

I have talked a length (probably too much) about those bad things that have happened to us through the people we put trust in. I have pointed out how the sinless church is full of sin. That thing called sin is in our lives no matter if your Christian or not. I have quite possibly painted a very negative picture of life on this planet. You could be living in poverty in Cambodia or in a penthouse in New York, in each case; life will give you ups and downs all the time. I know a girl that never recovered from trauma in her teenage years. Bad things happened that will haunt her forever. There is plenty of pain to go around.

The negative life seems to be all we have. Rich people get divorced at a higher rate than poor people. Poor people die at a higher rate than the rich. Don't you just love all this negative talk? I thought this chapter was called "Positive perspective"? We both just spent 6 chapters complaining about why our lives have sucked. We can blame people, the church, God, or sin, but either way, something crapped on your day. I am not one of those happy monkeys that spew flowers on everything. Sometimes things just suck.

I know a guy who is Mr. Positive. Everything is by Gods will and it always works out. He makes people around him sick. He used to pinch, hug, and kiss his first wife all the time. I almost hated going there because it made my marriage look terrible. Behind the scenes they were in a horrible marriage. They got divorced and he remarried. Some of his kids are a mess; his relationships are strained, and his second marriage is failing. Still Mr. Positive is remaining to be up-beat on life. That guy lives in the shoes of an ostrich with his head firmly shoved in some hole that's for sure.

Acting like Mr. Positive, while causing destruction, is not a good way to be. I have told people in pain "It will get better but not today." That is not the best answer but it is an honest answer. I am positive that a reset is good for everyone. I think it is crucial for those who don't

believe me because I believe we all need a reset at-least once (We all do). The reset is all about stepping back and looking at our lives in perspective. It is also all about the positive. Hey Pat, I thought you hated those nuts? Mr. Positive went too far, but being positive is a really good thing.

They say that it takes ten positive statements to replace one negative one. I believe in the positive but sometimes our scares come from the negative. I can't sit here and say that my personal reset wiped away all the negative memories in my life. What I can say is that I learned a thing or two. In fact I want to explore three things in this chapter in regards to the positive: be yourself, see yourself, and see others.

My dad told me in an off the cuff conversation that the boys down the street were better than me. That is a scar I carry. It was an innocent remark that he probably can't remember but it stuck on me like glue. I know it's not true but I do believe that he believed it. That is what hurts. In my mind I will never ever measure up to those boys in the eyes of my father.

Who was the one who said something bad towards you? What church member told you something that just wasn't true? Did a spouse say something stupid that you have never forgotten? If you're a woman "It was everything men have ever said to you." We men are screwed by the things we have said for eternity in the mind of a woman. Here is a dumb statement. Women are like elephants (see stupid). They never forget a word men say. Words are scars just as much as actions towards us.

On the flip side a teacher told me I was worth something to him. His words are what save me most days. He is dead now but he makes my day all the time and that was 30 years ago. I have received medals that make me think I'm good at things. I have been mentioned in papers and at banquets. I know I can help rather than hinder. Remarks made towards me are at war, in

my heart, every day. The good and bad bash into each other while trying to get to the top of the pile like Yertle the turtle. They are fighting over one very interesting thing: me.

If I wasn't important then why did God make me? If there is no God then why am I here? Someone will say we are like leaves in the wind. We just exist by dumb luck and are just blowing around, like dust, until we pass away. If that is so then why am I self-aware of the world around me? Descartes said "I think therefore I am." We are communicating through my words. I guess we exist, so I think.

Does a leaf care about looking good in the mirror? Does a dog mind if his words are offensive? Dogs don't talk dumb ass. Humans are different than other parts of creation. I believe we are here for a reason. We are just too complicated to just exist. We invent things to survive. A tree lives based on everything around itself. Its existence is relying solely on weather and soil. A person goes in a cave or grows food to eat and survive. We are more than meets the eye.

With that being said, we are real. To reset is to discover you. There are countless stories of people making a Tibetan trek to spiritually discover themselves. My divorce lawyer said "Getting lost in the South American jungle with his fiancé made an impact in their lives and marriage." They survived together. A near death experience can seem life changing. I know a man who was told he would die if he did not quit smoking (I know a lady too). They both began to quit but never quite finish the process (they are both now dead).

We talked about Gods role and responsibility in a previous chapter in regards to our fate. Is it possible that God allows things in our lives because it grooms us? Don't we wish for warm days in the winter? Good times when things go badly? I know most of us never want fun to end. The best times might be when we look forward to holiday trips. In the mean time we live lives that are less than our dreams.

