

25-1012a - Detailed Summary

25-1012a - *Placed With A Purpose*, Tom Freed

Bible Readers: Mike Mathis and Kevin Woosley

This detailed summary by Grok, xAI, (Transcription by TurboScribe.ai)

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Placed With A Purpose

Scripture Readings

1st Reading (0:04 - 1:11): Mike Mathis

Jeremiah 29:11-13: The service begins with the first scripture reading by Mike from Jeremiah chapter 29, verses 11 through 13. The passage conveys God's message of knowing His thoughts toward His people, which are thoughts of peace rather than evil, aimed at providing a future and hope. It further states that when people call upon God, pray to Him, and seek Him with all their heart, He will listen and be found.

2nd Reading (1:15 - 2:02): Kevin Woosley

1 Corinthians 12:17-20: Following this, Kevin reads the second scripture from 1 Corinthians chapter 12, verses 17 through 20, using the New King James Version. The text questions what would happen if the whole body were just an eye or just hearing, emphasizing that God has placed each member in the body as He pleased. It concludes that although there are many members, they form one body.

Summary of Transcript (0:04 - 24:53), Preacher: Tom Freed

(2:07 - 5:39) Sermon Introduction

The preacher, Tom greets the congregation, noting it is good to see everyone. He introduces his sermon titled "Placed with a Purpose," focusing on trusting God's positioning in our lives. He addresses common doubts people experience, such as questioning if they are in the right job, relationship, or church. Tom shares personal reflections, like wondering daily at work if he should be doing something else with 20 years left, and notes how people second-guess decisions, imagining better alternatives elsewhere, akin to the saying that the grass is always greener on the other side.

Tom challenges this restlessness by proposing that God has intentionally placed individuals where they are, referencing 1 Corinthians 12:18 where Paul states God has placed the parts in the body as He wanted. He extends this principle beyond the church to all aspects of life, portraying God as a divine architect who positions people with purpose. Tom asserts that people are not accidents in their circumstances but appointed, and understanding this transforms perspectives. He outlines the sermon's structure: exploring feelings of being misplaced, how God orchestrates placements, and thriving in current positions, before praying for open hearts.

(5:40 - 9:42) Addressing Discontentment

Tom acknowledges the reality of discontentment in a world influenced by social media, where comparisons steal joy, as quoted from Teddy Roosevelt. He describes how people view others' highlights—thriving jobs, perfect vacations, and dynamic churches—without seeing the struggles

like debt or relational issues, leading to feelings of inadequacy. This dissatisfaction is ancient, illustrated by the Israelites in Exodus 16:3, who grumbled in the wilderness, longing for Egypt's food despite their slavery, ignoring God's daily provision of manna. Tom reflects on how baffling their behavior seems after God's miracles, yet admits modern people do the same, complaining despite better conditions.

Discontentment often arises from unmet expectations or unhealed wounds, such as a stagnant job not matching college passions, strained relationships, or church criticisms like being old-fashioned, sermons too long, or feeling disconnected and unfulfilled. Beneath these lies a lack of trust in God's sovereignty, as per Proverbs 16:9, where humans plan but God directs steps. Tom explains that setbacks like missed promotions, breakups, or feeling out of place in church are not random but part of God's strategy, as He leads people to their positions. He urges shifting from questioning "why here" to asking "what now, Lord," noting that disappointments and frustrations prepare for greater things, before revisiting the key verse from 1 Corinthians 12.

(9:44 - 13:47) Body Metaphor Explanation

Tom elaborates on Paul's metaphor in 1 Corinthians 12, describing the church as the body of Christ where each person is a part, with unique functions like eyes, hands, feet, and ears. Verse 18 emphasizes God placing each part as He desires, and Tom humorously imagines chaos if a foot wanted to be an eye or if one dismissed the importance of a pinky toe, sharing how his dad's partial toe loss affected walking. He stresses that every part is essential for the body to function, extending this to life: God positions people in jobs to bring light, in relationships to reflect love, and in church to contribute to health.

Using Joseph's story from Genesis 50:20, Tom illustrates how seeming misfortunes—being sold into slavery and imprisoned—were God's plan for good, leading to saving many lives and Joseph's rise to second in command under Pharaoh. Joseph likely felt miserable and questioned God, but it prepared him for leadership. Applying this to the congregation at West Side, Tom affirms each person's essential role, whether as an encourager or prayer warrior. He quotes Ephesians 4:16 on the body growing as each part works, and describes the church as a spiritual house of living stones with Jesus as cornerstone, warning that missing stones cause collapse. Tom reiterates everyone's importance, divine placement, and purpose, big or small, as small things are big in God's eyes.

(13:48 - 16:40) Real-Life Examples

Tom shares stories to demonstrate God's purposeful positioning, starting with his friend Sarah who disliked her entry-level nonprofit job, feeling it mismatched her studies and dreams of corporate success. However, there she met a colleague who invited her to church, leading to salvation; years later, she recognized it as God's placement for her spiritual growth, now using her skills to help others. Tom then recounts his own experience at a low point with a second DUI, breathalyzer, and potential jail, feeling lost until a car service encounter led to Bible study, baptism, and new life in Christ, beginning with a small group worshiping in a garage, emphasizing God works anywhere, even in humble settings.

Further examples include David, a shepherd boy delivering food to the battlefield, positioned by God to defeat Goliath and advance toward kingship—what seemed mundane was a divine setup, suggesting even everyday tasks like DoorDash could be preparatory. In relationships, Ruth's story shows her widowhood in a foreign land leading her to stay with Naomi, glean in Boaz's field, marry

him, and become Jesus' ancestor; her loyalty turned displacement into God's plan. At West Side, despite no full-time preacher and small size, members' involvement in preaching and serving fosters profound growth, highlighting how God uses circumstances for spiritual shining.

(16:40 - 17:51) Church Growth Insights

Tom continues discussing the West Side church's unique structure, noting that six men take turns preaching, with John scheduled for that evening, encouraging the congregation to support him. He emphasizes how all members have grown significantly despite lacking formal training, highlighting Jim's potential as a full-time preacher and praising everyone's progress. Comparing the church to a mustard seed—small yet mighty—Tom draws parallels to the apostles' faith that sparked worldwide impact, asserting that God works through humble beginnings.

These examples reinforce that apparent detours in life are actually God's direct paths. Referencing Jeremiah 29:11, Tom reminds the audience of God's plans to prosper and not harm, providing hope and a future. He stresses trusting in this divine plan, even during miserable times, as humans cannot foresee the bigger picture like God can, urging growth in current circumstances.

(17:52 - 20:39) Overcoming Doubt Strategies

To transition from doubt to delight in divine positioning, Tom outlines practical steps, starting with praying for revelation on what to learn or do in one's current place, citing James 1:5 where God generously gives wisdom. Second, he advocates seeking contentment, referencing Paul's words in Philippians 4:11-13 about being content in any circumstance through Christ's strength, explaining contentment as active trust rather than resignation, and encouraging blooming where planted by investing in jobs, nurturing relationships, and engaging in church.

Tom quotes 1 Timothy 6:8 on being content with food and clothing, acknowledging personal struggles with contentment despite abundant blessings often taken for granted. Third, he advises looking for service opportunities in seemingly wrong places, such as volunteering in church for avoided tasks, and quotes Romans 12:4-5 on the body of Christ where members with different functions belong to each other, emphasizing individual roles' importance. Fourth, guard against Satan's lies that sow discontentment, as with Adam and Eve, countering with scripture like Jesus did, and Psalm 37:23 on God directing the godly's steps and delighting in their details, warning that the devil aims to frustrate rather than prevent salvation.

(20:41 - 22:28) Seasonal Changes Emphasis

Fifth, Tom reminds that seasons change, quoting Ecclesiastes 3:1 on a time for everything, advising to thrive in the current place until God opens new doors. He asserts that attendance at West Side is by God's choice, not chance, whether through job relocation or invitations, and references Acts 17:26-27 where God appointed times and boundaries for nations so people would seek and find Him, applying this to personal addresses, communities, and churches as opportunities for seeking God.

Instead of doubting the church, Tom encourages deeper involvement like leading lacking programs or hosting gatherings to deepen fellowship, positioning members to fill gaps rather than just occupy seats. He critiques the mindset of merely showing up weekly for an hour, noting Jesus did the heavy lifting but participation is still required, urging action over complaint and passivity.

(22:29 - 23:20) Biblical Church Models

Tom references the early church in Acts 2:42-47, where devotion to teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer led to spiritual growth and daily additions to their number, predicting great things when each member functions properly. He stresses each person's vitality to this process.

For those in leadership feeling misplaced, Tom recalls Moses' reluctance in Exodus 3-4, where God equipped him despite doubts, assuring the same for the congregation. This reinforces the theme of divine equipping in assigned roles.

(23:21 - 24:53) Sermon Conclusion Call

In wrapping up, Tom reaffirms that individuals are not misplaced but masterfully positioned, quoting John 15:16 where Jesus chose and appointed people to bear lasting fruit, urging them to be ambassadors in jobs, mirror grace in relationships, and build the kingdom in church, shifting from "what-if" to "what-now." He encourages Hebrews 12:1-2 to throw off hindrances, run the marked race with perseverance, fixing eyes on Jesus.

Tom calls for repentance and realignment if resisting God's placement, surrendering plans to watch purposes unfold. For non-Christians, he notes their presence is purposeful, as God directs only His own. He prays for empowerment to shine in current standings and invites forward those needing prayers, baptism, or to become Christians.