

GenZ – Generation of Purpose

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Sermon Synopsis

This episode of *World Impact* focuses on the theme of purpose, explored through the biblical story of Joseph, also known by his Egyptian name, Zaphenath-Paneah. Speaking directly to the questions of identity and calling faced by Generation Z, Dr. Billy Wilson begins the message with reflections from Oral Roberts University students, who share the challenges young people encounter when trying to discover their God-given direction in the midst of cultural confusion. Against this backdrop, the episode follows Joseph’s journey from his early days as Jacob’s favored son to his rise as Egypt’s second-in-command, showing how identity, endurance, and faith in God shape the fulfillment of divine purpose.

Drawing from Genesis 41:45–46, the teaching highlights the significance of Joseph’s new Egyptian name, meaning “Giver of Nourishment” or “Revealer of Secrets.” Dr. Wilson explains that Joseph’s true identity was not defined by Pharaoh’s title or by circumstances but by his belonging to God, symbolized earlier in life by the coat of many colors. In the same way, believers today are reminded that their identity is found in Christ, “clothed” in His righteousness (Galatians 3:27). This foundation makes it possible to discern both the general call to glorify God and love others, and the specific assignments God places on each person’s life.

The sermon outlines five steps for living out one’s God-ordained purpose, each illustrated through Joseph’s experience. First, embrace true identity as a son or daughter of God. Second, embrace and declare the dreams God plants in the heart. Third, endure the process of testing, as Joseph did through betrayal, slavery, and imprisonment. Fourth, resist temptation and maintain integrity, exemplified in Joseph’s refusal of Potiphar’s wife (Genesis 39). Fifth, extend forgiveness, as Joseph did when he reconciled with his brothers, demonstrating that releasing bitterness opens the way for growth and freedom.

In conclusion, Dr. Wilson encourages believers to “engage their finish,” reflecting on how they want their lives to be remembered. Joseph’s request for his bones to be carried back to Canaan (Genesis 50:25; Hebrews 11:22) is presented as a symbol of faith that looked beyond hardship toward God’s ultimate plan. The message underscores that God promises success and fulfillment to those who remain faithful to Him, no matter their stage of life. Through Joseph’s story, the episode offers a practical and biblical framework for understanding and pursuing purpose in today’s world.

Sermon Highlights

- **Establish Your Identity in God:** The foundation of fulfilling your purpose begins by embracing your true identity as a beloved son or daughter of the Living God, clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:27).
- **Embrace and Speak Your God-Given Dreams:** God places unique dreams in your heart related to your specific purpose. Speaking these dreams activates spiritual energy toward their fulfillment, even amid opposition.
- **Endure the Process with Faith:** Purpose often requires enduring painful and lengthy trials, just as Joseph experienced 13 difficult years before his dreams were fulfilled. Trusting God's hand through the process sustains you (Galatians 6:9).
- **Escape Temptation to Maintain Integrity:** Like Joseph fleeing Potiphar’s wife (Genesis 39), believers must avoid temptation, preserving their Godly integrity and favor, for Satan seeks to thwart your divine purpose.
- **Forgive to Emancipate Your Enemies and Yourself:** Forgiveness is a powerful step forward in fulfilling your purpose. Like Joseph released his brothers, forgiveness frees you to advance God’s plan in your life.
- **Engage Your Finish with Eternal Perspective:** Reflect on how you want to be remembered and live each day with the end in mind, just as Joseph prepared for Israel’s future and prophesied God’s deliverance (Hebrews 11:22).

Scripture Verses

Genesis 41:45-46

Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphara, priest of On, to be his wife. And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt. Joseph was 30 years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and traveled throughout Egypt.

Genesis 37:3

Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him.

Galatians 3:27

for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Genesis 39:12

She caught him by his cloak and said, 'Come to bed with me!' But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.

1 Corinthians 6:18

Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body.

2 Timothy 2:22

Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Galatians 6:9

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Genesis 50:25

And Joseph made the Israelites swear an oath and said, 'God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up from this place.'