Sure I could be dreaming of a white Christmas but I don't desire snow over green fields unless I'm a skier. What makes dreams come true? Where do you find your significance? The weird part is that we usually would not say "Within ourselves." I found significance in my first wife. I lived for her. I had the perfect ideal of what a happy life could look like: it was her. You buy a home, have some kids, and work. Within all that, I lived to make my wife happy. The problem is that we will never find happiness within something else. What happens if your wife leaves you?

I was left devastated because my reason for existing had gone away. For months I wandered the bicycle paths trying to think of why I exist. People who kill themselves most likely never get an answer; life becomes meaningless. Why do you think people find solace in a bottle or something else? Did it ever occur to you that our significance and desire for life will always be found within the one thing God gave you and nobody else: it's you? Strangely enough I should be the reason I exist.

Remember earlier in the last chapter I talked briefly about our pride. All humans are ultimately driven to survive. If pressed we will fight to have water, food, and shelter. It's all about self-existence. It seems so noble to give your last piece of bread to someone else. To help others survive. An unhealthy you will not survive. It's like on a plane. They say if the air masks come down we should put ours on first so we can help others. That seems selfish but is it?

Have you ever heard the saying "To love others, first, you must love yourself." I think we roll our eyes at that far too often. This is not a pride thing but a God thing. We were made for a purpose. To be unused as the person God made us to be is a crime. My wife said, the other day, "It's weird that some people are good at math and others at speed reading." We all have different

gifts and talents. I would even go further that we love certain things that others don't like such as coffee or classical music. There is something lovely and individualistic about each one of us.

I seem very weird to many people. I love all kinds of music and all kinds of food. Why is that? I always say that I am good at many things but not great at one thing. Wayne Gretzky is good at hockey. Michael Jordan is good at basketball. Wayne was not a great hockey coach and Michael was not great at baseball. We have our thing that makes us unique. I think I am all over the map so I tend to see greatness in anything.

It can be narrow minded to just think one thing is the best. I'll give two examples. One is the radish story. There was a lady named Kay who was a prominent speaker, and she was invited to a luncheon. Before the speech, she came to survey the venue. Kay noticed the great arrangements on the tables, but the most astounding part was the radishes. They were cut in interesting shapes to impress the ladies. After the lunch and speech, people came to speaker Kay and remarked how lovely the radishes were: that intrigued her.

She sought out the person responsible for stealing the show (in a good way). In the back room, she found a lady named Maria that had cut the radishes and remarked to her what an awesome job she had done. Maria was quite shy and said the radishes were not as important as her speaking. Kay told the shy radish maker that all the jobs were important to make the luncheon a success. Then speaker Kay paused and pondered things for a minute. She decided to make a pact with Maria: she would speak as long as the radish cutter would do her best cutting radishes. They both agreed as a team.

The second story is about a man who is a street evangelist. His passion was to go around the city preaching on the streets, on trains, and anywhere he could find. He was an expert and loved to talk to people about Jesus. I was told once that I was an evangelist. What did that mean?

A Pastor told me I had the desire to reach people outside the church and that was special. One day I was talking with my evangelist friend and he invited me to street witness with him. I told him that it was not me. I witnessed in different ways. He then said “I was not an evangelist.”

These are two very different stories about our talents. One noticed the difference and encouraged each other to excel. The other considered their talents different and separated them by importance. It's like guys who work on cars. One is a mechanic; another a car stereo installer; and lastly one is a car maker. Who is the real one who works on cars? The answer is they all are in different ways.

Be yourself. How can I say it any better. Be yourself. I find that church is the worst place for talent. People are drawn to a church. Many times they don't know why. Inside they find that there is no service available for their talents. She might be a painter but there is no painting ministry. He might be an evangelist but this church does not do that, yet God draws these people into your church. I find that Pastors have agendas that fit who they are and not what God brings to them. It seems to become more about whom the Pastor is rather than what God is orchestrating around him.

In a nut shell the Pastor is a Shepard. He cares for a flock of people. In the Bible some sheep were white while others were speckled. The Shepard uses the differences to his advantage. A church should look like a tool box. Do you think the twelve apostles were all the same type of guys? Oh no, they certainly were not, Peter was a rough leader and perfectly bull headed to move the church forward. Phillip was an evangelist and he did it very well spreading the young gospel message. Judas was the money guy (ok that didn't work). John was the writer. Jesus used these differences to further the kingdom of God.

