STAGES
Finding God Where You Are

AT A GLANCE:
Our talk series, STAGES: Finding God Where You Are, is about the various phases of life and how one may know and feel the Presence of God in each of those stages.

First Stage: The first 20 years of your life, and its purpose is to explore, to discover who you are—specifically, your calling, your values, and your identity.

Second Stage: The next 20 years—from 20 to 40 years old—and its purpose is to expand your life. In this stage, you develop your calling, your craft, and as always, your character. You also enter into new territories.

Third Stage: The next 20 years—from 40 to 60 years old—which is the time to be exact. To zero in. To focus even more on your distinct mission and increase your impact in the world.

Fourth Stage: This consists of the remaining years of your life, where you prepare your exit, pass on the baton, and possibly enter into new worlds.

AFTER THE SERIES:
You will see God in what you're doing. You will see God in the ordinary routine of your daily life.

Talk 3: "Exact"

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT:

Talk 1 is about the first 20 years of your life, and its purpose is to explore, to discover who you are—specifically, your calling, your values, and your identity. The key message is God is right here, right now.

Talk 2 is about the second stage of your life— from 20 to 40 years old— where your goal is to expand what you already have. Yes, pray for expansion. But here's a warning: When you expand, you'll meet pushback. You'll face resistance. The key message: "God fights your bat-tles."

Talk 3 is about after you hit 40, where your goal is to be Exact. To focus. To zero in. To subtract more than to add. To eliminate so you can concentrate. Knowing what you cannot do is as important as knowing what you can do.

The key message is no matter what stage you're in right now, *"God will turn it into good."*

I. REVIEW THE KEY BIBLE VERSES:

Review the story of David.

In Stage One, David was a shepherd. In Stage Two, David was a warrior. In Stage Three, David became king. The Bible says, *David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years.* (2 Samuel 5:4 NIV)

God tells David: *I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wher-ever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth…* (2 Samuel 7:8-9 NIV)

STAGES

Talk 1: *Explore*

Talk 2: *Expand*

Talk 3: *Exact*

Talk 4: *Exit*

Notes:

Review the story of Joseph— how his brothers threw him into a pit and sold him as a slave. Because they hated him and wanted him punished. But God turned it into good. Through a circuitous route, Joseph became the governor of Egypt.

The key message of Talk 3, *"God will turn it into good," comes from what Joseph told his brothers:You plotted evil against me, but God turned it into good…* (Genesis 50:20 GNT).

But note, this didn't happen automatically. Joseph was seduced by Potiphar's wife, and he resisted her allures. If he gave in to her temptation, I suspect God's plan would not have happened. But because he followed God, God turned evil into good. When you have a strong spiritual character, curses become blessings.

But the opposite happens too. When you're spiritually unprepared for the harvest, disaster strikes. Blessings become curses.

Your entire life is built on one foundation—your spiritual character. If your spiritual character isn't strong, the weight of your blessings will crush you. This is what spiritual character means: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23 NIV)

II. ASK FOR REACTIONS AND REFLECTIONS

Ask for sharing on the three temptations in life you need to fight at every stage, but they all increase in Stage 3…

1. Temptations to Lust
2. Temptations to Greed
3. Temptations to Pride

Ask: for sharing on the 4 Strategies To Protect Yourself from Temptations of Entitlement:

Strategy 1: Lead with a Limp
Strategy 2: Protect with Partners
Strategy 3: Monitor Your Marriage
Strategy 4: Connect with Your Core

III. PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray that members may be protected from temptations so that they can focus, concentrate on what God really wants them to do.

Pray that members will always remember the four strategies to protect themselves from temptations.

Pray for those who have fallen. Pray David's prayer:
"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; accord-ing to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!" (Psalm 51:1-2)

Pray that they will remember: God is found in your detours as much as in your destination.

Pray God, we allow You to form our spiritual character, so that our curses will turn into blessings.

Declare: Beside where I fell, I find a winning ladder, and beside my delay, I'll find a doorway to my destiny.
God will turn it into good.

Notes: