



**SHINE**  
**THROUGH**  
**YOUR**  
**STORY**

**REKINDLE** Your  
Purpose, **IGNITE**  
Your Light &  
**ILLUMINATE** the  
World by **SHARING**  
**YOUR STORY**

MICHELLE PRINCE



**SHINE  
THROUGH  
YOUR  
STORY**

REKINDLE Your  
Purpose, IGNITE  
Your Light &  
ILLUMINATE the  
World by SHARING  
YOUR STORY

M I C H E L L E P R I N C E

Copyright © 2023  
Michelle Prince

Performance Publishing Group  
McKinney, TX

All Worldwide Rights Reserved.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recorded, photocopied, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner, except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review.

Unless indicated otherwise, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version, NIV. Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 by the International Bible Society. All rights reserved.

ISBN:

Softcover: 978-1-956914-81-8

Hardcover: 978-1-956914-17-7



# CONTENTS

<b>Chapter 1: This Little Light of Mine</b> .....	1
What's Your Light?.....	2
Reignite Your Light.....	3
The Power of Your Story.....	5
Your Story Is a Gift.....	7
The Sin of the Desert.....	9
<b>Chapter 2: Before You Can Shine Outward, You Have to     Look Inward</b> .....	11
Getting Back on Track.....	14
Questions to Find Your Passion and Purpose.....	18
Which Road Will You Take?.....	25
Let The Journey Begin.....	31
<b>Chapter 3: Your Story Matters</b> .....	33
The History of Stories.....	36
You Were Created to SHINE.....	36
All the Difference for a Starfish.....	38
<b>Chapter 4: S.H.I.N.E - Sow Your Seeds of Greatness</b> .....	41
You Have Seeds of Greatness Within You.....	42
Enthusiasm – God Within.....	43
Cold Calling on My Destiny.....	45
Programming Your GPS.....	46
Trading in My Passion for a Bigger Paycheck.....	47
The Chosen.....	49
Stepping Out in Faith.....	49

When Inspiration Hit .....	51
Divine Provision.....	52
Do You Want a Cup of Coffee?.....	54
A Decision to Follow My Passion.....	55
Unique Dreams.....	56

**Chapter 5: S.H.I.N.E - Honor Your Story .....59**

A Challenge and an Encouragement.....	60
Not Quite What I Had Expected .....	62
A Blur of Blessings and Opportunities .....	63
Unexpected Detour .....	63
Prioritizing the Right People .....	64
Escaping from the Prison of Regret.....	65
“STOP!” .....	66
Slowing Down to Speed Up .....	68
Book Bound.....	70
Finding Your Story.....	71
My Own Example .....	74
Connecting the Dots .....	75
If Not You, Who? .....	76
Wake Up, Sleeping Beauty .....	77

**Chapter 6: S.H.I.N.E – Identify What’s Holding You Back .....81**

Becoming Unbound.....	82
How Beliefs Are Formed.....	83
The Earth Is What? .....	85
Who Do You Think You Are? .....	87
My Beliefs.....	87
Time to Take Out the Trash .....	89
Speak the Truth.....	89
Positive Affirmations.....	90
Running After the Truth.....	92
Take Up Your Sword .....	93
“My Inheritance and Identity in Christ”.....	96
Overcoming Procrastination .....	97
Life Is Short .....	100
One Story at a Time .....	102

<b>Chapter 7: S.H.I.N.E – Now Is the Time to Write Your Story...</b>	<b>105</b>
Quiet Time.....	106
Monday Morning Devotions.....	107
Opening the Door.....	109
My Walks With God.....	111
His Faithfulness Is True.....	113
“Write in a Book...”.....	114
My “Book Bound” Story.....	117
My Conversations With God.....	120
Journal Through P.R.A.Y.E.R.....	121
P – PRAISE.....	122
R – REPENT.....	122
A – ASK.....	124
The Principle of 2 Chairs.....	124
Y – YIELD.....	125
E – ENTER.....	126
R – RESPOND.....	126
He’s Calling You by Name.....	128
<b>Chapter 8: S.H.I.N.E – Encourage and Equip Others.....</b>	<b>129</b>
Your Story Is a Gift – Gifts Are Meant to Be Shared.....	130
So, How Do We Encourage and Equip Others?.....	131
Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts.....	132
The Power of Authority.....	134
A Text Message from God.....	136
You Are the Light of The World.....	138
Do It Afraid.....	139
Fear Not.....	140
You Are Not Alone.....	141
<b>Chapter 9: Step Into Your Greatness Now.....</b>	<b>143</b>
Women of Legacy.....	145
Arise, Shine.....	146
Don’t Wait.....	147
What Are You Waiting For?.....	149
Leave a Legacy With Your Story.....	150
<b>About the Author.....</b>	<b>153</b>

## PRAISE FOR SHINE THROUGH YOUR STORY

*“Have you ever felt like your story isn’t worth sharing or that you aren’t able to tell it in a compelling way? SHINE Through Your Story will convince you otherwise. God has created each one of us in His image, and since He is the ultimate Creator, He has shared that creativity with all of us. Michelle will show you how to make sure your light is shining bright!”*

### **Jordan Raynor**

Bestselling Author of *The Creator in You*  
and *Called to Create*

*One of the major themes of my books is that your stories matter! In Shine Through Your Story, Michelle Prince shares a formula to help identify your purpose, ignite your light and shine through your story for God’s glory.*

### **Bob Beaudine**

National Bestselling Author of *The Power of WHO*  
and *2 Chairs*

*“The most powerful story in the world is the story you tell yourself. Why? Because the story you tell yourself either limits or unleashes your ability to SHINE and impact others for good. Read SHINE Through Your Story today—someone is desperately waiting to hear your story, and Michelle Prince shows you WHY your story is so important and HOW to share it!”*

### **Tom Ziglar**

CEO, Ziglar Inc.  
Proud Son of Zig Ziglar

*“When Michelle Prince walks into a room, the atmosphere changes. She is not only beautiful, but warm, gracious, kind, and very intelligent. I am so excited about her new book SHINE Through Your Story. She has a way to encourage and inspire you. So many people give up on their dreams and begin to doubt their calling and purpose. Michelle shares how we all are important and challenges us to tell our story. Your story matters, and someone needs to hear it. God has given you a platform and an influence that are unique to you. This book is going to be a bestseller, and you will be transformed by reading it. I am honored to call Michelle Prince my friend.”*

### **Judy Pogue**

Co-founder, Pogue Constructions  
and Pogue Missions

*“I’ve read no more convincing persuasion as it relates to writing and publishing your story for the good of others than SHINE Through Your Story. Michelle Prince’s book is written as she speaks: in a conversational and honestly transparent style. Whether you’ve ever even considered writing your story—or if you simply need a gentle nudge to do so—this book will be your deciding factor. Enjoy the write!!!”*

**Laurie Magers**

Executive Assistant to Zig and Tom Ziglar

*“Even though I have known Michelle for many years, as I read this book, I found myself truly inspired. I laughed. I cried. And I cheered as Michelle shares with others how to SHINE! I can’t wait to get my signed copy!”*

**Howard Partridge**

President, Phenomenal Products, Inc.