A church is a great example because different people from around the world are the church. Willow Creek in Chicago had a slogan “We are a part of everybody.” That is what makes a church so pivotal in discovering you. Like I said, I am weird to many. I don’t fit completely in one spot. I gave a speech to a group of ministry leaders. One of the leaders didn’t agree with my view on the scripture I used. She challenged me in front of everyone if I took the Bible seriously. My Bible theology was not the main concern. What they wanted and what I am did not fit. God drew me to them, but they already had a preconceived picture of what they wanted. I have talent and I am valuable. They were looking beyond me and towards a picture of someone else, yet God had me before them.

In this chapter I want you to see how narrow minded and wrong this is. Not only are you made with special talents but they are to be used. Do you believe in fate? Most people do. At work I am a great trainer. The lady working next to me is not. My boss recognized it and is using me to train. I have not found a church that wants me. Many churches are looking for something God is not bringing them. Time after time I have found people leave churches because they have been miscast. At some point it must be about the people and not the Pastor. It’s the same at a job. The CEO looks good because of worker performance more than his or her charisma. We don’t see it that way but that is the way it really is.

Barack Obama might be a likable guy. They always said he won the presidency because of his charisma and face. I suppose it might also be because his skin was not white. Almost 8 years later we still don’t know who he is or what he has done. People vote or hire based on what they see on the outside but it’s the inside they should be concerned with. Barack might be just fine as a person. The problem is that we will never know. He has done nothing to show much of

who he really is inside, or maybe he has shown more than we like to admit. I always say the leader is a reflection of the people who voted for them.

The very first king of Israel was a king of the people. He turned out to be a bad king. God says in 1 Sam 16:7 **But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.”** Who we are inside is what we need. It is what you need too. The real you has been a real blessing and a real curse to those around you. That seems strange but you have heard it said “You are your worst enemy.” Miscalc people cause a tremendous problem most of the time because they are unhappy doing the wrong thing. The curses you have experienced just might be miscalc people.

Ask yourself this “What drives you passionately”? What do you love to do? What kind of friends do you keep? My closest friends from high school were a map maker, sailor, and space geek. I was a DJ and played hockey as a goalie. My friends did none of those things. I am a deeper person these days because of my friends. They complete me. My talents complete them too. Anyone in a church that rejects you because of your talent has got it all wrong.

The churches that have rejected me could not and still do not see the trees in the forest. I was a gift from God to be used by them. I was not for the church down the road. God drew me to that church. I added to what they did not have. Just like my friends are not like me but together we are great. Really this is not a church bashing thing. I just believe they have got it all wrong. The church agenda should be who the people are; rather than, what the Pastor is or wants. That is why the modern church is failing.

I wrote these words because if you don't use “You” properly, “You” will be failing too. Who are you? Gee Patrick, I work at an Oil company but that is not me. I am a writer. Ok that is



great but does that mean you should quit your job? I say maybe but most likely no. Try exploring these two options. One is to seek ways to use your talent to make the company better. The other is to explore ways to do your talents on the side.

Paul in the New Testament is a great example. He is an evangelist, writer, scholar, and of all things a tent maker. The saying goes like this “Your job is your sustainer for what you are really meant to be.” Paul makes tents to support his other passions. I knew a guy that quit being a mechanic in a really good job to preach on the streets. In the end he lost everything including his wife. I think Paul didn’t think that way.

I wish I could talk to my friend. Was it responsible to quit and assume his wife was on board? Was God on board? He would say yes. The facts would say no. Just because you are doing it in the name of God does not mean God is on board. Churches and Pastors need to visit that thought soon or they will lose their churches in time. My friend could easily blame his wife for leaving. She made herself an easy target for blame. Leaving a marriage is ungodly while evangelism seems godly. Maybe what he wanted outweighed what his wife or God wanted.

Now my friend is back working as a mechanic while preaching on the side, yet now it is without his wife. A church I attended has lost hundreds of people and is now fractured into three. The leadership remains. Again it’s not the forest through the trees but rather the trees in the forest. The saying “Stop and smell the roses” still stands. J Vernon McGee says “People are as busy as termites and as about destructive too.” Everyone needs to see people as an asset and not evaluating them on what they can do for our plan. This brings me back to the reset. It’s time to stop just existing and start living for ourselves and people.

