

Marriage is not meant for boys (Oko-Jaja 2018), neither is it meant for girls but for adults (men and women). But if you ask me, I think one really becomes an adult when he or she has discovered his or her purpose because that is when one truly begins living. And many a times, a person just needs to leave certain circles or environment; dissociation, limited association and expanded association (Munroe 2003), in order to really discover who they truly are / their purpose. This same theory applies to success. It takes a man who has discovered his purpose to set a standard, pay the cost for his vision and become persistent in pushing to the end. Dynah Carey, (the round character from the book, the atonement child, by Francine Rivers) followed this theory of association and it wasn't until then she started hearing from the Lord and then she really started living for herself.

The concept of purpose is central to life, marriage, and success. This essay will discuss the concept of purpose and the role it plays in marriage and success, drawing insights from three books: *The Principles and Power of Vision* by Dr. Myles Munroe, *Before and After I Do* by Dr. Chinyere Oko-Jaja, and *The Atonement Child* by Francine Rivers. Each author defines purpose differently, yet all agree that it is the foundation for fulfillment and legacy. Dr. Myles Munroe defines purpose as the vision God plants in every heart — the unseen picture of destiny that gives life meaning and direction. Dr. Chinyere Oko-Jaja presents purpose as God's covenant design for life and marriage: first discovered individually before marriage, and then lived corporately as two lives unite under one calling. Francine Rivers, through the struggles of her protagonist, Dynah, portrays purpose as something that can be clouded by suffering but rediscovered in Christ, who restores identity and direction. Purpose is the foundation of both marriage and success, for when individuals and couples align with God's vision, prepare

intentionally for covenant living, and remain steadfast even in trials; they experience true fulfillment and lasting legacy.

Dr. Myles Munroe's *The Principles and Power of Vision* presents purpose as the guiding principle for every individual. He writes that no invention, civilization, or personal achievement is possible without vision. Vision is more than eyesight; it is the ability to see with the heart, to perceive what God has already placed within a person. According to Munroe, "sight is a function of the eyes, but vision is a function of the heart." This distinction highlights that true success cannot be measured by external accomplishments alone but by the fulfillment of one's God-given destiny. His book outlines twelve principles of vision: clarity, planning, passion, faith, persistence, patience, and connection to God; which serve as stepping stones to personal and corporate success. One's life is not an experiment but "a project of Providence to fulfill a purpose that your generation needs." Purpose therefore acts as a compass, ensuring that individuals do not merely wander through existence but live with intentionality.

When applied to marriage, vision becomes the lifeblood of the union. A couple without a shared vision risks confusion, conflict, and stagnation. Just as an individual without purpose drifts aimlessly, so too a marriage without a guiding purpose becomes vulnerable to disillusionment. When partners unite under a shared vision, whether raising godly children, building a legacy of service, or supporting one another's callings, they create a bond that is deeper than romance. Purpose gives marriage not only companionship but mission.

While Munroe emphasizes personal vision, Dr. Chinyere Oko-Jaja's *Before and After I Do* stresses the importance of purpose in the specific context of marriage. She insists that purpose must be discovered before marriage. Entering a union without understanding God's design for

one's life often leads to unmet expectations and conflict. Just as an architect would not build without a blueprint, so too couples must not marry without clarity of purpose.

According to Oko-Jaja, the “before” season is a time of preparation—spiritual, economic, social, domestic, and sundry. Individuals should cultivate intimacy with God, develop emotional maturity, and establish healthy stewardship of resources. Marriage is not a place to discover identity; it is a covenant for two people who already know their God-given assignment.

After the vows, purpose takes on a corporate dimension. The two become one flesh (Gen. 2:24), and their individual visions must merge into a unified calling. Oko-Jaja emphasizes that marriage is a covenant designed not merely for personal happiness or satisfaction but for kingdom advancement. A purposeful marriage strengthens not only the couple but also the family, church, and society. Success in marriage, therefore, is not measured by wealth, fame, or outward appearances but by alignment with God's design. A couple living with purpose becomes a light to their generation, showing that godly love and unity are still possible in a broken world.

Francine Rivers' *The Atonement Child* brings a different but complementary perspective. Unlike Munroe and Oko-Jaja, who write as teachers, Rivers speaks through the power of story. Her round character, Dynah, experiences the trauma of rape and an unwanted pregnancy, which shatters her engagement, reputation, and sense of direction. Through her pain, Rivers explores how suffering can obscure purpose. Yet, even in brokenness, God's calling is not erased.

Dynah's struggle highlights that purpose is not always smooth or obvious. Marriage, which was once a dream filled with hope, becomes uncertain as shame and fear threaten her future. Yet Rivers demonstrates that God's grace restores identity and renews vision. We must understand

that true purpose is found not in perfection but in dependence on Christ, who gives forgiveness, healing, and direction when human strength fails.

In this narrative, marriage is portrayed not as a fairy tale but as a covenant tested by fire. Trials reveal whether a union is grounded in convenience or covenant. Dynah's story shows that purpose sustains resilience: couples who face crisis can endure if they anchor their marriage in God's redemptive plan. Likewise, success is not escaping hardship but faithfully walking with God through it.

When read together, these three books reveal a holistic picture of purpose. Munroe highlights vision as the foundation of destiny and success. Oko-Jaja stresses preparation and covenant alignment before and after marriage. Rivers reminds us that purpose is tested and refined in life's darkest valleys. The convergence of these perspectives teaches that purpose is both preventative and restorative. It is preventative when discovered before marriage, guiding individuals to make wise choices about their life partners and future. It is restorative when trials strike, offering resilience and hope to couples who might otherwise give up. Purpose transforms marriage from a fragile institution into a lasting covenant, and it redefines success from worldly achievement to eternal significance.

Just before we conclude, I must say 'a person with a purpose is not easily tossed about, he is resilient, he is dogged, and he knows what he wants and goes for it. He may not be quick to speak or make a decision but when he does, he stands firm on it. Consider Dynah from the atonement child. She carried the pregnancy even up till she was due, yet she wasn't even sure whether she really wanted the child. But when she was faced with labor, she just had to deliver the baby. But in all of this, she never allowed the pressure from her family and friends push her

into having an abortion. Dynah discovered her purpose and this brought hope and redemption into many people's lives. From bringing redemption to Doctor Wyatt, to her grandma, to healing her parents' marriage and much more. To succeed in life, you must run with a purpose. No matter how old you are when you discover God's given purpose for your life, you must act on it. You never know, the destiny of multitudes of men are tied to your own purpose in life.

Purpose is the divine compass that shapes life, marriage, and success. Without it, individuals drift and unions crumble. Dr. Myles Munroe demonstrates that vision is the energy of progress and the essence of success. Dr. Chinyere Oko-Jaja teaches that marriage thrives when couples enter it with clarity of purpose and live afterward in covenant alignment. Francine Rivers, through the poignant story of Dynah, illustrates that purpose is not destroyed by pain but rediscovered in Christ's forgiveness and strength. Marriage, then, is more than a romantic bond; it is a purposeful covenant designed to reflect God's love and advance His kingdom. Success is not the accumulation of wealth or the applause of men but the fulfillment of God's vision through faithful living. When couples align their lives with divine purpose, they build not only a lasting union but also a legacy that influences generations.

In the end, a life and marriage rooted in God's purpose will not only endure but will flourish, leaving behind a legacy of faith, love, and true success that outlives the couple themselves and individuals at large.