TOPIC: DESTINATION: DESTINY!

"Destiny" is a place we must all strive to reach, expending every effort to get there.

KEY POINTS

- There are many hindrances, many bumps in the road that leads to destiny. Obstacles will abound:
  - Doubt: "No, I don't think I can actually get there."
  - Timidity and Fear: "My destiny looks too scary. I will just stay right where I am."
  - Laziness: "It's going to take too much out of me to get to my destiny. The work is just too hard."
  - Unwillingness: "To be honest, I really don't want to do what God wants me to do and go where God wants me to go."
  - Disobedience: "I have heard the voice of God and I know exactly what I should do. But I am not going to do it."
  - Sin: "If I pursue my God-given destiny, I will have to end a particular relationship; give up a particular thing; stop committing my favourite sin. I will have to live right and be holy."
  - Distraction: "I'm certainly trying to reach my destination but I really need to watch this Netflix series next weekend. And I really need to check out that sale at Yorkdale. And Real Madrid is playing tonight, aren't they? Anyway, gotta go, Facebook is calling."
  - Procrastination: "I know where my destiny lies and I am going to get started doing what I know I need to do. But not today. Tomorrow…next week for sure…definitely in the New Year…."
- These are things that can lead to great frustration and conflict in our lives. But, on the other hand, frustration can become a blessing if it causes us to take hold of ourselves and begin to direct (or redirect) our efforts toward fulfilling our destiny.
- In this regard, we have a phenomenal example to follow: the man Christ Jesus, God manifested in flesh (Hebrews 12:1-3).
- There is no way for us to adequately understand the thought processes our Lord must have gone through as He progressed through life toward His final destiny at Calvary. From time to time in scripture, we get glimpses of what He was thinking:
- Luke 2:49: "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"
- John 9:3: "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day…."
- In Matthew 26:39, He went a little farther. He fell on His face and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."
- Through these examples we have the picture of a man who was totally focused, committed and dedicated to fulfilling His destiny, even from His first public appearance in the Temple as a child (Luke 2:49). By the time He was 12 years old, He was already an expert in biblical exegesis and interpretation (Luke 2:46-47).
- It is here that we come to another crucial point. Although Jesus was a 'good boy'—respectful to His parents and well regarded in His community—He took active steps toward fulfilling His destiny. He had a drive and desire bursting forth from within that propelled Him to do something outside of His normal behaviour (Luke 2:48-52).
- At times, situations like Jesus faced may lead to very uncomfortable moments, misunderstandings and even hurt feelings. There is a need for great wisdom and divine guidance (as well as human guidance from our spiritual leaders) as we take steps toward our destiny, but we must move forward.

KEY SCRIPTURES:
Hebrews 12:1-3; Luke 2:41-52;
Proverbs 18:16

- When we have a clear view of our destination, we "must be about [our] Father's business" and get busy.
- When we prepare ourselves for God's use—maintaining a humble heart, a teachable spirit and a willingness to obey—God Himself will open Destiny's doors for us. He will take us to places we could never have gone on our own and before people we could never have met on our own.
- How does a shepherd boy become minstrel to the king and be used by God to defuse the power of evil spirits?
- How does an Israelite slave in an Egyptian prison become prime minister in a day?
- How does a reluctant prophet become God's spokesman to a rebellious nation, with 'fire shut up in his bones'?
- How does a young teenage girl from Nazareth become mother to the Saviour of the world?
- All of these people were willing to be used by God. They were willing to suffer shame, even pain for the sake of fulfilling their destiny. They were willing to work hard and demonstrate diligence when no one was looking and when it did not seem as if there was any chance of their destiny coming to reality.
- So we need to work hard. Study hard. Pray hard. Be diligent. Be accountable. Have faith. Resist the temptation to quit.
- Keep a clear focus on your destiny. Be thankful. We are blessed that the great God of heaven has chosen us to do His work and be a part of His kingdom.
- There is a joy that is set before us. We can experience it every day on our way to our destiny and, when it finally comes, enjoy its fulfillment.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1) Has your destiny in Christ been revealed to you? How so: did God reveal it to you without you having to ask; did you ask God for His guidance; or did you come to God with something already in mind and ask for His permission to pursue it?
2) What is your destiny (for those who know or have an inkling of what their destiny is and feel comfortable with sharing it)?
3) Examples were given about the type of obstacles that may abound on the pathway to destiny. What can a person do to circumvent these pitfalls?
4) Take the time to pray and ask God to lead you to the destiny He has prepared for you. Thank Him for hearing your prayers.

Prayer Time

Lord, lead me along Your pathways. Reveal Your destiny for me, and please give me the courage and discipline to pursue it. In Jesus' name.

Life Group Icebreaker: Think about the longest road trip you have ever been on—how long was it and where did it take you? Was it well worth the trip?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2017

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

(Reminds me/Confirms) (New idea) (Think about)

(Do this) (Speaks to my heart) (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS