

David Bravo

LIVING A LIFE OF PURPOSE

I think that many men at some point in their lives wonder: “Why am I here?”; “Is this all there is?”; and “Am I making an impact?” While I don’t presume to know much, I can safely say that for me, I clearly recognize why I was created, and what I’m on this earth to do. And that is a powerful revelation for any man.

If I were to sum myself up in three words, it would be: fitness, martial arts, and Jesus—with Jesus being the number one priority and foundation for my entire life. I’ll share with you how my purpose is being fulfilled in each of these areas, and how they are interconnected.

I’ve always been an athlete and into working out. I’ve been in the gym since I was 14 years old. But it wasn’t until I hit my 40s that I got into the best shape of my life. So much so, that I even started registering for modeling competitions. As a professional model, all people really care about is your physical appearance, so the fitness competition world was an easy transition. I’ve done well and accomplished many worldly achievements. I been on the covers of magazines, I have a room full of trophies and plaques, and my personal training business has grown because of my success. But, to be honest, I was a selfish, self-centered individual who thrived on the attention I was getting. It wasn’t until some significant trials in my life and Jesus’ miraculous intervention that humbled me and brought me to my knees.



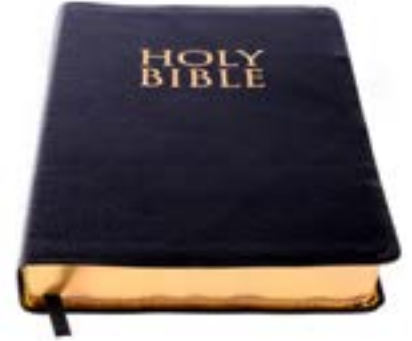
Jesus changed my heart. I was ready to give up the entire fitness, modeling, and competition world for good. Then Jesus led me to a Rescue Mission where he showed me hurting, broken people who needed my help; people who needed someone to care about them—and their health. Since then, I’ve been helping to build wellness programs for missions and shelters, using the knowledge and training I’ve received to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate. I train, model, and compete now for myself and to be a role model. Even my personal training sessions turn into deep discussions about life, while great friendships are built and impact is made. Not for my glory, but for the Lord’s.



When people ask me what my career is and I tell them I own a martial arts school, I get some interesting responses. They ask me if I'm a black belt, if I've ever had to use my training, and how quickly could I disable someone. Some of it is quite amusing. But I understand, because the martial arts have been sensationalized through movies, television, MMA/UFC, etc. While my knowledge and training are substantial, my greatest joy and sense of purpose is teaching. Unlike what we see promoted on MMA/UFC, martial arts does teach character and life skills. At my school, you don't get to learn the physical skills of martial arts until you first learn character traits like respect, integrity, discipline, humility, responsibility, etc. Each day I have the privilege of teaching and speaking into the lives of my students, making an impact that may have far-reaching effects. While my students love the physical skills, my fulfillment comes in teaching character and life skills. God has blessed me with the gift of being a teacher, and I embrace it each and every day.



Finally, and most importantly, I am a believer in Jesus Christ. I don't believe in religion. I believe in God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the Bible. I believe in what the Bible says, every word. I don't presume to understand it all, but the Bible is the foundation and hope of my life. Why do I believe? Because it's the only belief system in the world that has an overwhelming amount of evidence of its legitimacy, and because of the miracles Jesus has done in my own life. I could spend pages writing about His supernatural work in my life. Suffice it to say, I am an engineer by trade, and an analytical person by nature, and Jesus is undeniable to me. Anything and everything good in me and about me is because of Him. He is the one who broke me and lovingly disciplined me so that He could show me how to live for others, instead of myself. He's the one who



gifted me as a teacher and led me to teaching opportunities I would never have dreamed of. And He's the one who led me to leadership in a ministry and gave me a heart for those in need. Now all I care about is living the life that is pleasing to God. It's not easy. It's countercultural. I get called crazy, insane, ignorant, close-minded, etc. on a regular basis. But it's worth it. He's worth it. My life now has a purpose far beyond my house, the car I drive, the friends I have, the vacations I can take, and all the other worldly things people chase. In the end, the greatest joy is seeing Jesus work through me to serve others with love. More of Him and less of me. And in eternity, that's all that's going to matter.

~David Bravo

David Bravo, owner of Premier Martial Arts, is a 4th Dan Master Black Belt Chief Instructor, Master Martial Art Expert, Self-Defense Professional, Entrepreneur, Commercial Print & Fitness Model and Physique Competitor. Trained in Brazilian Jujitsu, Hwarang Do, Hapkido, Karate, Krav Maga, and Kali, David has been training and teaching Martial Arts since 1994. He is a former Tactical Master Instructor in CDT (Control, Direction, Takedown) under Senior Tactical Master Instructor, Tom Patire. He is also a VIPER Personal Protection Instructor and extensively trained in Hand to Hand Combative. Passionately devoted to protection, awareness and character building, David is currently developing a multi-media training program, and he has launched a Defender Foundation Chapter in AZ., whose primary focus is building an awareness campaign centered around the dangers of human trafficking. David is also an advocate for children, having begun a Christian charity whose proceeds help feed children who are suffering from starvation around the world. David is from La Junta, CO., and currently resides in Scottsdale, AZ.