*“Michelle’s passion and purpose SHINE through in this amazing book. With step-by-step guiding points to help you find your passion and ample encouragement to help you share those gifts through your story, this book is an exceptional tool to use and give to those you care for. I’m so excited to see how many lives are positively impacted by this heartfelt and power-packed book. Thank you, Michelle!”*

**Cheri Perry**

MVP Director, TMC

*“It can be difficult to believe your story matters when your experiences are filled with shame. However, the reality is your darkest moments can be the light of hope for others to realize their stories matter too. SHINE Through Your Story equips you to turn your most difficult life experiences into your greatest life purpose.”*

**LeTasha Wheeler**

Author, *Half Breed – Finding Unity in a Divided World*





## CHAPTER ONE

---

### THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE

*“Live as children of light...”*  
(Ephesians 5:8)

I am not sure how old I was when I first heard this song, but I remember it always making me smile. It was so easy to sing, and it went something like this, *“This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine. This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine. This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine. Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!”*

It still makes me smile, even singing it now. And how easy is it for all of us to understand what it’s about? We’re supposed to shine our light ... be the light for others. We’re supposed to illuminate the light that’s been given to us by God.

Yet it never really occurred to me, until just now, that part of this song is missing. You see, it says, *“This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.”* But what if you don’t know what your light is? What if you don’t think you even have a light to shine? What if that light has been extinguished by hard times, difficulties, and tragedy? And what if the thought of that light ever burning bright again seems so, so far away?

I'm here to tell you that you do have a light. Your light is your story. Your light is what God has created in you. It is your purpose. It is why you are here. And the reason we have a light—the reason we have a story to share—is because God wants us to shine through it. He doesn't want us to extinguish it, to be afraid to light it up again. He wants us to figure out what that light is and let it shine.

**Your light is your story. Your light is what God has created in you.**

### WHAT'S YOUR LIGHT?

Before we can shine outward though, we must look inward. How can we shine a light that we don't even know exists? How can we make a difference in the world when we're still unsure about ourselves? I know this feeling all too well. You'll hear more about my story later in the book, but if you're anything like me, you don't want to be burned out. You don't want to flicker and fade. You want to shine brightly. You want to be the reason somebody smiles. You want to be the reason somebody's life is better. You want to be the reason people are drawn to your light, which is the light of Christ.

But how can we make a difference for God if we're too afraid to light the very light He gave us?

You see, our light is our life, and our life is the story that we've been given. No matter what's happened to you, you can still choose to shine. You can choose to shine through the pain, the tears, the fear, the uncertainty. You can realize that your story (your light) is how we bring glory to God. And the only way others will be attracted to our light is when we shine.

I love the analogy of a flashlight in a dark room. Have you ever been in a situation when the power went out and you find yourself in a pitch-black room? It's so dark that you literally can't even see the hand in

front of you. But when you turn on your flashlight or light a match, the world around you instantly becomes illuminated. Suddenly, you can find your way. The darkness is gone.

How is that possible? Here's what I know to be true: light will always defeat darkness. Always! No matter how much darkness surrounds you or how many things have happened to you, all it takes is a one flicker of light to illuminate your path. One ounce of light penetrates the darkness every single time.

If you're reading this book, then you're probably like me—you strive to live purposely. You want to know what that God-given purpose is and how to live it out fully. You want to know that your purpose matters... that *you* matter. You want to create real impact that lives on.

Friend, I'm here to tell you that you and your purpose do matter. You are here on this earth for a reason. You were designed to shine. And when you do, you will glorify God with your light.

## REIGNITE YOUR LIGHT

There was a time in my life when I felt so burned out. I felt like I had literally nothing left to give to any of the people in my life.

But deep down, I knew what I had to do. I mean, I'd heard the announcement a thousand times on airplanes, so how could I not know? You know the one where they tell you, "In case of emergency, put your oxygen mask on first so that you can assist a child or someone else in need." I knew I had to take care of myself first, but I spent many years doing exactly the opposite.

I'm a mom, wife, friend, daughter, and more. So naturally, I wanted to excel in all those roles. I gave and gave and gave, but sometimes to the detriment of myself. Yes, the sacrifices I made were great—I'm not suggesting that giving to others is a bad thing. We're all called to serve. But when you give so much and don't put anything back for

yourself, if you don't fill your own cup up, how can you pour it out for anyone else?

“

**When you truly understand who you are, your purpose, where that light comes from, and the purpose behind shining it, it can never be extinguished.**

”

When you truly understand who you are, your purpose, where that light comes from, and the purpose behind shining it, it can never be extinguished.

Let me show you what I mean. Imagine you're holding a candle with the flame burning bright. Meanwhile, you have a second unlit candle on the table in front of you. If you were to take the lit candle and light the wick of the second candle, does the fire from the first candle burn out? No. The flame stays just as bright.

Now imagine you take that same first candle and light a third, fourth, and even a fifth candle. Would the lighting of multiple candles extinguish the original flame? Of course not! Why? Because the light from the first candle, the original source of the light, can never run out. The light only creates more light out in the world.

I explained this analogy to my oldest son, Austin, when he was three years old. At the time I was pregnant with our second child, Tyler, and Austin wasn't too excited about having to share my attention with anyone else. He really loved being an only child, and he was worried that having another child in the house would take away some of the love I had for him. Or if I'm totally honest, maybe I was the one who was worried about that. I mean, how could I possibly have enough love in my heart for two kids when I loved my one so much? Thankfully, having Tyler filled my love tank more than I could have ever imagined. The candlelight analogy helped Austin to understand that another child doesn't take away any love from him, it just creates more love.

You are light. I am light. And when we share that light, we brighten and illuminate the world for others. It doesn't take away anything from us. In fact, I know that when I give out my light, when I shine the brightest, I feel the happiest. So, in sharing our light, in sharing our story, it's not about us ... it's about others. Once you know what

**“ But when you do find your purpose in life, it doesn't matter when you get clarity. It only matters that you do. ”**

your light is, and once you know your purpose, and once you know the gifts that God has given you, then it's not scary to shine.

But how do you first light your own candle? How does that fire ignite?

I believe it comes by first figuring out who you are, what you want, and why God made you. Later in the book, I'll walk you through more of my journey, but just know

I didn't wake up one day knowing my purpose. In fact, I struggled most of my life. I'm not going to say I am even fully aware of what my biggest purpose is yet. I'm still trying to figure out what my light is for, and how I'm supposed to ignite it in greater ways. But when you *do* find your purpose in life, it doesn't matter when you get clarity. It only matters that you do.

## THE POWER OF YOUR STORY

Can you think of a story you've read or heard that struck you all the way down to your core and changed your entire perspective on life? Think about what that one story meant to you. It may have been a story about someone who reached a goal by overcoming their fear. Maybe it was a story about someone overcoming cancer—giving you hope that it could be your story as you or a loved one are sitting in a chair waiting to get chemo for the first time. It may be a story of a business owner who lost everything after the recession but was able to build another business twice as profitable as the one they lost.

