

Freestyle Note: Kia ora whanau - use this space to write a message & let your loved one know why you thought they'd be interested in this article.

What is Gods purpose for you?

For most of my adult life I struggled with alcohol addiction. Looking back now I have no idea how I survived all those years of drinking. During this period I was a busy business professional juggling mother-hood, heavy work-loads and two or three bottles of wine per night. I even got to the point where I'd drink methylated spirits - Anyway, point is I literally fell to my knees countless times and called out to God begging Him to remove my burden.

Thing was after a few years in prison, I'd often add into my prayers something along the lines of "Crikey Dear Lord - couldn't you have removed my burden - without putting me in prison?"

You see the final straw that broke the camel's back for me was an alcohol fuelled bender which ended in a crime which resulted in a 3.6 year prison term.

Looking back now I know that if I hadn't gone to prison, my life would've been very different to the mostly peaceful life I lead today. I honestly know without a shadow of a doubt that if I hadn't gone to prison all those years ago that I'd be dead by now.

At the very least by me going to prison, God removed the potential of me really hurting my beloved son - and I am thank-full for that.

I've come to understand that God does have a purpose for everything no matter how unfathomable it may appear at the time. Thing is God doesn't put out a sign-post when it comes to his purpose and that makes it hard to understand at times. Key point is, don't lose faith because life and God are a mystery.

So yes, I ended up in prison on a couple of occasions and that is a big part of the reason why I'm so passionate about helping parents in prison and their kids - but do I think that that was Gods sole purpose in imprisoning me? *I don't know - only He knows!* Maybe protecting my son was His reason for removing me from our family for a few years?

But again, that's just my speculation. But what I do have is a deep faith in God and the mysterious way He works not only in my life - but in everyone's lives.

Let's take a look at Apostle Paul. Apostle Paul before his conversion was an absolute asshole who was known by the name of Saul. He really thought he was being righteous in persecuting Christians before God literally had him knocked him off his horse on the road to Damascus. After his transformation Apostle Paul became so vocal about Jesus Christ being the son of God that he was put in prison.



Apostle Paul falling off his horse on the road to Damascus



A photo of one of the prison cells that held Apostle Paul

But here's the awesome thing - If Apostle Paul hadn't gone to prison, then there's the potential that he wouldn't have written some of the most compelling letters in the Christian New Testament"- those being: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon.

So my Opal Brethren - what are you going to do with the time in prison God has gifted you?

What I encourage you to do is to grow as a person in every-aspect of your life.

Make a plan to become the best person you can be and then set out on your journey. Your child(ren) will be witness to your journey and your transformation over the years to come.

My son often remarks that I didn't leave him alone when I went into prison because I was always in contact and remained a big part-of his life. He still makes comments all these years later about how he was encouraged to stick at school because he was inspired by my struggle to educate myself.

You see - that is the glorious mystery of God and how he worked in our family, He inspired me to change my life from inside prison & this impacted positively on my boy. God also had plans for Apostle Paul and all those years he was in prison too!

But the big question is: What is Gods purpose for you?



Psalm 57:2 says, "I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me." This is key in understanding God's purpose for your life. God has numbered your days and will fulfill every purpose He has for you.