Hebrews 11:22

By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instruction concerning the burial of his bones.

Exodus 1:8

Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt.

Quotes

- "Your purpose comes out of your identity. The purpose crisis we're really in in America and around the world is an identity crisis." - Billy Wilson
- "When God puts a dream in your heart, it is related to your specific purpose, and when you begin to speak the dream, it creates activity and energy toward fulfilling the dream." - Billy Wilson
- "If God is going to use you greatly, then the process you go through will be filled with pain. But if you understand your purpose and you know God has his hand on your life, you can endure the pain if you understand why." - Billy Wilson
- "Forgiveness is a purpose propellant. When you forgive, when you release people that have hurt you and injured you, you're moving closer to your purpose." - Billy Wilson
- "You don't have to live without purpose. Maybe you're watching this show and you're 65 years of age and you wonder, 'Could I ever reclaim my purpose?' Absolutely, you're still alive, you're still breathing." - Billy Wilson

Bible Study

Objectives

- To understand that true purpose begins with embracing our identity in God as His sons and daughters.
- To learn from Joseph's journey how dreams given by God are vital to activating our specific purpose.
- To recognize the necessity of enduring God's refining process despite trials and opposition.
- To understand the importance of fleeing temptations that derail the purpose God has for us.
- To embrace forgiveness as a key step to freedom and purpose fulfillment.
- To reflect on the eternal legacy we want to leave and how to engage with a purposeful finish.

Reading and Reflections

- Genesis 41:45-46 – Joseph given the Egyptian name Zaphenath-Paneah and his role in Egypt as a leader and provider.
- Genesis 37:3 – Joseph's identity established as the favored son with a special coat.
- Galatians 3:27 – We are clothed in righteousness through baptism into Christ.
- Genesis 39 – Joseph's temptation and refusal, demonstrating integrity and prioritizing God's purpose.
- Galatians 6:9 – Encouragement to not give up in doing good, trusting God's timing.
- Genesis 50:25 and Hebrews 11:22 – Joseph's faith to trust God's greater plan and how he wanted to be remembered.

Key Observations

- Purpose flows directly from identity; knowing who we are in God is foundational.
- Dreams and visions from God are not just fantasies, they are divine blueprints that activate purpose.
- The process of fulfilling God's purpose can be painful and demanding but is necessary for growth and preparation.
- Temptations and trials are designed by the enemy to snatch away God's calling, but God provides a way of escape.
- Forgiveness liberates us from bondage to past hurts and propels us toward destiny fulfillment.
- Engaging with our finish line reframes our perspective and motivates perseverance and impactful living.

Personal Reflections

- Do I fully embrace my identity as God's chosen child and walk confidently in His favor?
- Have I been hesitant to speak or act on the dreams God has placed within me?
- How am I responding to the difficulties and 'process seasons' God has allowed in my life?
- What temptations currently threaten to pull me away from God's purpose for me? Am I willing to 'run' from them like Joseph?
- Are there people I need to forgive to gain freedom in my purpose journey?
- How do I want to be remembered at my life's end? What legacy am I building daily?

Lessons for Daily Life

- Anchor your identity in Christ to receive confidence and favor for your purpose.
- Speak aloud the dreams God places in your heart to create spiritual momentum.
- Lean into the refining process God uses—trust that trials serve a greater purpose.
- Act decisively to avoid temptation; recognize God's provisions for escape.
- Practice forgiveness regularly to release burdens and unlock your full potential.
- Live each day with your 'finish line' in view, keeping eternal impact foremost in heart.

Practical Applications

- Begin each day with a declaration of your identity in Christ: 'I am God's beloved, clothed in righteousness.'
- Write down and share one God-given dream or calling with a trusted friend or mentor this week.
- Identify a current challenge or 'process' in your life and commit to trusting God through it.
- Recognize one temptation or distraction that threatens your purpose; set a practical plan to avoid it.
- Choose one person you need to forgive or release bitterness toward and pray for God's help to forgive.
- Journal your 'legacy statement'—how you want to be remembered—and reflect on how to live aligned with it.