What was that one story for you, and why did it have such a profound impact on your life?

Maybe, just maybe, for another person, that one story is *your* story. Maybe your life experiences, the moments that make up the story of your life, can create the most profound impact on another—maybe a beloved family member or someone you’ve never even met. Stories matter! Stories save! Stories can bring new life into this crazy, unsettling world!

Marketing companies capture your attention daily through their stories of others persevering, giving you hope that you can too—well, if you would just buy the product they are selling! They understand the power of a good story. Do you? Do you understand the power you have within you at this very moment? Do you understand the power of *your* story?

What is the one thing ... the one lesson ... the one gem that you wish you could share with the world to make it a better place? What nugget of wisdom do you have that can save others from making a huge mistake, or ease someone’s pain in their journey of life? Your life’s journey, your story, can create real impact in the life of future generations for many years to come. How cool does that sound? Yet, the impact won’t be felt unless it is heard or otherwise shared.

Only you can bring more into the lives of others by revealing how you got to where you are in life, how you persevered, how you won in life, or how you are winning now! This book will give you the key steps on how to create more hope, love, healing, and positivity in this world ... through your story, starting today!

A lot of people are going through life searching for hope, understanding, and more meaning. They are looking for answers! Maybe those answers can be found through *your* words, providing reassurance that they are not alone. There is someone else out there just like them—someone in pain or feeling lost.

I chose to share my story through writing and speaking—as I was called to do. If my path is not your path, don't let that deter you from reading on. I think you will find we each have our own path, and by reading my story, which God put directly in your path at this exact moment in time, your own calling can and will be further illuminated.

## YOUR STORY IS A GIFT

You have a story, and your story matters. Your story is part of your purpose, and God gave it to you for a reason. He gave you your story to serve His purpose, to glorify Him, and to use it to serve others. Your story is a gift, and gifts are always meant to be shared.

There are many ways to tell your story. You could write it, speak it, share it on a video or podcast, or communicate it through one-on-one coaching, in a Bible study, or just over coffee. How you share your story isn't as important as knowing that you have a story to tell and that you are called to give the gift of your story to someone who needs it.

Some parts of your story may be positive and uplifting, while other parts may have been difficult or traumatic. You may not have asked for it, but nonetheless, it's *your* story.

**You cannot change the history of your story – those things that are in the past. But what if your story influenced someone else's future? What if your story played a bigger part in His story?**

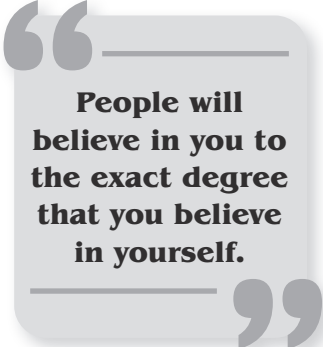
You cannot change the *history* of your story—those things that are in the past. But *what if* your story influenced someone else's *future*? *What if* your story played a bigger part in *His* story? *What if* putting your pen to paper played a big part in your own future? Okay, no more “what ifs” for your life ... let's change the terminology to

*when* you share your story. *When* you change your life and that of another! It is all about **WHEN** now!

If parts of your story are messy, that's OK! Because in your mess is your message, and in your test is your testimony. You can share your story and turn your setback into a setup for someone else! So, if you want to serve others ... if you want to make a difference in this world, then you simply must tell your story.

How do I know? My entire life changed after following the nudge to tell my story and write my first book, *Winning In Life Now*. It's one of the reasons why I'm so passionate about helping others to tell their stories now—because I've seen firsthand what can happen when you do.

To share your story, you first must believe that your story matters. Do you *really* believe that your story matters? I hope so, because people will believe in you to the exact degree that you believe in yourself. So, if you believe that you have something valuable to share—that your story can help someone else—then they will believe in you too.



**People will believe in you to the exact degree that you believe in yourself.**

Of course, the opposite is also true. If you believe your story and your light are *not* worthy of sharing, then, unfortunately, others will believe that too. Either way, it all starts with you! Don't let this discourage you or get you down. Even if you are not feeling worthy yet, you will hear stories and antidotes all throughout this book to help you see the beauty already within you.

What's important is that we find a way to believe in ourselves, instead of surrendering ourselves to fears that stop us from seeing the greatness God put within each and every one of our souls. God placed *seeds of greatness* within us before we even took our first breath.

I fully believe that we have the power to impact people's lives through our stories—the power to inspire, encourage, and equip others to be all they were created to be. But, like Uncle Ben said to Peter Parker in the movie Spider-Man, “With great power comes great responsibility.”

## THE SIN OF THE DESERT

My friend Tom Ziglar shared an impactful story with me that really brings home this point. We're not sure who originally wrote it, but it's called “The Sin of the Desert.”

Imagine that you're in the desert, and it's *hot!* People around you are literally dying of thirst. It's a horrible situation.

But the good news is you found water! You know how to quench the thirst for yourself and literally save the lives of all the people around you.

But what if you chose not to tell them? What if you kept that critical information just for yourself? What if you let them die when you knew what they needed to live? That would be a sin. So, the “sin of the desert” is when you know where the water is, but you refuse to tell others.

You're probably thinking, *I'd never do that!* I thought that too, but the reality is we do this every day. We do this when we keep our stories to ourselves—the same stories that could inspire or give hope and encouragement to a thirsty soul.

My goal with this book is to help you find the confidence in yourself, in your story, and in your ability to share it with others. Even if it's just for one other person, your story can mean the world to them. That one person could be YOU!

There are people in this world who are desperate to hear what you have to say. I pray that you boldly step out in faith, tell your story, and

have the courage to shine your light. You can make a difference and inspire others to do the same.

You may be thinking—why me? I am not special. I'll counter with this: Why *not* you? I am here to tell you that, as God's uniquely and perfectly designed children, we are *all* special! We are all His masterpiece. He put us here in exactly this time and place in the universe. We are here to have impact ... to take action ... and most importantly, to shine! And God equips those He calls so we can accomplish the work He's called us to do.

As you consider what story you will share, envision the joy you will feel when you change just one heart to see a brighter pathway toward God. I can tell you from experience that nothing feels better than knowing you helped one person gain clarity into how they can impact the world by illuminating their light. You see, God is the original source of all creativity, so your work will compound all that He has given to this world. Just you. Just your story. Just your words—from His words to you!

**We are here to  
have impact...  
to take action...  
and most  
importantly, to  
shine!**

My hope for you is that your inner spark gets re-ignited, and you become all that you were created to be. Because when that little light of yours lights the world for someone else, oh, the joy that comes with that! And that joy comes not just from singing the song ... it comes by living the song. "*This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine ... Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!*"



## CHAPTER TWO

---

### BEFORE YOU CAN SHINE OUTWARD, YOU HAVE TO LOOK INWARD

*“The purposes of a person’s heart are deep waters,  
but one who has insight draws them out.”*  
(Proverbs 20:5)

**F**or as long as I can remember, I always wanted to be “the best.” I wanted to be the smartest, prettiest, and the most successful. Yet, much of my life, I never really thought I fit my definition of those things. I just possessed a deep, burning desire to be “successful.”

