

You Were Made For So Much More!

By John Thomas Crestwell, Jr.



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This book is dedicated to all who strive for peace, liberty, and justice for all; for those who understand that outer conflict does not resolve until inner turmoil evolves. To all who understand that the micro and macro are interconnected; all who know that to fix the world we must first fix ourselves. And to all who know that we have the power and capacity to move beyond the dualistic struggle in this age toward a new way that leads to wholeness and the eventual transformation of our planet. I honor you with the words in this book.

**We were meant to live for so much more.
Have we lost ourselves?**

**We want more than this world's got to offer.
We want more than the wars of our father's.**

And everything inside screams for second life!

Meant to Live, Switchfoot

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rev. John T. Crestwell, Jr. is a life coach, singer, preacher, teacher, writer, inspirer, and the founder and Lead Minister of AWAKE Ministries, an interfaith program of the UU Church of Annapolis that is dedicated to teaching principles that uplift, and edify the worth and dignity of all. Rev. John believes in the power of emotional literacy and intercultural competency as pathways to greater compassion, understanding and love in our world.

Rev. John is an affiliate faculty member at Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago and was previously an adjunct professor at Potomac University. He holds degrees in Mass Media Arts and Theological Studies.

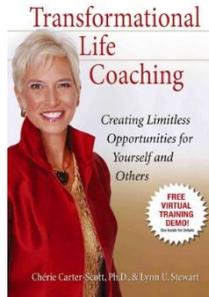
Rev. John has spoken before thousands, served on several boards and committees, written for several publications and been an entrepreneur in advertising, sales and marketing. He believes that finding and living your life's purpose is the way to thrive and experience joy every day.

He is married and has five, mostly adult, children.



FOREWORD

By Dr. Cherie Carter-Scott, Ph.D.
“Mother of Coaching”



John is the son I never had. I met him several years ago after my office received a message from him: “Your book, *If Life is a Game These Are the Rules*, saved my life!” I had to respond.

We began our conversations via SKYPE, my preferred mode of communicating since much of the time I’m in Thailand. I have enjoyed coaching him ever since. I have been witness to his transformation, appreciated his story, and his immense love of people! And I have coached him to the point where I know he is committed to his vision to transform the world. Rev. John has dedicated so much of his time and energy to changing lives that I have been compelled to support his vision and to connect with him on a personal level. I too have dedicated the last 42 years of my life writing, teaching, speaking, coaching and mentoring thousands of souls!

John’s book is simple to read and easy on the spirit. To exercise what he lays out takes time, practice, and persistence. I encourage you to read his book until his teachings seep into the depths of your being. Also,

consider joining him in his quest to transform our planet. There are many of us who know that our destiny as humans is greater than our present reality.

I've been in the coaching field since 1974 and I've seen how professional coaching transforms lives. I am excited that John has dedicated his life to making an impact wherever he is called. I believe he is uniquely equipped with the stories, tools, and lessons, learned in life and through my method of coaching, that I have no doubt he will continue having a significant impact on the world. I am eager to share his dream and enjoy the adventure with him!

Learn your lessons!

Dr. Cherie Carter-Scott, Ph.D. MCC

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Introduction

Why You Should Read This Book

In this book you will find a compilation of some of the most important teachings I have learned and experienced over the last 46 years. It has led me to a fulfilling and rewarding life of service; a life led by compassion, empathy and love. I know what joy, compassion and contentment feel like. I have created for myself a practical and spiritual way of living that, if understood and practiced in your own way, can lead you toward living the life you were meant to live—a purpose-filled life that opens new pathways for you and all in your sphere of influence.

Wisdom is found all around us if we are open to receiving her. She comes in the voice of people we know and do not know. She comes when we feel the wind blow or hear the thunder roll. She comes when we experience synchronicities or serendipitous moments; when we see children play, when we are on vacation with our family or a loved one, or even when we hit rock bottom. Wisdom comes from various places as we experience life; and her still, small voice brings the understanding we need for that particular time, place and circumstance. Those gems are not always warm-fuzzy insights. They are often hard lessons to prepare us for the road ahead. Wisdom's gems remind us that we have free will to choose the path(s) we follow in life. She repeats to us that we do indeed have a purpose in life but we must seek it out to find it; that we are important as special and unique manifestations of the ONE; made to do, be and live much fuller lives if we heed life's lessons.