I was told (Gee many times) that I need Jesus. I need to conform. I need to be anyone but who I am. I make people uncomfortable because I see outside the box. Trust me people love the

box. Be yourself! Be who God made you to be. Patrick there is no God. I am who I am. Yes finally you got it. God or not you are yourself. Thank God you see that now (Did I say thank God). I want to be comfortable in my own skin. Yes, I want that for you too. That comfort is placing you right within who you are. I don't care what people say, be a painter, lawyer, mathematician, or a postal worker. Be any one of those things as long as it is you.

I said earlier that a reset is really about getting perspective. It's about stopping, smelling the roses, and seeing yourself as you are. Yes, see yourself. It's so important to be yourself. I can't stress it enough. You can't really be yourself until you see yourself. In the first year of my divorce I spent way too much time looking in the mirror. I kept looking for me. Who was I? I thought I was my "Ex's" husband: wrong. I thought I was non-Christian: wrong. I had been told for 33 years I was supposed to be anything but me. From my parents to my Ex-wife I have been told I am less than stellar. Yet, in the mirror I began to see something else.

What did I see in the mirror? Well it began one day when someone in a group said that God values us. What? That was just plain ridiculous. I knew who I was because everyone (And I mean everyone) told me that I sucked as a person. Remember, my Dad told me it was my fault for the break-up. My mom wanted an apology for my choice in a wife. My Pastor said I needed help. A teacher told me not to pursue school because he said I would fail. Well let me tell you, night school, a University degree, a new marriage, and several books later they were all dead wrong. They are all dead wrong.

That same man in the group challenged my thinking. He told me the second best line I know "God does not make junk." That stung and confused me because everyone I ever loved told me I was junk. God loves me? God does not think I am junk? What the hell (so to speak)? Then I remembered my teacher Mr. Neufeld in grade 8. It all came flooding back to me. He

cornered me one day and told me that I was heading for destruction (The best line I know) “You are more than that Pat Green.” Those words “Pat Green” have echoed in the back of my skull for almost 40 years. In the mirror I began to see (slowly) what God sees.

When I went to university I had a vision. God told me to go to school to become a Pastor. I had two men direct me in the beginning. This is weird. The first encouraged me to go. He said I had pastoritis (The unquenching desire to be a church leader). It was time to go. The second man told me that I should go full out and take a full course load. In both cases that was what God was telling me inside too. Ironically after I graduated in 4 years the same men shun me because I am different. The first will not talk to me. The second told me I needed help. Yep, the fun life of Patrick in a nut shell.

Here is the weird part. It was like I was walking down a forest road and every now and then a person would come out of the trees and say “You can’t.” Another would say “You shouldn’t.” In my first two years of school I think about six people encouraged me to quit. That included Pastors and Professors. In junior high school one teacher encouraged me and believed in me. In high school another well regarded teacher told me I would amount to nothing. Listen to all the voices.

Inside I heard two different themes. The first was from all those doubters: your junk, trouble, dumb, untalented, different, and a rebel. Don’t do anything because you will not survive. The second was God asking me to preserve. That voice said you’re not junk instead your: special, loved, and an outside the box extraordinaire. I did by the way finish University with a 3.34 average in 4 years while working full time. Even I surpassed my own expectations.

Let’s go back to the mirror. Hmmm, God says I’m not junk eh? In the mirror I was beginning to see me. In my last two years of school I was on that same forest road. I almost quit

several times I can tell you. Then men began to come out of the trees saying I am unique. I must be who God made me to be. It's like God was showing me what the Devil wanted me to see and what God wanted me to see. In the mirror God was asking me from day one "Patrick what do you see"? Then God asked me "When it comes to sin, you, and others, what does God see"?

A reset cannot happen till you see what God see's. He does not see junk. He is not looking for some other talent. He is not interested in asking you to find another church. In the Bible over and over he is calling us back to him. I talked briefly about God saying his creation was good. If a perfect God made something good then how could it have gone so wrong? I have changed my perspective on people. We are still "The good" that God did make. Our perspective on ourselves is what is wrong. There are far too many people coming out of the forest and telling us we are worthless. We need more people telling us that we matter.

The reset is so needed these days more than ever. Global warming tells us we are doomed. We are considered phobic by our opinions these days. You are not a man and you are not a girl. Thinking outside the box is becoming unthinkable. It seems that if you are not in the group, then your phobic and out. I am stunned that we are becoming the book 1984. It warns us against Big brother government and group think. Yet, like a speeding train, we are heading there. There are now the word police, cameras everywhere, and human rights for everything. Individuality is being crushed right before our eyes.