I see now that I set myself up for failure, as nothing I did was ever good enough to meet *my* definition of success. It was unreachable because my benchmark kept moving as I moved up the ladder of life.

Reachable or not, my desire to be “the best” made me quite competitive in my high school years. I was determined to be well-liked and involved in as many school activities as I could. I set out to be a leader or an officer in several groups, including becoming captain of the drill team. I’m proud to say my ambition got me most of the things I strived for—but not everything.

My grades were not very good compared to many of my peers. I wasn't the prettiest. I didn't get all the accolades and awards I had hoped to achieve. In fact, the only "award" I got in high school was "Most Friendly." And at the time, I was so disappointed because what I really wanted to be was "Most Beautiful" or "Prom Queen" (a title my best friend won instead).

I know, I know! How shallow was that of me? I wish I could say that I was thankful for getting recognized for *something* when the majority of others did not get a thing, but I had some growing to do back then.

But I was not deterred. I kept after every opportunity to achieve success. I sought leadership titles and tried to remain active in everything I could. It was not all fun and games, though. It was hard, and to say I was stretched too thin is an understatement. It was during those years that I developed a foundation for spreading myself a bit too thin, which carried on for a good part of my life.

Oh, if I only knew back then what I know now. We all say this, but I am a firm believer in that familiar adage of, "Everything happens for a reason." I now know that those challenges and the ones yet to come were there to build me into the person I am today. Without going through the challenges, I could not relate to all the people doing the same today. If I could not relate, I could not help them find their light, which is part of my big purpose.

I'm sure part of what I was trying to do was prove to others that I had what it took. But really, I think deep down I just needed to prove it to myself.

My search for accolades and proving I had what it took did not end with high school. This competitive spirit continued well into college. The pressure was on! I *had* to be a 4.0 student, president of my sorority, and involved in numerous extracurricular activities, including being nominated to Student Government.

I am not trying to say that competitiveness and working towards being the best is bad. What I am trying to say is that it all comes at a cost—both to you and those around you—so you must be sure that it is worth it. You must be doing your best to be the best for the right reasons. You must have balance, or your light may be short-lived.

**You must be doing your best to be the best for the right reasons. You must have balance, or your light may be short-lived.**

When I was in college, I had a roommate that loved Amy Grant. I wasn't familiar with her music at the time but after hearing it, I fell in love with the song, *All I have to be*. The words are incredible, and it was such a great reminder for me as I tried so hard to be “the best” in college and life.

One of the lines from the song that really resonated with me most was, “*The more I try to be the best the more I get the worst and I realize the good in me is only there because of who you are...All I have to be is what you made me, any more or less would be a step out of your plan...*” If you are struggling with being an over-achiever like me then I encourage you to listen to that song as a reminder that all you have to be is the YOU that God created you to be!

My light was bright, but the cost of it all gave me a little flickering here and there, especially when I veered off track with my purpose or needed a rest. The important thing is to stay in touch with who you are, Whose you are, and stay aligned with your why.

My ambition and drive didn't end in college. In fact, it just intensified as I graduated from college and started my career. Ultimately, I began working for Zig Ziglar, which had been a goal of mine since I was 18 years old (more on that story later).

I did all these things in high school, college, and beyond—but nothing was ever enough. Once I'd tasted greatness within me, I wanted more.

But now I also understand that I was looking in the wrong places to make it a reality. I now know that searching for titles is a bit of “superficial” success rather than being an accurate symbol of it. More importantly, I understand that my value was with me throughout my entire journey, as I am a child of God.

## GETTING BACK ON TRACK

I think deep down, we all want to be “the best” at something. We want to be successful or recognized as being good at or accomplishing something. We want to feel good about ourselves and have validation to back it up. But if you’re anything like I was, a lot of those successes, accolades, and achievements aren’t really based on anything that truly matters in life.

When I think back, I wonder: Why did I want to be captain of my drill team or president of my sorority? I’m very proud of those leadership opportunities, but why did I strive so hard to get them? What was my definition of success at that stage of my life? What’s my definition of success now? I’m still trying to figure that out as my journey matures, but I have a much clearer picture of it. My definition of ultimate success is to shine my light as bright as I can so that God gets the glory.

I’ve matured so much through the years. Yes, my eyesight may not be as good as it used to be, but I see everything in life so much more clearly than I could during those early years. Back then, it was all about *me*, or what people thought of me, and not about Him.

Clarity is the key. Without clarity on what and why we are trying to achieve success, we may be working towards the wrong things for the wrong reasons. It’s like this quote I once heard ...

*“People may spend their whole lives climbing the ladder of success only to find, once they reach the top, that the ladder is leaning against the wrong wall.”*

(Thomas Merton)

Is your ladder leaning against the wrong wall? Do you even know what wall you want it to be on? These are tough questions to answer—or at least they were for me. The easiest way to get clarity is to ask yourself questions like:

- ... What do I really want for my life?
- ... What do I want for my family?
- ... What do I want for my career?
- ... What do I want for my personal life?
- ... What do I want to do for God?
- ... What legacy do I want to leave?
- ... Why do I want these things?

Those are important questions. Because as we go through this book and I give you the tools to help you shine your light, we have to get clarity on our WHY.

Colossians 3:23 says, *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not for human masters.”* So, to be successful, we have to work at it. In order to shine our light, we have to put in the effort.

Thinking back to the hard work and effort I put in while working for Zig Ziglar, I can honestly say one of my greatest achievements was winning the coveted title of “Salesperson of the Year.” I was so proud of that accomplishment, and I felt Zig and the company were proud of me too. I was given a plaque to celebrate the milestone. I still have this plaque almost 25 years after receiving it.

For those of you wondering about Zig Ziglar, he was America’s most influential and beloved motivational speakers. Zig influenced an estimated quarter of a billion individuals through his 33 books, including his bestseller, *See You At The Top*, which has sold almost two million copies. It was an incredible honor to work for Zig and to say he had a big influence in my life is a total understatement!

One of the things I loved most about the awards at Ziglar was that Zig would personally pick a Bible verse for the person receiving the award to be inscribed on the plaque. The special verse Zig chose for me when I was awarded “Salesperson of the Year,” was Matthew 6:33 NIV:

*“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

I never really analyzed the Bible verse that Zig picked out for me until recently. We had just moved, and as I pulled the plaque out of a moving box to hang it in my new office, it hit me. After re-reading the verse, it occurred to me that what I was seeking in high school, college, and beyond was my own success. I was seeking to be “the best” for the wrong reasons.

Maybe Zig subconsciously knew he needed to remind me to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and then all these things would be given to me. I had it backwards for a really long time—and I’m still working on getting it right now—but I can say for sure that I needed that reminder then, and even now.

