

Discover Your S.T.O.R.Y

God's S.T.O.R.Y in a person's life is the creative DNA that sets them apart. It's what made Michelangelo to sculpt, Michael Jordan to play basketball and Beethoven to write music. It is the imprint of God's creative handiwork in our lives. Ephesians 2:10 tells us that we are:

"God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

The Bible teaches us that God has a book in heaven that records all of the times, events of your life. He has taken the time to plan them out and to make sure they 'fit' into something very special.

"All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." Psalms 139:15-16

"The Lord looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men...He fashions their hearts individually; He considers all their works." Psalm 33:13,15

Because God made us unique and designed us to live for His glory, we find satisfaction **when** we use His imprint to please Him. Listen to what Paul says in his letter to the Ephesians and to the church in Philippi.

"It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for."
(Ephesians 1:11 MSG)

"God is working in you to help you want to do and be able to do what pleases Him." Philippians 2:13 (NCV)

God made you **unique**, to live for His **glory, everyday** in every **way**.

The best way to discover **how** God made you unique, **what** He designed you to do, and **where** He desires you to 'fit' into His body comes through uncovering seasons in your life when **success** has collided with **satisfaction!** We are going to take a look at those moments when your favorite conversations, activities, and successes all came together. It's a way of looking at God's good creation and finding the S.T.O.R.Y that He has made you to tell.

Max Lucado, in his book, "Cure for the Common Life," provides a detailed explanation of how to help us discover our unique S.T.O.R.Y. In this next section we are going to glean from his book a series of simple exercises to help us get the ball rolling. If you are interested in a more detailed look at this subject, I encourage you to read his book!

Discovering your S.T.O.R.Y and sharing it with others is the best way to describe God's handiwork in your life. Let's begin the process of our own discovery by listing out moments in our childhood, youth and adulthood where it all seemed to come together: a sense of satisfaction and fulfillment in doing something that we really loved to do. It could have been a great 15-minute memory or a memorable event:

- *I got to help Aunt Susie cook the Thanksgiving meal*
- *I played the trumpet in a band*
- *My first boss saw my hard work and promoted me*
- *I started my own business*
- *I built a fort*
- *I re-designed my kitchen*
- *I was a part of an incredible missions trip experience to Timbuktu*
- *Stayed under budget, on time and increased productivity*

I think you get the point, right? Just let your mind wander for the next 5 minutes and jot a short list of these “sweet spot” moments as a child, youth and as an adult. Don’t be embarrassed or modest in making this list, it’s all a part of making a careful exploration of who God has made you to be (Galatians 6:4) – *and you won’t be handing this in!*

One-Liners of Sweet Spot Experiences I remember are:

Childhood:

Youth:

Adult:

God has given all of us experiences that are worth remembering and building on. Our next task in finding the unique S.T.O.R.Y. that God has imprinted in each of us is to expand these “one-liner” experiences by adding descriptive details to the moment.

Here is an example:

One-Liner: I built a fort.

Details: As a kid I loved riding my bike into the woods with friends, exploring the unknown and blazing trails to a hidden fort. We would borrow our Dad's saws, clippers and other tools and set off an adventure. I liked organizing the team, handing out assignments and getting to work. It was such a great feeling at the end of the day to watch trails appear from the thick woods, use what we could find to construct a clear path and work hard to build a fort hidden deep in the trails of the forest.

What felt most satisfying to you? Blazing a trail with a team and building something we could be proud of.

Now its your turn! Take a few minutes and chart out the details of three quick "one-liner" stories.

Story #1

One-Liner:

Details:

What felt most satisfying to you?

Story #2

One-Liner:

Details:

What felt most satisfying to you?

Story #3

One-Liner:

Details:

What felt most satisfying to you?

4. What about **R**elationships? Do you enjoy solo, teams, leading, following?

Make a short list from the stories above that capture your preferred relationship dynamic.

5. Where is that **Y**ES! When it all comes together in perfect satisfaction.

Describe these moments from the stories above.

Putting Your S.T.O.R.Y together

The themes in my S.T.O.R.Y show that God has put me together so that I love to
(insert your Strengths)

I particularly like to do that with *(insert your Topics)*

I work best in optimal conditions that include *(insert your Optimal conditions)*

And I am best when I'm in the role of *(insert your Relationships)*.

All these themes of my S.T.O.R.Y work together so that I can *(insert your Yes!)*

It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don't use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and destroy your freedom. Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows." Galatians 5:13