I want you to be yourself. First you must see yourself. Strangely and sadly Michael Jackson comes to mind. He did a song called the "Man in the mirror." Look at this chorus

**I'm starting with the man in the mirror, I'm asking him to change his ways.**

**And no message could have been any clearer if you wanna make the world a better place. (If you wanna make the world a better place) Take a look at yourself, and**

**then make a change.**

I like his music but I am not so sure I liked his lifestyle. There might be something wrong with him in some of his actions. Then I had to catch myself. Am I becoming the same person who thought I was nuts. Michael's song reminded me that he looked for himself in the mirror too. He was misunderstood. Maybe, just maybe, all he ever wanted was to be accepted as Michael (The man in the mirror). I do too, do you?

This whole book has been a journey. I wanted you to walk down that road with me: to see the junk in this world. I wanted you to know that I hear what they say about you. I know how they treated you. I have tried to build a case that God does not view people the same way people do. God only loves, cares, and hopes in us. What we see from people, who say they care, say they are Christian, might not be the truth. Just because someone says they are right, doing it in our best interest, and godly does not make it reality. What do you see in the mirror?

It has taken many years to see me in the mirror. I don't think Michael Jackson completely ever got there. Maybe he did, but I know I am still a work in progress. Like I said it is so important for you to change perspective through a reset. To be yourself, you have to adore and see yourself. The positive perspective is born out of the ashes of negativity. I needed you to see negativity in your life through the first chapters. I desperately want you to see that God cares. What is the best way to see the real you and love the real you? Ironically it comes through viewing others.

We need to see others for who they really are too. I knew a couple that were Mr. and Mrs. Wonderful. She was beautiful and very godly. He was a leader in business and in the church too. They lived in a nice home with nice kids. Once a week they held a group Bible study. That group

became huge. People were so attracted to this positive atmosphere. It was a happy time for those of us who were unhappy. That couple made our week. He was the man who said I was not junk.

Behind the scenes was a different story. They lived a perfect life but something was wrong in that perfect house. I have seen shows or plays about the masks we wear. Nothing is what it seems. I don't think that abuse was in that household, but something certainly was wrong. Even today I don't see anything wrong in their lives. They smiled, laughed, and cried with us all. I don't know the truth, but they ended up divorced.

Here are my two bits on why it happened to a perfect couple. I don't think they ever really talked. I know in my first marriage; we never really tried to know each other. We never really tried to fulfill each other's dreams. In reality, we were two separate lives living together. No wonder it was so easy to become separated. I believe that was the same story for my perfect couple.

She came from a Catholic background. He grew up in a Christian home. Religion was told to be their common bond. The individuals are secondary in that type of marriage. I have to tell you folks, that won't work. We are people and we are individuals made for a purpose. We are made to serve others with that purpose. So often we think we should just serve at the cost of ourselves. God did not make us that way. My reckless nature gives my wife a different view. Her passive nature keeps me sane. I think we complete each other. We try hard to encourage our differences. I don't think that was allowed or nurtured in my perfect couple's life.

Eventually she chose to leave. Like I said, I don't know anything about why. I bet she was suffocating with indifference to life. I bet he was trying to be everything they expect. I wonder if he could ever let himself be who he really is inside. In both instances, I think one let it out and the other kept it hidden. What was "It"? "It" was the individual on the inside: the person

and character God gave them. They needed to feel safe to express themselves and I don't think that happened.

She decided on a reset. He was forced to reset. Again, she probably gave him fuel to blame her for ruining the perfect marriage. She just wanted to be herself. This is not a good reset. Pain, suffering, and shame will have to be dealt with in this type of reset. How often did I see him sitting in church looking totally lost? She never came back to the pew. Pride, guilt, perception, and shame now ruled their lives. A reset is very good but it does not have to cost a marriage or relationship.

I don't know what happened to them. I know she got a tattoo and he got remarried. It draws me back to Adam and Eve in the Bible. When they ate of the forbidden fruit God said they would know the difference between good and evil. My perfect couple ate of divorce and now they know what I know. Life now looks different just like it did for Adam and Eve outside the garden. Tragedy and pain bring perspective. We all end up believing we could have done things differently. Sometimes we only see that after the house has burned down.

The positive part is perspective. There are so many good things to learn from the trials we have gone through. Being Mr. Positive does not bring only the positive in life. Life has its own way. We are intertwined with other people. They negatively and positively affect us all the time. What is positive is that you can make an inspirational difference in others' lives. How you live your life will affect you and those around you. What kind of life do you want to lead? Do you want a positive one? Then read on my friend. It's time to open our eyes and mind on how to begin a reset.