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Gleanings

Discover Your Role in the Meta-Narrative



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One of the conundrums of human existence is the question, why am I here? At some point in life, most human beings entertain the question. But there do not appear to be any credible satisfying answers, so many people give up. They numb their curiosity with the busyness of life. By taking this approach, they tacitly assume that the question does not require an answer. This position presumes that we can live life as we please with no consequences for ignoring the question. But is that true?

If you believe you were created to play a role in the Creator's meta-narrative—the overarching story of history—and failure to discern and play your role is unacceptable to the Creator, then it is dangerous to ignore the question.

Proverbs 16:4 suggests that God is working out his meta-narrative:

The LORD works out everything for his own ends—even the wicked for a day of disaster. (NIV)

If God's own ends are the events that comprise his meta-narrative, then according to this text everything is part of the meta-narrative, even people who are characterized as wicked. If the term *wicked* refers to those living in rebellion against God, then even the rebellious are part of God's plan. This may be perplexing, but in reality, if God is sovereign, it is what we should expect. If the amazing universe that we live in is beyond comprehension, then the Creator of the universe must also be beyond comprehension. Therefore, whatever the Creator chooses to do should not surprise us because total comprehension of his will and ways is not possible. Even people living in rebellion against the Creator cannot thwart his will.

Given that the Creator is sovereign over his universe and that alignment with his will and ways brings blessing (Psalms 1), it will go better for people who choose to play their God-given roles in the meta-narrative rather than rebelling. Rebellion will not be successful. In the end, every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord (Romans 14:11). So how does a person play his or her role in the meta-narrative?

One of the tools we have for finding our roles in the meta-narrative is the C4 principle. C4 stands for calling, character, capability, and commissioning. C4 is used in Scripture as a means to identify the purpose of God for people. For example, C4 was used to qualify construction workers (Exodus 35:30–36:2); to select a musician (1 Samuel 16:14–23); to appoint people to distribute food (Acts 6:1–6); and to recognize organizational leaders (1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9).

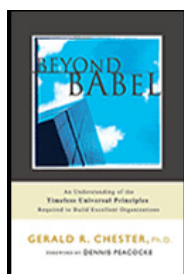
Because blessings flow when we align with God's meta-narrative and God has provided C4 as an alignment tool, it is therefore wise to use C4 to find and fulfill our roles in the meta-narrative.

An example of someone who used C4, though probably unwittingly, to find and fulfill his life purpose is Christopher Columbus.

Columbus was a fifteenth-century cartographer. He studied the work of Greek geographer Eratosthenes and Italian cartographer Toscanelli. Based on his studies, he conjectured that the earth was round and was convinced that it was his destiny to demonstrate this reality. A demonstration would both validate his theory and open up a shorter trade route with the east. In addition, Columbus was a devoted follower of Christ and was convinced that he needed to share the gospel of Christ with people he encountered along the way.

But an expedition to test his thesis would be very expensive. His only hope of financing was the support of a reigning monarch. The monarchs of Portugal, England, and Spain turned him down—they all thought he was mad. Nevertheless, he would not be dissuaded; he felt called of God to the mission. Even his name revealed something of his mission. Note the following excerpt about him from *The Light and the Glory*.

He had long been convinced that God had given him a special, almost mystical mission: to carry the Light of Christ into the darkness of undiscovered heathen lands, and to bring the inhabitants of those lands to the holy faith of Christianity. His own name, Christopher, which literally meant Christ-bearer, was to him a clear indication that God had called him to do this. Indeed, he found confirmation of his call almost everywhere he looked.”(Marshall, Peter; David Manuel (1980-09-01), Baker Book Group-A. Kindle Edition, p.31)



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Calling, the first “C” of the C4 principle, refers to the call of God on each of our lives. One of the ways God puts destiny in us is to give us passion to do what we are called to do. Clearly, Columbus would not have continued seeking funding without a deep passion and conviction that he was called to his mission.

The second element of the C4 principle is character. Character is a measure of a person’s alignment with the will and ways of God. In other words, character is a reflection of a person’s view of God. Columbus was holistic, that is, he viewed God as the definer of everything in life. This means that every endeavor is an opportunity to honor and glorify God. This was a guiding compass in Columbus’s every decision.

The third element of the C4 principle is capability. Capability is the skill and ability that a person needs to fulfill his or her mission in life. Columbus was an accomplished cartographer and a student of history, which helped him gain the vision for his mission that ignited his passion.

While calling, character, and capability served Columbus well, there was still something missing. He needed to be commissioned. Commissioning is the final element of the C4 principle. Commissioning is the validation by authority figures who are sovereignly placed in our lives (Romans 13). Authority figures help us find and fulfill our divinely ordained purpose.

While Columbus was trying to find a monarch to commission (and finance) his expedition, he left his young son at a monastery whose prior was Juan Perez, a very wise man who was also the confessor for the queen of Spain, Isabella.

After being turned down for funding by the monarchs of Portugal, England, and Spain, Columbus went to pick up his son. He arrived at the monastery one evening and Juan Perez noticed his discouragement and began to dialogue with him. The conversation went long into the night. The wise prior directed Columbus back to the Lord and in the process became persuaded of God’s call on Columbus’s life.

The next morning, Juan Perez sent a message to Queen Isabella encouraging her to reconsider Columbus’s proposal. She did and Columbus was commissioned by the king and queen of Spain for his expedition to discover a shortcut to the east and, in the process, to expand the Christian message as the apostles Paul and Peter had done many years before.

Commissioning agents are important for everyone. They validate God’s call on our lives, set a context that will enable us to fulfill that call, and may even help fund the call.

It took Columbus many years to find his calling and then many more years and a lot of endurance to fulfill it. There were many difficulties and challenges along the way, but he persevered and played his role in the meta-narrative. He found and fulfilled his life purpose. Although he may not have been aware of it, the C4 principle provided the compass of alignment for his journey.

Be encouraged. Others before you have found and fulfilled God’s call on their lives. You can too. Use the C4 principle as a compass for your life purpose, that is, as a tool of alignment with the meta-narrative. Be faithful to stay on the journey. Notice the clues, such as your name and the revelation you have from God. Develop godly character. Identify and develop your capability. Engage with your commissioning agents and never give up.

May the Lord grant us all grace to use the C4 principle as our compass directing our roles in the meta-narrative for the glory of God.

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	Prior Strategic Life Alignment Alumni Events	Recordings Available
Fulfill Your Life Purpose	<i>Seminar:</i> TBA	TBA
	<i>Webinar:</i> TBA	TBA
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