**“After you have sought after the Lord and He gives you the desires of your heart, what do you want those desires to be? What is it that you want the Lord to give you? And are you seeking Him first to get those things, or are you trying to figure it out on your own?”**

When you think about your own definition of success, I want you to consider it through the lens of what Matthew said in that scripture. After you have sought after the Lord and He gives you the desires of your heart, what do you want those desires to be? What is it that you want the Lord to give you? And are you seeking Him first to get those things, or are you trying to figure it out on your own? Checking in with yourself and God periodically

will ensure you are on the right track in your season in life. After all, things change—and sometimes quickly.

If I asked a group of people what their definition of success is, I'd probably get a different response from every single person. I have learned through my many years of coaching and speaking that we all define success differently. Some people define success as recognition, a title, making a certain amount of money, living in a certain size house, or raising a loving, caring family. There are no right or wrong definitions of success. The key is that we understand what it is for us and what we know in our heart as our own truth. So, let me ask you, what is *your* definition of success?

**My Definition of Success is...**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Through the years, I've had the privilege of meeting some incredibly talented speakers and authors. I'm astounded at the opportunities I've been blessed with and the people I've shared the stage with. One day I started thinking about all these people that I look up to. I was curious as to what makes them all "successful." I mean, what is it really? Why is one person considered successful and the other one isn't?

After much time thinking quietly on it, it became clear to me. What I find consistent across all of them is that they're all passionate about what they do. They're all living life on purpose. They're not second-guessing themselves or the gifts that God has given them to share with the world. Yes, the people I consider as having achieved success

seem to have clarity of who they are, why they're here, and what their light is. And they're out there shining that light.

If that's the case, then that means all of us can live on purpose, too, if we take time to gain clarity and then follow our heart. So, let's start there. It is time for us to get clarity!

## QUESTIONS TO FIND YOUR PASSION AND PURPOSE

We all have something we are meant to do in this lifetime that supports God's master plan. It's called a purpose. Your passion will be tied to your purpose—because I just know that God isn't going to give you a purpose in life that you hate, right?

You are here for a reason. So, let's uncover it, or at least that next step in your journey to your purpose. And we'll go on this journey together by having you answer a few questions to dive a little deeper.

I want you to write down the answers to these questions on a piece of paper, or in this book—or better yet, in your personal journal for later reflection. The answers to these questions are going to give you insight into your purpose. As I said earlier, before we can shine outward, we must look inward.

### **Question #1: What Activities Do You Most Enjoy?**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Do you love to paint, travel, run? Do you love to be around children, motivate others, write? What are you doing when the time is flying

by? And what are you drawn towards when it comes to doing things in your free time? Those are all clues to who you are and why you're here.

**Question #2: What Would You Do If You Could Not Fail?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

That's a hard question to answer, I know. I want you to really think about this and allow yourself to dream beyond what you might be used to doing today. Take the blinders off and think, "Okay, if I had all the money in the world or all the time in the world, what would I do?" Yes, what would you do if you didn't have a mortgage to pay, or didn't have responsibilities? What would you be doing instead? If you were guaranteed that whatever you started—whether it be a business, a ministry, a book—would be a success, a huge success, what would you want to accomplish? What would you do if you could not, would not, guaranteed will not, fail? Write it down. Remember, God parted the Red Sea. So, anything can happen!

“  
**What would you do if you could not, would not, guaranteed will not, fail? Write it down.**  
”

Would you start a business? Maybe you'd want to go climb Mount Everest or buy a beach house. Maybe you'd want to quit your corporate job and travel the world. Maybe you'd want to start a family or get married, be a successful author or painter. Really stretch your imagination beyond what you see for yourself today. Don't limit yourself. Write whatever comes to mind.

At one point in my life, I considered what *I would be* if I knew I could do anything with guaranteed success. I wrote that I wanted to be a speaker, author, and coach. I remember meeting somebody one time who gave me their business card, and that was their title. I said, “Oh, wow, someday that’s what I want my title to be.” I’m incredibly blessed and a bit humbled, but go figure, that is my title now.

So, why am I having you ask that question for yourself? Because in life, we often limit ourselves. We set goals that we know we can achieve, or we think just a little bit outside of our comfort zone instead of doing what we really want to do. Maybe we are fearful that it won’t work, or that people won’t like it. Or we think “Who am I to do something like that?” We think we are not good enough or that our dreams are for “other” people. Or is it just me thinking those things?

The bottom line is when we can expand our minds to think beyond what we’re capable of today, we can get clarity on our purpose. I believe that God gives us dreams and desires that really push our limits (as opposed to comfortable goals that we can easily do on our own). He wants us to know He is there with us every step of the way, giving us special talents and skills to make big things happen in our lives.

**“God gives us dreams and desires that really push our limits (as opposed to comfortable goals that we can easily do on our own).”**

I was reminded of that this morning, as I was doing my devotional. The desires of your heart have been planted by a good and loving Father. And even though they may seem so far away right now—so, so far—it’s never too late. God is faithful, and if He gave you the desire, then He will bring it to fruition. But many times, we allow doubt in. We limit ourselves to our desires, don’t we?

Maybe we think we’re not worth our dreams or that we’ll never have enough money to do it. Perhaps we think, “I’m just

from a small town. Who am I to do anything like this?” Well, that’s the whole point of this book. Who are you to NOT do something like this?

**Question #3: What Ideas Are You Most Inspired By?**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Meaning when you’re reading the news or watching TV, what are you drawn to? Is it politics? Is it global warming? Christian values? Leadership? What inspires you? Personal growth? Women’s issues?

Think about it this way. When you go to a bookstore, what section do you end up in? That’s a big clue. I can learn a lot about a person based on where they are in a bookstore. So, really think about it.

For me, I love personal development, I love leadership. I love all things growth and development. So, that’s where you’re going to find me in a bookstore. Now, my husband, he’s probably going to be in a history section or reading biographies. Some of you I know may end up in the fiction section or the cooking section. Again, there’s no right or wrong, but that is a clue to what inspires you.

**When you discover what inspires you, you’ll step that much closer to discovering your purpose.**

And when you discover what inspires you, you’ll step that much closer to discovering your purpose—which, by the way, is your light, which is your story.

I love this next question...

**Question #4: When Do You Feel the Most Empowered?**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

I'll put it another way. When are you most proud of yourself? What are you doing when you know you've done an excellent job? Maybe you never brag about yourself, but inside you know you've "done good," as us Texans would say. Are you leading others? Are you singing? Are you writing? Inspiring others?

If this is a hard question to answer—and for many people it is, especially women—then think about what people compliment you on. Is it your cooking, your hospitality, your unique ability to listen or inspire? When we figure this out, that's when our lights start shining brightest. And as the song said, we're supposed to let it shine. So, what are you doing when your light is shining brightest?

**Question #5: What's On Your Bucket List?**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

There was a movie several years ago called *The Bucket List*. It's a cute movie about these two men who are getting ready to "kick the bucket," so they make a list of all the things they want to do before they die.

We know we're supposed to do this, but have you written out your list? I hadn't until a couple of years ago, which is what really prompted this question: What is it I really want to do before I die?

What is it that you want to do? No matter what, at the end of your life, when you're sitting on your deathbed, what is it that you wish you would have done? Author a book? Start a ministry? Travel the world? Go on a mission trip? What's on your bucket list?