For thousands of years, the world's religions have played a major role in allowing wisdoms' message to be imparted. Billions claim a particular faith tradition as

their own. Within each religion, whether it is Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, Islam or Christianity, there are universal teachings about who we are as people in relation to God, nature and all reality; that we are in fact higher-consciousness beings made to experience many lives in extraordinary ways.

In that light, the words in this book are inspired by the great faiths of our world, past and present. What you are about to read are interfaith teachings given as a pathway for you to manifest your greatness in life. Each chapter in my book is dedicated not only to facilitate your mental and spiritual growth but to also share with you a religious lesson from the past that will inform your present and future. My hope is that you will see that many of the world's great faiths share many truths that you can immediately apply to your life.

I do understand if you are cynical about religion; that you see religion as something that has conspired or worked against humanity for millennia. You have a point. But upon further inspection, it has not been a particular faith that has caused hurt and disgrace to so many in our world; rather it has been the misuse of religion by individuals past and present that has caused so much turmoil. Religion in its proper context is beautiful and changes lives! This book is not a comprehensive analysis on what is right and wrong with religion, rather this book attempts to simply bring together, to synthesize many ancient and modern ideas and teachings to reveal to you that YOU WERE MADE FOR SO MUCH MORE!

CHAPTER II

YOU WERE MADE TO
WRESTLE WITH FINDING
YOUR PURPOSE

(Judaism)

**YOU WERE MADE TO WRESTLE WITH FINDING
YOUR PURPOSE
(From the teachings of Judaism)**

LESSON:

Judaism is one of the world's oldest religions. Scholars date its beginnings back to around 1800 to 1400 BCE during the Axial Age—a time when many of the world's religions were emerging. Jewish recorded history is found in the *Torah*, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible. Their stories show Jews how to live in relationship with their God (YHWH or Yahweh) whom they worshipped at first as a tribal deity and eventually as the one true God. These stories are fascinating; full of sacrifice, love and all that people experience when trying to survive in a harsh world. It should be noted that Jewish history, although presented chronologically in the Hebrew Bible, is really a collection of writings completed and perfected over many thousands of years. The literal nature of the stories is not the point. The point of the narratives is to show a people's covenant with their God through history—including their struggles, failings, fears, and many lessons learned. Ultimately, theirs is a story of love, hope, triumph and promise. When reading these ancient texts through this lens, all people can find a message relevant for their lives.

There are over 13-million Jews in the world who worship in many ways all across the globe. Their concise and organized history has been a major civilizing force in the Western world. It's important to note that Judaism preceded Christianity and Islam

by thousands of years. It is no wonder why their culture, mores and folklore have dramatically impacted the mythos of the world in religion, science, politics, and entertainment.

One of the narratives that I really love is the story of Jacob, son of the patriarch, Abraham, who wrestles with “a stranger” all night before receiving the important name, Israel. As is in life today, a name change of a Hebrew Bible character was always significant representing rebirth, a new pathway, or a new covenant with God. The person was never the same again...

24 Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. 25 When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. 26 Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." 27 So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." 28 Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." 29 Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. 30 So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved." 31 The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip. 32 Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the thigh muscle that is on the hip socket, because he struck Jacob on the hip socket at the thigh muscle. -Genesis 32:24-32

MESSAGE:

YOU WERE MADE TO WRESTLE WITH FINDING YOUR PURPOSE

(From the Teachings of Judaism)

“You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed.”

-Genesis 32:28-29

The nation of Israel was born out of struggle, the story says. A skirmish does not leave the victor unscathed. If we ever expect to figure out our purpose (a lofty quest), we must struggle with searching for it. There is no other way but to struggle. You must wrestle with the “God of your understanding” and keep on wrestling until the blessing-the answer-comes, and a new name-a new direction-is given. Frederick Douglass said, “There is no progress without struggle”. A diamond is born when a piece of coal is put under immense pressure.

In the Jacob narrative we witness a man afraid of living into his purpose. He is afraid for what he has done in his past, afraid of not living up to others’ expectations, afraid that he is unworthy of his position, afraid he might succeed. There needed to be an intervention.

You will find that when you are unsure of what to do with your life, seen and unseen forces will conspire to move you forward. This is intentional. EVERY

HUMAN BEING HAS A PURPOSE—to learn and to thrive as a coexisting being in harmony with all people, places and things. You have to ask yourself a question and then make a request: “Am I ready for my lesson(s) and purpose(s) to be revealed?” If so, be prepared to struggle with the search. Make a request: *“Spirit of Life, Creative Sustaining Force in the universe, God of my understanding, I am ready to see where it is I need to go, do, and be. I am ready. Show me. May it be so.”* That’s it.

