

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT DOUG K. REED AND *DIVINE INTENTIONS*

Whatever's holding you back will hold you back no more! In *Divine Intentions*, Doug Reed leaves no stone unturned! You will be changed, healed, and empowered to live out God's divine plan for your life!

—Darryl Strawberry

Evangelist and four-time World Series champion
New York Times best-selling author, *Finding My Way*

Divine Intentions is a powerful scriptural attestation that we are God's creative handiwork. This soul-stirring intimation reminds us that we have been personally called on a redemptive journey to an abundant life beyond our wildest dreams.

—Rob Hoskins

President, OneHope
Senior advisor, World Evangelical Alliance

Doug invites you on a compelling journey toward the life God intended you to live. *Divine Intentions* will touch your heart and mind as it connects you with the God who rescues, restores, relabels, and redirects your life. It's a captivating and life-transforming read.

—David Brakke

Pacific Northwest church planter and lead pastor
The Church at Maltby-Monroe, Maltby, WA

Divine Intentions charts a course for smoother sailing in life. While God is always our "Captain," Doug Reed puts inspirational wind in our sails with strategic concepts to stay on course.

—Mark Alford

News anchor, Fox4 News, Kansas City; fledgling sailor

A powerful compass leading you to true spiritual freedom! Doug Reed's *Divine Intentions* is a *must* for anyone longing to know *why* they're on this planet and *how* to become exactly *who* God made them to be.

—Jesse Quiroz
Lead pastor, *Journey Church*, Troy, MO

The first time I met Doug, we hiked up a mountain together. On that journey, I learned about Doug's passion for helping others find the freedom and purpose God has for them. This book is a great reflection of that passion. Get ready to take your own exciting journey as you read this book.

—Joel Malm
Founder, Summit Leaders; author, *Fully You*

The personal experiences shared by Pastor Doug Reed in *Divine Intentions* will impact people everywhere. New believers' and mature believers' faith will be strengthened. You will be motivated to do great exploits for the Lord.

—Bishop Michael Grant
First presiding bishop, Assemblies of God, Jamaica

In *Divine Intentions*, Doug Reed takes you by the hand and gently and biblically leads you from a place of pain to a place of healing and wholeness. A must read!

—Rick Welborne
Lead pastor, Life Church, Fruitland Park, FL

Doug not only believes the content that he has masterfully crafted for us in *Divine Intentions*, but he authentically lives it. Doug's insights on God's purpose, God's healing power, and God's direction are applicable for individuals or groups at all levels!

—Nik Adwalpalker
Lead pastor, Throggs Neck Community Church, Bronx, NY

Doug Reed is the clearest, most powerful voice on *restoration* to our generation. *Divine Intentions* brings this voice—and God’s restoring power—to your easy chair.

—*Tim Enloe*
International conference speaker and author

Divine Intentions is a must read for anyone who desires to discover their own story that has been authored before the foundations of the earth.

—*Steve Lummer*
Lead pastor, Discovery Church, Prescott, AZ

Divine Intentions is an invitation to hope, healing, and the fulfilled life you long for. Caution: pick this book up and you won’t put it down.

—*Paul Feuerstein*
Lead pastor, Helena First Church, Helena, MT

Doug Reed, in his book *Divine Intentions*, takes you down the road to self-worth and value—not through your eyes, but through the eye of your Creator. God has a plan. Even when you reach a dead end, He is there to build a new road.

—*Reggie Dabbs*
Motivational speaker and author, *Just Keep Breathing*

Doug has always had a passion to help people reach their full potential in God. Through this excellent, practical, and inspiring book, you will find yourself desiring to take the next step in discovering and living out God’s personal purpose for you.

—*Jason St. John*
Lead pastor, Evangel Church, Kansas City, MO

Doug is a gift to the kingdom of God and to the church. He has been such a blessing to our church as we have partnered for kingdom work. I know you will be blessed by his heart and insights.

—*Chad Benson*

Lead and founding pastor, Lifegate Church, Burleson, TX

In *Divine Intentions*, Doug Reed brilliantly addresses the root issues that interrupt individuals (and families), keeping them from experiencing the life God intended. Whether you are looking to reset the course of your life or simply need a recalibration, this book will redirect you into God's purpose.

—*Alan Biggers*

Family specialist, pastor, and executive director
Teen Challenge Southeast, Kansas City Girls Academy

Doug has spoken into so many lives over the years and has helped changed the trajectory of hearts all over world. With this book, you get to experience his heart and what I have experienced by being around him. *Divine Intentions* will introduce you to what so many of us have been recipients of.