Challenges for the Week

- Declare your identity in Christ daily and reject any voice that contradicts God's truth over your life.
- Speak your God-given dreams boldly, even if facing opposition or misunderstanding.
- Do not give up on a struggle you are currently enduring; persevere in faith and patience.
- When temptation arises, immediately choose the way of escape God provides.
- Forgive one person who has hurt or offended you, releasing the past into God's hands.
- Reflect each evening on how your daily actions move you closer to God's purpose.

Further Study

- Study the full story of Joseph in Genesis chapters 37, 39, 40, 41, and 50 to grasp the breadth of his purpose journey.
- Reflect on Galatians 3:27 and Romans 8:14-17 about identity in Christ as children of God.
- Meditate on 1 Corinthians 6:18 and 2 Timothy 2:22 concerning fleeing temptation and pursuing righteousness.
- Read Hebrews 11 to explore faith examples including Joseph's legacy and vision for the future.
- Explore Psalms 23 which comforts us through difficult processes and assures God's presence.
- Examine Ephesians 4:31-32 to deepen understanding of forgiveness and how it frees us spiritually.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today humbled by Your great love and purpose for our lives. Thank You for the example of Joseph, who stands as a testimony of faith, endurance, and God's perfect plan unfolding through every circumstance. Lord, help us firmly anchor our identity in You, the Author of life, so that we may walk confidently in Your favor. Give us courage to embrace the dreams You place in our hearts and strength to endure every trial on the path to fulfilling our purpose. Deliver us from every temptation and grant us hearts of forgiveness, that we might walk free and fully engaged in Your calling. May we look to the finish line with faith and passion, desiring to glorify You until our last breath. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Daily Devotionals

Day 1

Scripture Verse

Genesis 41:45-46 (NIV): "Pharaoh gave Joseph the name Zaphenath-Paneah and gave him Asenath daughter of Potiphera, priest of On, to be his wife. And Joseph went throughout the land of Egypt. Joseph was 30 years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and traveled throughout Egypt."

Reflection

Take a moment and consider Joseph – a young man sold into slavery by his own brothers, thrust into a foreign land, yet destined by God for a divine appointment as a ruler in Egypt. His story is remarkable because it reminds us that our identity is the foundation of our purpose. Joseph's identity was deeply rooted in being the favored son of Jacob, a fact symbolized by his coat of many colors. But more than earthly favor, Joseph's true identity was found in his relationship with God, who clothed him in righteousness and favor beyond measure. Like Joseph, many of us wrestle with the question: Who am I, and what is my purpose? In a world filled with uncertainty, comparison, and voices trying to define us, the key to purpose is embracing our identity as sons and daughters of the Living God. When we surrender to Jesus, we are clothed not only in His forgiveness but in His righteousness (Galatians 3:27). Then, no matter our age or circumstances, we are chosen, loved, and empowered to fulfill the unique plan God has for us. Let me paint a picture: imagine a young artist struggling to find their style, doubting their talent, comparing themselves to others on social media. The artist feels lost, ignoring the unique creativity God has put in their hands. But when they embrace their God-given identity—that they are wonderfully designed and gifted—they begin to paint with boldness and purpose that reaches others' hearts. This is your story too. Your true self is discovered in Christ, and only when you embrace that identity can your purpose unfold. Remember, Joseph's Egyptian name, Zaphenath-Paneah, means "Giver of Nourishment" and "Revealer of Secrets." God has a name for you too, a purpose waiting to nourish and reveal. Today, reflect on the ways God has already clothed you with His favor. How does knowing you are His beloved child change the way you view your circumstances? Like Joseph, God's favor will prepare you to walk boldly into your call. Your identity in Christ is the starting point of a life fueled by divine purpose.

