

40 Weeks of Purpose

Week 32

Using What God Gave You

POINT TO MEDITATE ABOUT FROM LAST WEEK:

I was designed by God to serve Him.

We talked about what makes us up as Servants:

- 1) Gifts and Abilities
- 2) Heart or Passion
- 3) Personality
- 4) Experiences

VERSE TO MEMORIZE FROM LAST WEEK:

• 1st Peter 4:10 (ESV)

- 10) As each has received abilities, use them to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace

We are all different, and all have different gifts... But are all needed!

QUESTION TO CONSIDER FROM LAST WEEK:

What has God given me that I can give to others?

Which really is the question that we are trying to answer in this whole series...

- God deserves your best
- He designed you for a purpose and expects your best
- He doesn't want you to worry about abilities you don't have
- He wants you to focus on the talents He has given you

• Ephesians 5:17 (NLT)

- 17) Don't act thoughtlessly, but try to understand what the Lord wants you to do.

- Let's talk about the process of figuring out what God wants from you
- It's a 3 step process

1) **Assess your Gifts and Abilities**

- Give yourself a HONEST look, and determine what you are good at

- Romans 12:3 (NLT)

3) As God's messenger, I give each of you this warning: Be honest in your estimate of yourselves, measuring your value by how much faith God has given you.

- Make a list!
- Ask other people for their honest opinion (not a compliment)
- Gifts and Abilities are always confirmed by others
- You might think that you are great singer, but if no one else agrees...
- Ask yourself where you have seen fruit in your life that other people have confirmed
- The best way to discover your Gifts and Abilities is to experiment with different areas of service
 - Try: Working with young people
 - Doing correspondence course work
 - Organizing a used clothing drive
 - Teaching a Sunday School Class
 - Visiting one person a week who has been unable to attend meeting
 - Showing young married Sisters how to run a house
 - Helping newlyweds with a budget
 - Taking refreshments every week for a month
 - Organizing a choir
 - Writing an article for the Tidings about resisting temptation
 - Leading Gym Class at the Heritage School
 - Take Piano Lessons so that you can play at meeting
 - Babysitting a Brother and Sisters baby so that they can go out to dinner

JUST TRY SOMETHING!

- Experiment with lots of different things
 - Make yourself a list of 12 things that you are going to do for one month each in the next 12 months
- You will quickly discover the things that you have a Gift or Ability for

2) Consider your Passions and Personality

• Galatians 6:4 (MESSAGE)

- 4) Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that. Don't be impressed with yourself. Don't compare yourself with others.

• Ask yourself:

- What do I enjoy doing most?
- When do I feel most alive?
- What am I doing when I lose track of time?
- Do I like routine or variety?
- Do I prefer serving in a team or by myself?
- Do I consider myself an Introvert or an Extrovert?
- Do I consider myself more of a Thinker or more of a Feeler?
- Which do I enjoy more – competing or cooperating?

3) Examine your Experiences and extract the Lessons you have learned

- Forgotten experiences are worthless
 - Forgotten painful experiences are doubly worthless
- Keep a journal of what you've been through
- We rarely see God's hand in our lives as it happens
 - We don't see past the pain or failure or embarrassment
- Only in hindsight do we realize that God had a purpose for that problem
- Look back at your life and see what lessons you have learned by your experiences
- Take a whole Saturday and do a "Life Review"

- Once you decide who you are (Gifts, Abilities, Passion, Personality, Experiences) then you should ACCEPT THAT

- Don't waste a single minute wishing you were someone else
- Part of accepting who you are is recognizing your limitations
- Nobody is good at everything
 - Chances are you are going to think that a certain service is the best, and you are going to be upset that you aren't good at it
- Understand that you are who you are, and need to work within that framework
- 2nd Corinthians 10:13 (NLT)
 - 13) But we will not boast of authority we do not have. Our goal is to stay within the boundaries of God's plan for us, and this plan includes our working there with you.
- The idea of Boundaries refers to the fact that God assigns each of us a field of service
- When you try to overextend yourself or reach beyond what God designed for you, you will experience stress
- Two temptations you will have is to **COMPARE** yourself to others and **CONFORM** yourself to others expectations
- **DON'T!**
- Whenever you lose your joy for what you are doing, check to see if you have done either of those two things
- There are two reasons why you shouldn't compare yourself to others:
 - 1) You will always find someone better than you, and you will get discouraged
 - 2) You will always find someone worse than you, and you will get all full of pride
- 2nd Corinthians 10:12 (NIV)
 - 12) We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.
- People will want you to conform to their expectations, because they don't understand what you are doing, and it may be beyond their comfort zone
- What is the most popular way that people will try to get you to conform to their way of thinking?

- They will **CRITICIZE** what you are doing!
- *“Why are you wasting your time making sandwiches for homeless people! You should be passing out pamphlets instead of sandwiches. Christ called us to preach, not feed people.”*
- Just ignore them...
- Be confident in this LONG process that you have been through to determine your Gifts, Abilities, Passions, Personality and Experiences that has drawn you to the service that you are doing
- They don't know who you are or what you are good at or what you like to do
- They often think that you should be like them and do what they do

- This process ISN'T a Once-In-A-Lifetime kind of thing
- Continually re-assess yourself
 - Push yourself to try more and do more
- Whatever gifts you have been given will be enlarged and developed through practice
 - Soon you will be able to do more (and do it more quickly) than you ever thought

POINT TO MEDITATE ABOUT THIS WEEK:

God deserves my best.

VERSE TO MEMORIZE THIS WEEK:

- Galatians 6:4 (MESSAGE)

- 4) Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that.

QUESTION TO CONSIDER THIS WEEK:

How can I make the best use of what God has given me?