

A Different Perspective
Living Life to the Full By Knowing Who I Am
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Ugly Duckling Has a Dream

When she walked out on the stage the audience just sneered at her. The judges rolled their eyes. She was 48 years old, never been married, never been kissed, unemployed and still looking. Her hair was a mess. Her eyebrows looked like a forest. She was frumpy at best and her dress looked like something my mother used to wear back in the sixties.

She'd been singing since she was 12 years old and always wanted to sing in front of a large audience. After she pranced out onto the stage - she was really odd you know - one of the judges asked her what she dreamed to be.

"A professional singer", she answered. The judges and the audience were incredulous. "And why hasn't it worked out for you so far?" A judge asked. They all poked fun at her. They were brutal. But she stood her ground.

"What are you going to sing for us tonight?" One of the judges asked patronisingly. "I dreamed a Dream' from Le Miserables," she answered. And on the thumbs up, the audio pressed the button. The music began to play and she opened her mouth and began to sing ... with the voice of an angel.

Her performance brought the house down. Her name is Susan Boyle. And within just a few weeks over 100 million people had watched this video clip on YouTube on the Internet.

I've watched that video - seven minutes and seven seconds. I've watched it online several times now and not once have I finished with a dry eye. The world wanted to judge this book by it's cover but before she walked out on stage she told the interviewer "*I'm going to make this audience rock!*"

No one believed her, no one believed her, until she opened her mouth to sing these words. I can only speak them, I can't sing them but have a listen anyway:

*I dreamed a dream in time gone by
When hope was high
And life was worth living
I dreamed that love would never die
I dreamed that God would be forgiving.*

*Then I was young and unafraid
And dreams were made and used and wasted.
There was no ransom to be paid
No song unsung, no wine untasted.*

*But the tigers came at night
With their voices soft as thunder
As they tear your hope apart
And they turn your dream to shame.*

*I had a dream my life would be
So different from this hell I'm living
So different now from what it seemed
Now life has killed the dream I dreamed.*

Those beautiful words from the stunning musical La Miserables are the story of many a life. We start off with dreams and so often those dreams are crushed. So often we don't end up living the life that we thought we should be living.

Susan Boyle knew something about herself before she walked out on that stage. Thirty-six years she had been singing and had never had the opportunity to perform like this. But she knew who she was and nervous as she was she sang so beautifully, so powerfully that she was like a mirror into our souls.

When we looked at her we saw ourselves. We saw our hopes and dreams even when the audience laughed and sneered and she was crushed by an unforgiving world. Why did over 100 million people watch this video clip online. Why is it that you just can't watch that performance without getting misty eyes and a stuffy nose? Why?

Because it reminds each one of us deep down that the need we have to be who we are created to be. It reminds us of the pain of a world that doesn't know who we are. As a life, a life that doesn't know where it's going. It hurts. It hurts so deeply for so many people.

And there is not a sane of person among the 100 million who doesn't wish Susan well. There's not a one who's not inspired. There's not a one who doesn't ache to experience just what she experienced.

My friend, so many people of the 6.5 billion people alive on planet earth today are like travellers who've lost their passports. Men, women, children are on a journey to somewhere without really knowing who they are and where they're headed.

And the tragedy amongst all of this is that this life we have to live down here on earth, it's a one time thing. It's not a dress rehearsal and we don't get a second chance. There's one chance to make it count. One chance to live it to the full. One chance. And all too soon the spring of our youth turns into autumn. All too soon we find ourselves heading toward the last act of this drama that we call life. All too soon ...

I don't know about you, but I want to look on the life that I've lived when I'm old and incontinent and toothless, I want my heart to glow in the knowledge that not only did I discover who it was that my God made me to be, but that I lived out the identity that He gave me, the personality He gave me, the life plan that He gave me, to the absolute full!

You can't ask much more of life than a life lived where you know that you know deep in your heart, that you lived it to the full when you're on your death bed.

Let me ask you something. As you contemplate the remainder of your life, the time between now and when you breathe your last breath here on planet earth, will you ask yourself these basic questions? Have I discovered who I was created to be? Am I living that out to the full in my life? Am I singing the song of my dreams that God planted deep in my DNA before time began? When you ask yourself those questions what's the answer? Yes or no?

If your answer is 'yes' then you talk about some profound sense of joy, peace and contentment, the sort of stuff I was talking about before. If the answer is 'no' then probably there's this nagging sense that you're missing out on something. Is this all there is? Surely there must be something more?

You know, my experience with most people, by far the majority are in the 'no' category. They have some sense of destiny but also they have this sense that they're not living it out, at least not to the full. And for me the starting point of all of that is an understanding of who I was created to be. Understanding my nature. People often talk about personality type.

So over the next 4 weeks on the program that's what we're going to be unpacking. A dear friend of mine, Keith Henry, will be joining me next week on the program. He and I have just finished writing a book together on this very subject. It's called '*Personality GPS Living Life to the Full By Knowing Who I Am*'. And the whole point of that book and what we are going to be talking at on the program

over the next 4 weeks is to discover who we are. Who you are. Who I am. What personality did God give Me? And what's the plan for using that personality in this world. It's all summed up in a nutshell by the Apostle Paul who wrote this in a letter to a bunch of friends in a church in Ephesus in the First Century:

"For we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works that God prepared in advance for us to do."
(Ephesians Chapter 2, Verse 10)

In other words, who we are and the destiny that He's mapped out for our lives, those two fit hand in glove. That's why it's so important for us to know exactly who it is He's made each one of us to be. It's important for me and it's important for you.