Prayer

Father God, thank You for clothing me with Your righteousness and for calling me Your beloved child. Help me to see my identity through Your eyes, that I may walk confidently in the purpose You have ordained for me. Give me the courage to embrace who I am in You today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Day 2

Scripture Verse

Genesis 37:3 (NIV): "Now Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because he had been born to him in his old age; and he made an ornate robe for him."

Galatians 3:27 (NIV): "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."

Reflection

Let us dive deeper into the next step in fulfilling your divine purpose: embracing and speaking the dreams God places in your heart. Joseph was not afraid to share his dreams, even when it caused unrest with his brothers. His dreams were God's blueprint for his life—specific insights into the unique role he was to play. Many today wrestle with the heavy expectation of one single purpose or dream, believing their life must fit into a narrow box. But Joseph's story teaches us that while God calls us to love Him and others—our general purpose—He also plants a specific dream inside us to make an impact in this world. These dreams are not wishful thinking or vanity but holy directives that, when spoken and pursued, activate spiritual momentum toward fulfillment. Consider the young person anxious about choosing a career or the older adult feeling restless and wondering if their purpose has passed them by. God's dreams for your life are not confined by age or circumstance. Like Joseph, your dreams—though they may cause difficulty—set in motion the divine path for your future. When Joseph spoke his dreams aloud, though his brothers responded with hatred, he was already walking toward God's promise. Think about a gardener planting seeds. Those seeds must be spoken of and tended to; otherwise, they remain hidden underground. Your dreams are those seeds. Speak them out boldly, nurture them with faith, and watch God bring growth in His perfect timing. Do you believe God has placed a dream in your heart? Or are you too afraid to speak it for fear of opposition or failure? Remember Joseph's example. Your faith-filled words cultivate a future that God is already preparing. Speak your dreams today, knowing God honors the voice of His children who trust Him.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for planting dreams in my heart and for the courage to speak them. Help me to trust Your timing and to stand firm when opposition comes. Let my dreams glorify You and bless those around me. In Your mighty name, Amen.

Day 3

Scripture Verse

Galatians 6:9 (NIV): "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

Genesis 39:12 (NIV): "She caught him by his cloak and said, 'Come to bed with me!' But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house."

Hebrews 11:22 (NIV): "By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions concerning the burial of his bones."

Reflection

Today's reflection challenges us to endure the process and escape temptation while embracing the finish line God has set for us. Joseph's journey was not quick or easy—thirteen years of hardship, betrayal, unjust imprisonment, and trials. Yet through every painful step, Joseph's faith in God's purpose kept him steadfast. What trials are you enduring right now? Perhaps you feel abandoned, misunderstood, or stuck in a season of waiting. Remember Joseph's faith—he kept his eyes on God's promise despite the hardships. Paul's encouragement reminds us not to grow weary, for a harvest awaits those who persevere. Your pain and process are not in vain; they are sanctifying and producing fruit for God's glory. Joseph also faced fierce temptations intended to derail him from God's purpose. When Potiphar's wife tempted him, he fled, leaving even his cloak behind. His integrity preserved his destiny. Like Joseph, temptation can come in subtle or blatant forms, trying to make us compromise for temporary relief, but God calls us to flee and pursue righteousness (1 Corinthians 6:18, 2 Timothy 2:22). Your purpose demands that you run the race with endurance and purity. Finally, engage your finish. Joseph, even facing death, foresaw the greater plan and urged his brothers to take his bones back to the Promised Land—a testament of faith and hope. What legacy do you want to leave? How do you want to be remembered? Will your life testify to a purposeful journey lived for God's glory? Imagine a marathon runner who stumbles and tires but pushes on, eyes fixed on the finish line. Every step, every mile matters. So does your pursuit of purpose. Don't give up. God's purpose in you will come to fruition, for He is faithful. Today, renew your commitment to endure, resist temptation, forgive enemies, and finish strong.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, grant me strength to endure my trials and wisdom to escape temptation. Help me to keep my eyes fixed on the finish line You have set before me. May my life reflect Your glory, and may I fulfill the purpose You have designed for me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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