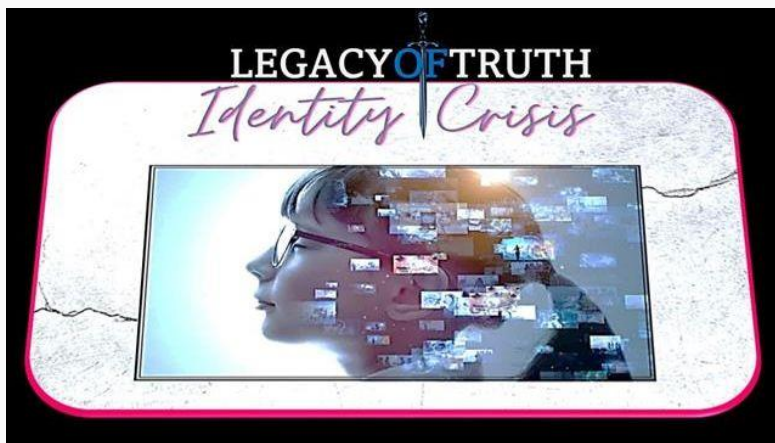




Dear Friends,

I hope all is well with you and your loved ones! This is the season that reminds us of our many reasons for giving thanks to God for His blessings. So it is with a grateful heart that I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation for your partnership in this ministry!

Several weeks ago, I had outlined a number of ministry activities that I planned to share with you in this update. However, God has been compelling me to share what I have learned as a result of a number of interactions with students. As a result of my sessions with these young adults, I feel compelled to launch a new project next year—God willing. I will include a brief overview of this project, Project Destiny, at the end of this update. ***Consider the following summary as foundational to the need I hope to address in Project Destiny:***

SOCIAL MEDIA: As this year unfolded, I found myself spending an inordinate number of hours in discussions with high school seniors and college students in various settings (one-on-one, youth groups, in the classroom and on Zoom). The questions and concerns raised by them covered a multitude of issues, but there was a common thread running through almost all of our discussions. As I pulled on that thread, I realized it was connected to the negative effects that social media can have on teenagers, especially in understanding their true identity under God.

TEENAGE IDENTITY CRISIS: A 2018 Pew Research Center survey found that 45% of teenagers are online almost constantly and 97% use a social media platform, such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat. Multiple studies have found a strong link between the use of social media and an increased risk for spawning a ***negative self-image, low self-esteem***, depression, anxiety, self-harm, and

suicidal thoughts. Many teenagers are experiencing a time of uncertainty and confusion causing a loss of personal identity—an identity crisis.

IDENTITY, SELF-IMAGE & SELF-ESTEEM: Identity is ***who we are***, and self-image is ***how we perceive ourselves***. Our identity and self-image have a strong influence on our self-esteem. Self-esteem is ***how we feel about ourselves***. Low self-esteem generates a lack of confidence regarding what we can do, ***our purpose***. The thoughts that we sow in our minds (our identity) will ultimately reap our destiny. In Galatians 6:7, Paul declares this truth in no uncertain terms, “Whatever a person sows, this he will also reap.” Consider the following progression from sowing a thought to reaping a destiny: When we sow our thoughts, we will reap an attitude. Keep sowing that attitude, and we will reap our actions. Continue sowing those actions, and we will reap our behavior. When we sow our behavior, we will eventually reap our lifestyle. When we sow our lifestyle, we will reap our character. When we sow our character, we will ultimately reap our destiny.

CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE: Since God is a Spiritual Being and we are created in His image, we are also spiritual beings. Moreover, we are also emotional, rational, and volitional beings. In other words, we ***“mirror”*** some of the basic characteristics of our Creator. Each of us have a ***unique personal identity*** that is revealed by God when we reflect His image in us. “And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though ***reflected in a mirror***, are being transformed ***into the same image*** from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

UNVEILING GOD'S IMAGE: God has gifted us with a powerful mental faculty, our imagination. When we use it to visualize positive change in our lives by ***thinking the kind of thoughts that reflect God's thoughts***, we begin to ***unveil our true identity***. God's Word gives us a profoundly simple truth regarding how our thinking reveals our true identity. “As a man thinks in his heart, so he is” (Proverbs 23:7). ***Our thoughts form the foundation of our identity*** and ultimately our destiny. The formula for positive thought transformation, renewing our minds, is also profoundly simple. “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the ***renewing of your mind***. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:2).

PROJECT DESTINY: Each one of us has a unique personality created by God for a special purpose that only He can reveal. To my way of thinking, I am convinced that helping young adults discover their identity and eventually, God's purpose for

their lives, is one of the most significant aspects of the mission God has entrusted to us. Having a specific godly purpose is a strong driving force for anyone, but especially for young people. Purpose acts as a catalyst for thinking godly thoughts, in order to make godly decisions that will set the course that leads to a **godly destiny!**

PROJECT DESTINY—ONLINE: In order to achieve this most significant aspect of our mission, I believe the time is right to create an online course. The need for online courses has increased over the past year at the high school and college levels. The Census Bureau released a report in last March showing that **homeschooling has doubled since last year**. So, the timing is right, and the need is great. Therefore, I am planning to launch Project Destiny by converting our e-book series into an online course, as the foundation for this project. Please pray with us for the Holy Spirit to direct our steps as we construct the framework for this project.

YOUR PARTNERSHIP: I want to thank you for the vital role you play in helping us to carry out our mission and humbly ask that you prayerfully consider a year-end gift. Your contribution will help us “stay the course” and, God willing, launch “Project Destiny” next year. **By God’s Grace Alone – Pete**

SEVERAL WAYS TO DONATE: Since most of our funding occurs during this time of year, a year-end gift would be most appreciated! Other ways to support our efforts would be to make a monthly contribution or to help us through AmazonSmile (Amazon contributes to us when you purchase). For more information on all of programs go to: www.legacyoftruth.org/giving/
