doing something new, He had an intended purpose in that storm, and it would ultimately produce life in the next season. That is how story works in our lives.

Over many years now, the Lord has brought to my adventures and stories, people who are bitter, cynical, and untrusting. Sometime they are bitter about their story, other times it is towards Christianity and the church. Any talks about religious perspectives are met with kickback like you've just added the ingredients for the perfect storm. In many cases folks respond this way because of a collapse or failure in their personal tale. This was the case in my own story when approached on issues of my own spirituality and depravity. I had experienced a mindset that doesn't allow for the messy aspects of restoration in culturally sterile or religious forums. So too, there are a plethora of folks who have been met with a list of

requirements to receive any kind of mercy or grace and have been left alone to muster a worthy performance when they were stuck in a deep rut and no one wanted to get muddy.

But that was my story and I have found myself intrinsically linked to the ranks of those misfits much like myself, who have felt stuck, erased, estranged, and even abandoned.

I am so thankful that God never gives up on us. After a season of seeing my story through the lens of Jesus and going through a period of mental, emotional, and spiritual detoxification. (Repentance.) Christ provided Himself for the rehabilitation and restoration of my story that I so desperately needed. The Lord began to do new things in my life and they looked differently than before. Things are simple now; my previously misplaced dependency on self and performance has been totally re-centered on the only One who could bring restoration to my story again.

This season was primarily for me to be refashioned by the Lord in every way, To write down what He was doing in me and to journal my way through the agonizing territory of my guilt, shame, loss, and regret. I began to trace the gracious ways in which God particularly met me in my weakest moments and darkest hours over the previous few years.

Once I began to see my story through the lens of Jesus, being painfully transparent, brutally honest, and when I stopped glossing over the side of me that had been hidden, ignored, and kept at bay by the old me; That is when things began to change in my life. The Lord began to reorder and refashion my

dogmatic perspectives of the church, the kingdom, and even ministry. He began to restore my usefulness in the most unconventional ways and most importantly, my story now had value and purpose. I finally understood that God had been at work all along and that my story was in-fact epic!

What became immediately clear through this season is that this world is packed with people just like me. People who live with guilt, shame, regret, and sadness because of what they have done or failed to do; people who would do anything to go back in time and make different choices but are presently plagued by the realization that they can't; people who live in fear that they will never hope again; people who have lost everything and wonder whether they will ever experience joy and peace like they used to; people who battle suicidal thoughts because they'll never outrun or outlive the consequences of their sinful decisions and the people they have hurt; people who endure the painful, inescapable void of broken relationships; people who struggle with believing that anybody (even God) could love them because they have done so many bad, destructive, and hurtful things.

In that season, my story, and the stories of so many others the Lord has brought my way, opened my eyes to a world populated by pain. It showed me that we are in an epic battle for our faith and the hope of heaven. I now find that I can deeply relate to every person I talk to who feels desperately at the end of their rope and is therefore starving for a reason to keep going. And I am much more cognizant that the folks who seem the most put together on the outside are potentially going through the same thing I was going through.

This is where I have begun to realize that God is not through with me rather He has refashioned me with a greater purpose and a great story. Rather than seeking to be used by God in some way, much to my surprise and initial reluctance, God's purpose and usefulness has found me even though I was emphatically not looking for it. It is just what He does. He qualifies the disqualified and uses them in the most unconventional ways to impact a culture and gather His followers. It has been a whole new world for me. This sense of purpose and usability makes me hesitant to use words like ministry because we have traditionally put suits on the defining characteristics associated with its terminology. If I may, allow me to say that it looks so much different from the ministry I used to be involved in but it isn't! That's if you need a proper definition. It is supernaturally natural in every way and it is at work in the stories of people who like me have been wrecked by the enemy or have been the cause of a wreck. Remember! You are a hot mess and candidate to be used by God at any given point in time so take hope; God is not through with you. (See the story of Gideon and a bunch of cracked pots if you need examples of unconventional.)

How would I define my purpose and calling for God today? I would define it by saying... I am a misfit and I belong to other misfits; I am an outcast who belongs to the other outcasts who have at one time been stuck in their story and lost hope. I love them deeply in ways that I never did before and in ways I cannot articulate. I belong to them and we belong to each other. We are people who are placed together by the God who seeks out the lost and the guilty and the fearful and the

hurting who then bear one another's burdens and share their story all while He fashions a bride.

Here is the deal. You make think you have gone through the Hell of brokenness and shame but God has a passport for you that is stamped with new places, full of adventure, full of hope, and full of wholeness. Welcome to a new frontier fellow misfits!

Your Story ain't broke after all!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



John Fairrington is a writer, a shepherd, and a teacher. He is also the president and owner of IRR - I Ride Rogue - I Rider Rogue LLC, along with two ministries called The Redeemed Adventure Project and Adventure of Hope. These ministries are devoted to helping folks discover the story God has authored for their lives, Seeing ourselves through the lens

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