Our final question to help us get clarity on our purpose, is really the most important question:

**Question #6: What Legacy Do You Want to Leave?**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Obviously, we all know we're going to die someday. Nobody likes to think about it, but we know it's true. So, when you're gone, what do you want people to remember about you? What impression do you want to make during your time here on earth? That's your legacy. Do you want people to remember your accomplishments? Do you want them to remember your smile and your kind spirit? Do you want them to remember how you made them feel?

Remember, if you are reading this book, then you are still living and breathing. That's the beauty of asking yourself this question now—you can still create a life that will leave the legacy you want to leave, starting today! But if we don't think about it now, it will be too late by the time

**“We all need to start living now, while we're still in our living years.”**

we are ready to leave that legacy. So, what do you want your legacy to be for your loved ones, your business, your community, for God? We all need to start living *now*, while we're still in our living years.

This book is intended to ignite your light, your spark, so that you can shine. And not only to light other people's paths, but ultimately to glorify God. I love these questions so much! They are the exact questions I asked myself when I was struggling with figuring out my own purpose in years past. I didn't have the answers to these questions immediately, and even now, I continue to revisit them as often as possible.

Once I had gained clarity of my purpose, I also gained motivation to write my book, share my story, and to inspire and motivate others. It wasn't because of me, but because I figured out that I have this ability to share something with others that could change their life and the lives of those around them. And if I have the ability to shine my light and share it with others, then you do too. You have a bright light, a flame within you that is just dying to burst through. You have a purpose, and your life, your story, is a gift from God.

I am most in tune with the deeper parts of myself and my light within when I get away from the noise and spend time in nature. Do your best to do the same. Take a day away. Go somewhere where you find inspiration. Maybe visit a park, pond, or nearby lake. When we take time out of our busy schedules to listen to our inner voice and God speaking to us, we will always get the answers we're searching for. If you don't have the opportunity to get away, take a little extra time in the shower or having your morning coffee before the house starts stirring.

Shining our light isn't for our own purpose—it's for others, and for God. We will enjoy the collateral benefits, though. But how can we know how to do that or what we would say to help others if we don't even know who we are? Take the time now to look inward so that you can shine outward. If you have any doubts, know that you are worth it. And know that while God is patient, time is of the essence if you want to live out your best life for as long as possible.

**You have a bright light, a flame within you that is just dying to burst through.**

I encourage you not to gloss over the questions I've posed. I think discovering your purpose is the key to shining your light, and that's why we're starting here. If you take the time to answer these questions honestly now, and on an annual basis, you'll get the clarity you need to fulfil your God-given purpose.

### WHICH ROAD WILL YOU TAKE?

Now that you have a little more clarity regarding your passions and purpose, I want to dive a little deeper into how to make your dreams and goals a reality.

In the late eighties, there was a movie called *Made in Heaven* that I absolutely loved. I'm not really sure why I loved it so much. It's quite cheesy when I watch it now, but still it touched me in such a way. It's about a couple that meets in heaven, and they fall deeply in love. But then they are separated when Annie is sent back to earth to earn her wings. Mike is beside himself with despair. But lucky for him, the heavenly powers offer him a deal. Mike can return to earth, but only on the stipulation that he and Annie will not remember each other. They are given thirty years to find one another.

Back on earth in a physical body, Mike can't seem to get his act together. "There must be something more to life," an inner voice keeps insisting. "There must be a reason I'm here."

The harder Mike tries to ignore that inner voice, the more persistent it becomes. Then one day Mike meets some people who sense that he is struggling to unleash a strong inner desire. It seems to be connected to Mike's love of music, specifically to fragments of a song that keep playing over and over in his head.

To better express this song, Mike teaches himself how to play the saxophone. To his delight, the more skillful he becomes as a saxophone player, the more he can bring forth fragments of the song. Ultimately, it is Mike's magnificent saxophone performance of the song in its entirety that reunites him with Annie.

To this very day, I can still remember the words of Mike's song. Probably because at that point in my life, they struck a chord in me and maybe I needed to hear them.

*"If you don't really know where you want to go, it makes no difference which road you take."*

**If you don't really know where you want to go, it makes no difference which road you take.**

How many of us are walking down roads that are leading nowhere? How many of us have a feeling that our lives could be happier and more prosperous, but our current circumstances are holding us back and making it impossible to succeed? The "Mike" from *Made in Heaven* didn't know where he was going, because he didn't know what he wanted. Because he didn't have a purpose, he didn't care where he ended up. Could that Mike (or Mary) be you?

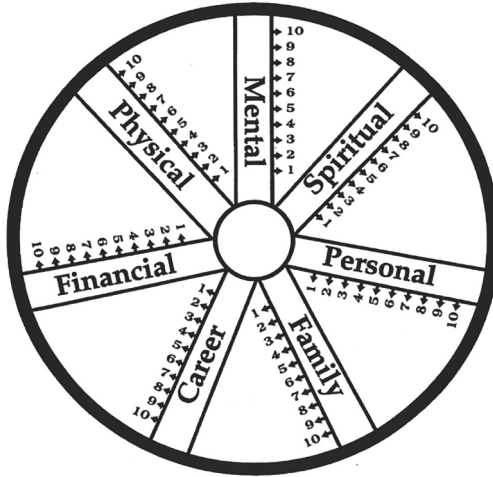
We may be aimlessly scrolling through social media—doing this activity, that activity—with no real thought of why, no real clear direction, no goal. I don't think any of us really want to admit we do that, but the truth is, we all do. We either don't have clarity on what we want, or we know what we want, and we procrastinate on it or doubt ourselves.

I'm not going to dive into procrastination too much now. I actually wrote a whole book on it called *Busy Being Busy...But Getting Nothing Done?*, and I'll touch more on it in Chapter 6. The thing with procrastination is that we're typically not procrastinating on what *doesn't* matter. We usually procrastinate on the things that we know are going to make us happier, healthier, have better relationships, a better career, prosperity, etc.

How many of you, when you woke up this morning, immediately checked your email or spent way too much time scrolling through social media? Did that time bring you closer to your dreams and goals? Or did it move you farther away? You won't get that time back, so it is best not to waste it with excessive "brainless activity." I like a little brainless activity here and there when I am overworked and overstressed, but I cannot live my life absorbed in it. Will the way you spend your first waking hours make your heart's biggest desires come true? If it was spent on social media and email, probably not.

My point is, we find the time to do things that won't lead us where we ultimately want to go. We procrastinate on the things that God has placed in our heart. Or maybe you're not even sure what those dreams and goals are. So, that's what we're going to focus on for just a moment.

I want you to think about your life. Think about it holistically. Zig Ziglar has a tool called *The Wheel of Life* that looks at your life as a whole. He understood that you're more than your career and you're more than your personal or family life. You're more than the money you make or the job that you have, both of which can disappear in an instant. He insists you need to look at yourself holistically, especially when it comes to setting goals. When you clarify the goals that you want to achieve in all areas of your life, and you place them within the spokes of your wheel (Personal, Mental, Career, Financial, Family, Spiritual, and Physical), you'll achieve balanced success.



So, let's talk dreams and goals! What do you want for your career? How much money do you want to make? Where do you want to be when you're 65 years old? 75 years old? Where do you want to live? What do you want to accomplish personally and professionally? How do you want to spend your days? Those are all questions to get you closer to what you really want for your life. Goals are critical in staying on track and being accountable for all that you are striving for in life. Go ahead and write down at least one goal in each area of your life:

**Personal**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Family**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Career**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Financial**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**Physical**

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## Mental

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

## Spiritual

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

So many people go through life asleep. Well, maybe not totally asleep. They're in that comatose state where they're going through life without giving it a lot of thought. Worse yet, the thoughts they do have are

**“So many people go through life asleep. Well, maybe not totally asleep. They're in that comatose state where they're going through life without giving it a lot of thought.”**

defeating. No fingers pointed here. Actually, I'm speaking for myself at times. But you wake up, go to work, pay the bills, take care of the kids, do what you have to do or what we think we *should* do. It is like that movie *Groundhog Day*, where the day starts over every morning and the experiences are all the same. But there are changes we can make in how we approach each day.

I hate the word “should.” I'm sure I'm not the only one that heard things like, “You should do this, you should do that, you should, should, should, should...” Stop the

“shoulds,” for goodness’ sake! Instead, focus on what you *will do*. What do you want to do? What brings you joy?

## LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

The answers are within you. Getting clarity on that now is important because in order to shine through your story, you must know what and for whom you are called to shine. The foundational part that I’m walking you through of finding your purpose and then getting very clear on your goals—that’s what’s going to lead you to knowing who you are and what your story is.

It’s important to point out that sharing our story isn’t about writing a book. It’s not about making it about us. It’s about sharing what we know, what we’ve learned, what we’ve been through with someone else to connect with them, perhaps inspire them, guide them, or even warn them.

I want to encourage you to be open to the idea that you *do* have a story to share. I also want to give you the freedom to know that it’s okay if you’re not ready to share it just yet. Let’s talk about how you could share it when you’re ready. You do have a story, and you must trust me when I say: your story matters.

People have said that we should write the story that we need to read. And if we impact just one person, it is worth it. Someone you may know or someone you may have never met is waiting for your story. If nothing else, you can have peace that you are serving God and His people by sharing your testimony. His good works within you, His triumphs over the darkness in your life, and His never-ending faithfulness. As we go through this journey together, I pray that the answers you’re seeking become clear and that you see the power in your story.

“  
**I want to encourage you to be open to the idea that you do have a story to share. I also want to give you the freedom to know that it’s okay if you’re not ready to share it yet.**  
”





## CHAPTER THREE

---

### YOUR STORY MATTERS

*“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”*

(Matthew 5:14-16)

**A**ccording to the most recent United Nations estimates, there are over 8 billion people in this world. Yet each one of us has our own beliefs, knowledge, experiences, challenges, passions, values, thoughts, and ideas that can inspire, give hope, and teach others. We are all unique ... right down to our very own original fingerprint and DNA!

We have been Divinely created for greatness. Our path has been laid out perfectly according to His purpose for us. With the gifts we have been given comes a responsibility to share our greatness with the world for His benefit. We all hear the dire stories all over social media, in the movies, and on the news. God has created a way for us to fight evil with good ... to fight the negative messages of the day with messages of perseverance, hope, and love. Our goodness

**“We have been  
Divinely created  
for greatness.  
Our path has  
been laid  
out perfectly  
according to His  
purpose for us.”**

can prevail through spreading our messages far and wide. We must remember why we have our gifts... to help others.

*“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit  
is given for the common good.”  
(1 Corinthians 12:7)*

When you think about it from that perspective, there can be literally hundreds, thousands, or even millions of other people in this world who want to know what you know or how to do something that you already know how to do. Even sharing a different perspective can change the life of another or create a sense of hope where there wasn't any.

... Maybe they want information on a subject that you have a deep knowledge and burning passion about.

... Or maybe they are going through a hardship right now, one that perhaps you have also dealt with. Maybe they are looking for resources and relationships to help them know that they are not alone. Your story can comfort them with the knowledge that they are not the first person to experience such loss, trials, or difficulties. You can show them that prevailing is an option.

... Maybe you have a special talent that has taken you years to master. If so, I bet you there's someone out there that would benefit from hearing about your experiences and lessons learned ... if only it was available.

... You might be a business owner or service professional who has experienced tremendous success or has an exceptional background. If that's the case, I bet you there are other professionals out there who would like to learn from you so they can be successful too.

But aside from just teaching someone what you know, imagine:

- *What if your story was the turning point for someone else to make a positive change in their life?*

- *What if your story helped someone to finally overcome an addiction, heal a broken relationship, or achieve a lifelong goal?*
- *What if your story was the one thing that gave someone hope when they were feeling down or discouraged and needed it most?*
- *What if your story kept someone from committing self-harm or hurting others?*
- *What if your story inspired someone to take action because they thought, “If she can do it, I can do it!”*
- *What if just one person read your story and it made a total difference in their life?*

*What if that one person was you? Would you write it? I believe we would all want to share our stories if we knew it would help someone else. Even better, what if it helped you clear out the clutter in your own brain by writing it out?*

**“Deep down, don’t we all want to make a difference, feel significant, and know that we matter—that our stories matter?”**

Deep down, don’t we all want to make a difference, feel significant, and know that we matter—that our stories matter? I know I do, and I think you do too, or you wouldn’t be reading this book.

But sometimes sharing our stories can seem intimidating, or even pointless. After all, who really cares, right? At least that is how I felt. But when you see it from the perspective of giving hope to someone who may need encouragement to keep pushing forward, then it makes it all the more worthwhile ... and necessary.

## THE HISTORY OF STORIES

Jesus told stories. The apostles told stories. It's because those stories were written down in what we now have as the Bible that we even know about them today. The Holy Spirit's work through the church, as documented in the Bible, is what is responsible for making believers today.

If the disciples had walked with Jesus but kept those stories to themselves, we wouldn't be living today with the hope that we have in the Truth. We would not have so many of the answers that we seek.

**It's about sharing your story and shining His light through your story for others to see.**

You see, it's not just about your story. It's about *sharing* your story and shining His light *through* your story for others to see. He has called you for this day and time. As we know, God is with us every step of the way. He always shows up in His perfect way and just on time! He created you to live prosperously with joy in your heart.

## YOU WERE CREATED TO SHINE

You are loved, favored, and chosen to serve a higher purpose and to glorify God in the process. You are His masterpiece, created in His image to shine His light through you. There is power in you being you, the real you. If you don't believe me, believe His words, as shared in Ephesians 2:10 (NLT):

*"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."*

For many years, I don't think I knew the real me. I was a people pleaser for most of my life, subconsciously becoming who I thought others

wanted me to be. But that came at a price. I did not go so far as to be what Julia Roberts depicted in the movie *Runaway Bride*. I at least knew how I liked my eggs cooked, but I was still far from being my authentic self.