—*Terry Kelley*

Lead worship and production pastor, Hope Fellowship, Frisco, TX



**DIVINE
INTENTIONS**

DIVINE INTENTIONS

The Life You're Supposed to Live,
The Person God Meant You to Be

DOUG K. REED



WHITAKER
HOUSE

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DIVINE INTENTIONS

The Life You’re Supposed to Live, The Person God Meant You to Be

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to my Savior.

When I was lost, You rescued me.

When I was labeled, You renamed me.

When I was broken, You restored me.

When I was drifting, You redirected me.

*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.*
—Ephesians 2:20 (NLT)

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FOREWORD

I hope you are ready to begin living out the life you were truly created to live. That's why you have this book in your hands. You know there is more. You feel it deep down. The problem is that in some way, you feel stuck or at a crossroads.

I believe it is God's divine timing and plan for you to encounter the *Divine Intentions* He has laid out for you. Your story was written by a God who saw you before you were born, a God who loves you and has an adventure ready for you to live. Your story is connected to *His* story. Psalm 139:16 reminds us that “*every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.*” God has a unique story that He has written just for you—one of purpose and calling, one that will have you making a difference for the glory of the Author, God Himself, the Creator of all.

The problem is, life happens. Mistakes are made. Hurt is inflicted. Detours take over and we get stuck between the life we are living and the life God intended for us to live. *Divine Intentions* will be your GPS and compass to get you back to the life you were created to live. It will take you through a four-step discovery process to help you become the person God meant for you to be.

This is more than a book by Doug Reed; it's his life message that I've seen him live out for years. I've seen countless people cross paths with

Doug and this message—and it altered the course of their lives. All over the world, there are men and women living out their stories for God as missionaries, authors, pastors, business leaders, parents, and more. They are changing the world as they live out their calling. They all have one thing in common: they were at a crossroads in their lives...and came across this life message under the ministry of Doug Reed. It changed who they were and what they would become.

There is one story in particular that stands out for me. Her story started out like so many do, full of hope and promise of a bright future designed by God. The problem is, she never knew about a God who loved her and created an adventurous story uniquely for her. She wasn't raised in church at all. Her parents were divorced before she hit her critical teen years. Like many others, she encountered abuse of every kind, along with an often-absent alcoholic father. This was her normal. She knew nothing else. Hurt was common. She thought life was about abuse and being devalued. She didn't know of a greater love or a divine plan until she was in high school, when she was invited for the first time to a local church youth ministry meeting.

She had never been to church and was not aware of the gospel story. She didn't know about the heavenly Father who wanted to *rescue* her from the hurt and abuse she was accustomed to and *restore* her back to the person she was created to be. She didn't know the heavenly Father who wanted to *relabel* her as the gifted, powerful, and beautiful daughter of God that she was, who wanted to *redirect* her life to one of purpose so she would make a difference in her own future family and minister to thousands of others.

The offer of free pizza and a fun night got her into that church on a Wednesday night...but it was the life-changing message from the youth pastor that God used to open her heart.

Four years later, when she graduated from high school, she was a faithful member of the church's student ministry. She headed to Bible college to pursue the ministry calling that she discovered was part of her divine story.

That girl was my wife, Kelly, the love of my life, who I met at that same Bible college. The youth minister, of course, was Pastor Doug Reed.

Doug became Kelly's spiritual father and I had to win him over to marry her. He officiated at our wedding and was an early mentor for us both when it came to ministry. Twenty years later, we are now best of friends and ministry partners. Kelly and I planted Destination Church in Virginia in 2011 and Doug has been part of our church story from the beginning. He now serves as our partnership/teaching pastor as well. I get to see the same life-changing message that changed my wife's story change the stories of thousands in our church. Besides speaking at our church several times a year, Doug travels across the country, sharing his message of God's restorative plan in churches and conferences. He also leads mission trips all over the world.

I am so excited to see the impact *Divine Intentions* will have on people's lives as they read and discover the four keys of being *rescued, restored, released, and redirected*. I will be forever grateful for the ministry and friendship I've been honored to have with Doug. And I believe that after you see what this book does for your journey, you will be forever grateful, too. Get ready to live the life you're supposed to live, to become the person God meant for you to be. Enjoy discovering the *Divine Intentions* God has for you! *The best is yet to come.*

—Bryan Briggs
Lead pastor
Destination Church, Central Virginia

INTRODUCTION: THE AUTHOR OF YOUR STORY



Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.
—Hebrews 12:2 NKJV

Your story began before you were even born. Your parents were chosen without your consent. Your family history was established before you took your first breath. Your personality, body type, and unique gifts were embedded in your DNA without any prior authorization from you. But none of it was haphazard.

Every story requires an *author* and your personal narrative is no exception. Your story has a divine Author who would be thrilled if you fulfilled the role He has planned for you. You existed in His loving, wildly creative imagination before you appeared on earth. In fact, you have been on His mind and in His heart for all eternity. His plans are perfect and His thoughts about you are not limited by time, space, or circumstance.

