

THE CONCEPT OF PURPOSE AND THE ROLE IT PLAYS IN MARRIAGE AND
SUCCESS.

Purpose is the invisible thread that weaves meaning into human existence. Without it, life becomes a random succession of events, but with it, every joy, trial, and triumph acquires eternal significance. Across literature and theology, the search for purpose has always defined humanity's deepest questions: Why am I here? What is the meaning of suffering? How do relationships thrive? These questions find profound answers when examined through the lens of three very different but deeply interconnected works: *The Atonement Child* by Francine Rivers, *The Power of Vision* by Myles Munroe, and *Before and After I Do* by Chinyere Oko-Jaja. Though each book approaches the idea of purpose from a distinct perspective—narrative, spiritual, and relational—they converge on the truth that purpose, grounded in God, is essential for success in every area of life.

Francine Rivers' *The Atonement Child* tells the story of Dynah, a young Bible college student whose life is shattered when she is raped and becomes pregnant. The book wrestles with the rawest form of human suffering, exposing how tragedy can strip away illusions and force one to confront ultimate questions about identity, destiny, and God's will. For Dynah, the crisis was not merely physical or emotional; it was existential. What purpose could possibly emerge from a life-altering trauma? The voices around her offered competing answers: terminate the pregnancy and preserve her future, or embrace the child and face rejection from society and even her fiancé. Yet the heart of her journey reveals that purpose does not vanish in pain. Instead, it is refined through pain. Her grandmother Miriam and mother Hannah provide powerful subplots that

emphasize the long-lasting consequences of abandoning God's purpose. Both women had abortions in their youth, and the void it left shaped decades of regret, bitterness, and alienation from God. Their stories highlight how turning away from divine purpose, even under immense pressure, often leads to deep wounds. Dynah's eventual decision to keep her child is not portrayed as simplistic triumphalism. Rather, it is an act of trust that God's purpose can redeem even the most broken situations. Rivers uses this narrative to demonstrate that true purpose is not negated by suffering but often revealed within it.

While Rivers illustrates purpose in narrative form, Myles Munroe directly addresses it in *The Power of Vision*. For Munroe, purpose is the foundation of vision and the prerequisite for meaningful success. He declares, "The greatest tragedy in life is not death but life without a purpose." This assertion underscores the futility of pursuing achievements detached from divine intent. Munroe distinguishes between ambition and vision. Ambition is self-centered, rooted in personal desires and competition. Vision, however, emerges from an understanding of God's purpose for one's life. Vision provides clarity, discipline, and resilience, enabling individuals to overcome challenges and remain focused. Purpose is the compass, vision the map, and discipline the vehicle that propels one toward destiny. One of Munroe's most striking principles is that God only provides resources for His purpose. Human dreams and desires may fail, but God is committed to sustaining what aligns with His eternal will. This principle reframes the way individuals should view success: not as personal accumulation or recognition but as the fulfillment of a God-given assignment. Thus, while Rivers shows how purpose sustains the individual in suffering, Munroe demonstrates how purpose fuels vision, supplies provision, and ensures lasting success. Without purpose, success is hollow; with purpose, even small achievements resonate with eternal significance.

In *Before and After I Do*, Chinyere Oko-Jaja brings the conversation on purpose into the arena of marriage. In contemporary society, weddings often overshadow the true essence of marriage. Lavish ceremonies and fleeting emotions dominate, while the covenantal and purposeful foundation of marriage is neglected. Oko-Jaja confronts this distortion by returning to God's original design. Marriage, she argues, is not a cultural invention but a divine institution. Its purpose is companionship, fruitfulness, and the demonstration of Christ's covenantal love for the Church. When couples fail to recognize this, marriages crumble under the weight of unmet expectations, poor communication, and cultural pressures. Oko-Jaja emphasizes that individuals must first discover their personal purpose in God before entering marriage. Without clarity of individual purpose, union becomes fragile, as two people without direction cannot create a purposeful partnership. After marriage, couples are called to live out their shared purpose through love, sacrifice, and mutual support. This book highlights the protective power of purpose in relationships. Just as Munroe teaches that purpose secures success, Oko-Jaja shows that purpose secures marriages. It shifts focus from external appearances to internal covenant, from fleeting feelings to enduring faithfulness.

Though written by different authors in diverse genres, these three works harmonize around a single message: purpose is indispensable in life, marriage, and success. In *The Atonement Child*, purpose anchors the soul in suffering, proving that even brokenness can yield redemption when surrendered to God. In *The Power of Vision*, purpose energizes vision and transforms dreams into disciplined, divinely sustained pursuits. In *Before and After I Do*, purpose preserves marriages, reminding couples that their union is not a mere contract but a covenant aligned with divine intention. Together, these perspectives provide a holistic understanding of human existence. Life's greatest trials, victories, and relationships are all meaningful only when they

serve the higher call of God's purpose. To live without purpose is to drift without anchor; to live with purpose is to walk with clarity, resilience, and hope. Ultimately, it is purpose that enables individuals to endure hardship, couples to sustain love, and communities to achieve success that lasts beyond a lifetime.