Over time, it became exhausting to keep wearing a mask and not truly be who God created me to be. The me that wasn't perfect or happy or confident all the time. The me that wanted to do more for God and be a "difference maker." The me that knew I had gifts to share but felt like I'd be accepted more if I continued to play small. The me that was too scared to illuminate and shine my light.


Natalie Grant's song *The Real Me* perfectly explains how I felt during those years. It's a great song about the masks we wear and the toll that doing so takes on us over time. But thankfully, God knows who we really are and loves us just the same. Thankfully, He is patient in His unconditional love.

Maybe you've been playing small and wearing masks too. Maybe you're reading this book because you're tired of the song and dance, and you're ready to step out and be all that you were created to be. Maybe you know, deep down, that you have something to share, personally or professionally, that could make an impact in someone else's life. Maybe, like me, you're ready to finally shine *through* your story.

It's time for you to illuminate and shine from within! To finally play big and boldly step out of your comfort zone. To create a life that serves God and others.

To assist you along this journey, I've created a simple formula to help you gain clarity on how to illuminate your inner light and share your story for God's glory.

It follows the acronym **S.H.I.N.E.**

- 
- S** – Sow Your Seeds of Greatness
  - H** – Honor Your Story
  - I** – Identify What’s Holding You Back
  - N** – Now is the Time to Write Your Story
  - E** – Encourage and Equip Others

Throughout the rest of this book, we will unpack these concepts together. I will give you suggestions and different exercises that you can do to help you grow in your confidence to share your story. You will also gain a greater understanding of why you have been called for this purpose as we unpack how God is leading your life. And we’ll look at ways you can use your story to shine a light for others on the same path. In the end, if nothing else, it is my sincere desire that you will learn a bit more about yourself and God’s desires for your life.

### ALL THE DIFFERENCE FOR A STARFISH

Now, if you’re anything like me, you may still not be convinced that your story matters. After all, you’re just one person ... how could you really make an impact in this world? Well, that reminds me of the story of the starfish.

One day, an old man was walking along a beach that was littered with thousands of starfish, all of which had been washed ashore by the high tide.

As he walked along, he came upon a young boy who was eagerly throwing the starfish back into the ocean, one by one.

Puzzled, the old man looked at the boy and asked him what he was doing. Without looking up from his task, the boy replied, “*I’m saving these starfish, sir.*”

The old man chuckled aloud. “*Son, there are thousands of starfish and only one of you. What difference can you make?*”

The boy picked up a starfish and gently tossed it into the water. Then he turned to the man and said, “*I made a difference for that one!*”

Life has a way of making people cynical. Just like that old man walking on the beach, many people conclude that their lives don’t matter. They think that they are unable to make a difference in a large and vast world, populated by so many other people. They see the value in others but are blind to their own value.

**I made a difference for that one!**

But the truth of the matter is, all throughout history the course of humanity has been dramatically altered by people willing to make a difference. Innovations have been created, wars have been won, institutions built, and entire nations changed through the power of just one person. Think of Thomas Edison, Mother Teresa, or Moses. After all these years, we remember these people because of their stories.

And while their stories are pretty remarkable, your story doesn’t have to be quite as dramatic in order to make a difference. Here’s the thing. God doesn’t make “average” people, so there’s no such thing as an “average” story. It is important to also remember that God does not make mistakes. You are unique, special, and valued in the eyes of the Father. He has given you your story, whatever it is, to shine as a light for others.

You can shine a light for others by sharing your story—your passions, experiences, skills, talents, and knowledge—with those who need to hear it. How amazing would it be to share your story and have the confidence to know that you did make a difference in the world ... again, *even if* it was just for one person?

For you to know that, just perhaps, there was actually a purpose to the pain, to the struggle, or to all the hard lessons you've learned along the way. And for you to know that in all of it, God was preparing you to share your story in order to serve others and create your legacy?

**He has given you your story, whatever it is, to shine as a light for others.**

Would it be worth it to you then? What if I told you that one could even be a future generation you will never meet? Would you be willing to try and make a difference with your story for just “that one”?

What I hope you realize by reading this book and following the S.H.I.N.E. formula is that you already have everything within you to make a difference, share your story, and serve others *with* your story.

And in doing so, you will ***SHINE Through Your Story.***

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Michelle Prince is a best-selling author, sought-after motivational speaker, and the CEO/Founder of Performance Publishing Group, a partner publishing company dedicated to making a difference ... one story at a time. Michelle knows that everyone has a story to tell, and she is passionate about helping them tell it for God's glory.

Michelle assists companies and individuals through her training and people-building solutions. She helps them ignite their passions, identify their talents, achieve balance, unlock potential, and be more productive, all so they can achieve abundant success in their personal and professional lives.

For information on Michelle's speaking, corporate training, and people-building solutions, go to

[www.MichellePrince.com](http://www.MichellePrince.com)

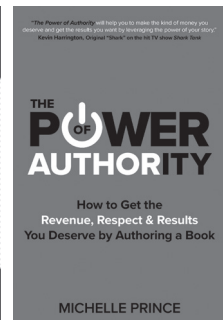
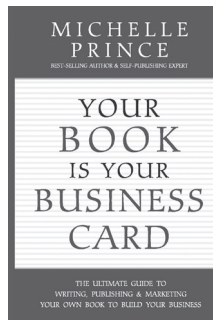
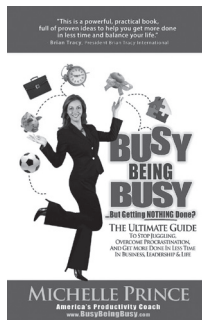
or

[www.PrincePerformance.com](http://www.PrincePerformance.com)

Or you can email us at

[Support@MichellePrince.com](mailto:Support@MichellePrince.com)

Additional Books & Resources  
from Michelle Prince



You can find these books and more at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)

# YOU WERE CREATED TO SHINE!

*“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”*

Matthew 5:14-16 NIV



You have a story that matters. Your story is part of your purpose, given to you for a reason and intended to serve a bigger purpose. Your story is a gift, and gifts are meant to be shared.



## SHINE THROUGH YOUR STORY

**SHINE Through Your Story** will help you rediscover your gifts, ignite your light, and illuminate the path for others, all through sharing your story! In this book, Michelle Prince shares her proven S.H.I.N.E formula, which will help you gain clarity into who you are, why you're here, and how to shine from within.

- S** Sow Your Seeds of Greatness
- H** Honor Your Story
- I** Identify What's Holding You Back
- N** Now is the Time to Write Your Story
- E** Encourage and Equip Others

It's time to stop playing small, step out of your comfort zone, and finally embrace all that you were created to be. You were created to **SHINE!**



Michelle Prince is a best-selling author, sought-after motivational speaker, and the CEO/Founder of Performance Publishing Group, a partner publishing company dedicated to making a difference ... one story at a time. Michelle knows that everyone has a story to tell, and she is passionate about helping them tell it for God's glory.

Michelle assists companies and individuals through her training and people-building solutions. She helps them ignite their passions, identify their talents, achieve balance, unlock potential, and be more productive, all so they can achieve abundant success in their personal and professional lives.

ISBN 978-1-956914-81-8