It can be hard to process this truth because our lives are far from perfect. But there is power and comfort knowing that He has a strategy for

your story. Knowing that a better plan exists than the one you've been following is a starting point for revolutionary change in your life.

King David passionately crafted these words:

You created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.... Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

(Psalm 139:13–14, 16 NIV)

God has a book—and you and I are in it. All of David's days, your days, and my days are written in God's book. He started to write about us before we were even conceived!

However, the life we are living may not be the one He intended. In our hearts, we know this must be true because Jesus promised us an abundant life (see John 10:10) but few of us have that. Most of us have simply chosen a different life for ourselves, or we follow a path that someone else put before us. Most are not living the life God intended them to live.

Yet God is obsessed with us. He cares more about you than you care about yourself. The apostle Paul wrote, "*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*" (Ephesians 2:10).

Think about it: you're a *masterpiece*. I used to think I was an accident, an experiment gone wrong, but then, I met the Author of my story and learned His plans for me. The chaos that I had made of my life had not nullified His creative work. And He didn't mind doing some rewriting! My mess could stop Him from crafting a masterpiece.

THE POWER TO FULFILL YOUR STORY

Let's pretend that I'm sitting down to write a book about *you*. I can make you rich or poor, plain or amazingly attractive. I could make you a person of influence, or a virtual nobody. I could write about you in a way

that makes you struggle, or I could make you blessed beyond measure. Just one tiny problem: my book is *fictional!* I have no power to make the story come true. My authority as the author of your story ends quickly. Fantasy over. My point is, I don't have the power to make my vision of you come true—but God does. He is “*the author and finisher of our faith*” (Hebrews 12:2 NKJV).



YOUR DIVINE AUTHOR HAS WRITTEN ABOUT YOU
WITH A STRATEGIC, RECKLESS ABANDONMENT,
NEVER STOPPING TO CALCULATE THE COST OF
WHAT HE IS PROPOSING.



And God writes with a full creative freedom that has no limits. Your divine Author has written about you with a strategic, reckless abandonment, never stopping to calculate the cost of what He is proposing. When God planned your perfect reality in this world, He had “*glorious, unlimited resources*” (Ephesians 3:16) at His disposal. God desires to make His every plan and every purpose be your true-life story. His love for you is vast and He wants you to experience all that He has designed for you.

Unlike a story I might attempt to write about you, God's story isn't fiction. Your divine Author has already penned a masterpiece about you that He would like to share one step at a time. God is relentlessly committed and lovingly devoted to you. He wants to give you the life He always intended you to have—to make your story come true.

PEERING OVER THE EDGE

Some of my favorite childhood memories are the short vacations my family took to my aunt and uncle's cabin in southern Missouri. I would explore the surrounding woods and go on make-believe missions with my trusty, Daisy Red Ryder BB gun, like a special-ops soldier on assignment.

I would fire that amazing, air-powdered weapon thousands of times on every vacation. Everywhere I went, my imagination took me on incredible adventures.

I loved to stand on the cliffs overlooking a nearby river and shoot my BBs down into the water. There was a drought one year; the normally deep and fast-flowing river was shallow and docile. One summer day, the ground gave way as I stood about six feet from the edge of the cliff. The whole section crumpled and I tumbled down in a cloud of dirt and rocks.

Fortunately, a neighbor boy saw me fall and ran to get my parents. I was soon rescued and taken to the hospital, where I was treated for a concussion, cuts, and bruises, but no broken bones. Luckily, my BB gun also survived the fall, and we both fought valiantly after that.

However, my fanciful days of freedom were suddenly curtailed. My parents kept asking me, "Why were you so close to the cliffs? What were you thinking?" They stressed how blessed I was that I survived the fall and how I had to be more cautious. And where they once seemed carefree, they now constantly worried about me.

But that's how it is. Dangerous and tragic events teach us important lessons, whether we're kids on vacation or adults experiencing heartbreak. Experience makes us hesitate and stay away from the dangerous cliffs of life that we used to frequent. The advice of those who are no longer adventurous sidelines our own adventures. Caution kills our curiosity and we become risk-averse. The attractions of life's dangerous places no longer hold the same allure.



BY AVOIDING THE UNKNOWN AND PLAYING IT
SAFE, YOU CAN MISS THE CHANCE
TO FIND OUT WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU
ARE MEANT TO EXPERIENCE.



Sometimes in life, the greatest opportunities lie in the unknown and danger is mixed into our destiny. By avoiding the unknown and playing it safe, you can miss the chance to find out who you are and what you are meant to experience. Maybe it's time for you to peer over the cliffs again. The Holy Spirit is ready to teach us God's vision for our lives.