Before you manifested in human form you made a deal... A deal to come to this planet to learn lessons. You came to thrive and coexist. That deal has a lot of perks—food, drinks, sex, naps, laughter, etc... It also comes with a lot of problems—emotional, physical, and spiritual. That’s the bargain you made. You also agreed that it would be much more of a journey if you did not remember all that you know as an eternal being. You agreed that the game of life would be more worthwhile, that you could really elevate your consciousness, if the veil of amnesia was not lifted. And so here you came to this world of cause and effect; this magical world of opposites—placed where you’d be given the optimal chance at figuring your things out. Yes, you chose it all! The first lesson is acceptance of the circumstance; owning it as yours.

Struggling to find your purpose is first of all a lesson in accepting everything in your life. I’m not saying you should live with abuse or neglect or to accept your station. I’m saying the opposite. I’m saying you chose this path to do your work. I’m saying that cosmic vibrational laws of attraction and magnetism have created this optimal environment for your senses to experience everything you need in order to

find your purpose and learn your lessons. And, by the way, YOUR PURPOSE IS ALWAYS LINKED IN THE LESSONS YOU MUST LEARN. Look into what causes you trouble. Generally you're going to find that your purpose is found in the opposite of what you struggle with. In numerology, individuals almost always demonstrate negative characteristics of their energy before maturing into the affirming aspects of their nature which, as stated, is found at the opposite end of the scale. You may be an angry, fearful, sarcastic and negative person who, paradoxically, likes to help elderly people. Your lessons are obvious: Open your heart, love more, and align yourself with positive experiences as a spiritual practice. Now, think about this... Your purpose in working with elderly people could be to help them deal with their anger, fear, and frustration as they grow older and less independent. Interesting how those seemingly opposite traits can work together!

As a child I was shy but liked to talk. I always managed to be noticed, but really wasn't sure what to do with the attention. When I was 16, I was on a teen TV show. When I got in front of the bright lights and cameras, I had a panic attack. The host asked me about my career and goals, and I blanked on what I was supposed to say. Afterward, I couldn't even recall my responses! I was traumatized. For weeks, all I could hear over and over in my head were the words my dad said as we drove home in the car: "You blew it. You got bad nerves just like me." Maybe I was 'just like him', but I knew that somehow my future was tied up in that awful experience. That night in my room, as tears welled up in my eyes, I vowed that I would never, ever let that happen again—and it didn't!

I know that experience, and others, eventually led me on my life's path - from TV and radio sports broadcasting in college; professional sales and advertising; becoming an entrepreneur; and now a minister. Through *my* struggles the real and authentic "me" emerged. Who would have guessed that that kid who "freaked out" would someday speak before more than 4,000 people and get a standing ovation! Many of us think because our parent(s) didn't make all their dreams come true that we can't either; that we are somehow yoked with them in a karmic pattern. Perhaps - but, we can change the pattern with a conscious, deliberate and determined effort.

Think back to the Jacob story... Jacob needed something to get him out of his rut. An angel came (God manifested in that angel) and Jacob wrestled with him. However, I like the version that says Jacob wrestled with himself. The passage said that he was alone. Jacob was by himself—thinking, wondering, questioning. He was afraid, weary, and apprehensive. He needed something to get him moving. He needed to have a "dark night of the soul." As he wrestled, he said to this stranger, "I will not let you go unless you bless me," meaning 'I will not stop until my message, direction, my purpose is clear—and I need a sign.' Jacob persisted, as we must. He was hurt in the process (we will be too) but when the dawn came, he received a new name—Israel, "One who prevails with God" and, as a result, a nation would bear his name. You are not the mess you think you are. **YOU WERE MADE TO STRUGGLE WITH FINDING YOUR PURPOSE.** Accept this and then get to work in creating the life you deserve!

Finding Your Purpose 7 Affirmations:

1. Struggling to find meaning and purpose is good
2. Lean into the changes happening in your life
3. Your purpose is linked to lessons you must learn
4. To get to the authentic YOU requires rebirth
5. You will be hurt but you will be healed
6. Be persistent and ask for what you want
7. Meditate or pray to comprehend your life lessons clearly