No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.... No one can know God's thoughts except God's own Spirit. And we have received God's Spirit (not the world's spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us.
(1 Corinthians 2:9, 11–12)

One of my goals for this book is to increase your curiosity and decrease your caution. I am praying that God will create a *holy wonder* in you about the future He has for you. I am praying for a dissatisfaction with the status quo of your existence and asking God to move you out of your comfort zone. Life cannot be lived fully without risk. The cliffs of your destiny are calling. The ground may seem precarious, but the view is spectacular! The good stuff—God's stuff—is always near the edge.

CREATIVE OVERKILL

God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.
(Genesis 1:31 ESV)

I once watered and fertilized my garden to death. I fed my future vegetables so much that I destroyed them with something that was designed to help them.

I have a habit of overdoing just about everything. I tend to overdevelop, overthink, overload every message, and overwrite every paragraph. I must self-edit or I drown my ideas with too many words. My creativity must be limited because *I* am limited.

But what is true for me is not true for God, the ultimate Creator and creative genius. His creation—the universe and everything in it—will take your breath away. But His greatest creation is *us*, a work in progress. For Him, enough is never enough until His vision for you is completely realized. “*We are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works*” (Ephesians 2:10 NIV).

We are His creation. This is both a basic truth and a divine revelation, particularly when you consider the magnificent complexity of the human body, the sophistication and remarkable diversity of humanity, and the unique individualism of everyone you know. These all indicate the intelligence and power of the Creator.

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. (John 1:1–3)



YOU ARE PART OF THE CONTINUAL EXPRESSION
OF JESUS’S CREATIVE GENIUS. AND HE’S NOT
DONE YET BECAUSE *YOU* ARE NOT DONE.



Everything was created through Jesus, which means you are part of the continual expression of His creative genius. And He’s not done yet because *you* are not done. Jesus is so committed to his *creative intentions* toward you that He died to redeem you.

When Adam and Eve sinned, creation rebelled against the Creator. Not wanting to be separated from His creation, the Creator took the punishment that we deserved upon Himself. Jesus died and rose again so that

the life He originally intended for us could be possible again. *“He died for all, so that all those who live would no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and was raised for their sake”* (2 Corinthians 5:15 AMP). We are His redeemed creation. How great is the love of the Creator for His creation!

DESIGNED FOR A PURPOSE

Woodworking has been a hobby of mine since childhood. When my wife, Jeanne, and I were engaged, I created a wooden jewelry box for her that she still treasures and uses to this day, thirty years later. Every time she uses it, she’s reminded of how much I love her.

That jewelry box was designed with a specific purpose in mind. If, God forbid, I ever got mad at her, removed her jewelry, and put my fishing lures in there, the gift that once brought joy would now cause pain. And that jewelry box would make a lousy tackle box because it was not designed for that purpose. My creation would fail to fulfill my original intention.

In a similar way, we have been lovingly designed by God for a specific purpose. We can fill our life with lesser things, but He lovingly designed us to hold the treasure of destiny. He created us with the capacity to fulfill all He has planned for us.



NO MATTER HOW FAR YOU ARE FROM THE LIFE
THAT GOD PLANNED FOR YOU, YOUR PURPOSE
HAS NOT CHANGED.



No matter how far you are from the life that God planned for you, your purpose has not changed. You may have brought junk into your life, but God’s original, loving intention for you is still very much alive. He would love to see you brought back to a life of His divine design. No life that you could create on your own is better than the one He intends for you.

CALLED TO HOPE

If we are ever going to embrace the truth that God has *divine intentions* for us, we must be a people of hope. Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus, “*I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know **the hope to which he has called you***” (Ephesians 1:18 NIV). My goal is to help you see that there are God-ordained plans for you and He wants those plans to be your reality.

Can you give yourself permission to consider the possibility of a life beyond what you’re experiencing right now? A decision to believe is more than a platitude or a therapeutic exercise of self-encouragement. Embracing hope is the genesis of a whole new existence. Nothing great ever happens until someone is brave enough to hope for it in their mind, soul, and spirit.

Even creation itself hopes for a better future. Writing about the curse that sin brought to the earth, Paul wrote, “*With eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God’s children in glorious freedom from death and decay*” (Romans 8:20–21). He is saying that one day, God will redeem creation just as He has redeemed us. But note the key phrase: creation will “*join God’s children in glorious freedom.*” In other words, we are ahead of the rest of creation. We who know Christ have a hope that is more advanced than everything else. We have already been redeemed. We have already been given new life. Creation marvels at the hope we have been given.

We are called to hope. My prayer for this book is the same one that Paul prayed over the Ephesians: “*I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you*” (Ephesians 1:18 NIV). I pray that your mind and heart overflow with hope. And I pray you will experience everything God has intended for you.