

Thursday — God Gives You Opportunities

Big Point: *Once we realize that the gifts and abilities that we've been given by God are to be used solely for His benefit to bless others, the desire of our heart becomes God's will and not our own.*

Have you ever found yourself saying, "What on earth am I here for?" That very question became the foundation of Rick Warren's best selling book The Purpose Driven Life. Millions of people desire to know how God has wired them and what they are supposed to do here on earth. The only problem is sometimes we don't like what we hear after we find out what we are here on earth to do. We think we should be doing more, having a more illustrious career, being more popular, well-known, with more status and recognition. We sometimes find ourselves saying, "Why is it that some folks thrive and become successful while others are challenged and wind up becoming a bagger at Kroger?"

*Let's set the record straight—for us to think that because of our faith, God gives more to some than others is a little slippery. Financial and physical blessing is not the best indicator of faith. We should all search our heart and become who God has created us to be and do the things He has called us to do. If God has called you to die for the Gospel, great. If God has called you to be a billionaire and to bless others, great. If God has called you to sell it all and move to the hills of Uganda and translate the Bible, great. If God has called you to flip burgers for the rest of your life to impact the lives of teenagers—never making more than the bills you have to pay—then you sure as heck better do it. It is not for you to decide, but to be faithful with what you have been called to do with the gifts you've been given. And it should be the desire of your heart to please Him above all else—for His will to be done, **not yours!***

Read and Think.... Find Answers in the Bible

Romans 12:3 has a way of busting any kind of bubble that we begin to blow up about ourselves. Fundamentally speaking, we are to base our identity in Christ. What guidelines do Romans 12:3-6 give us with regard to our gifts?

Romans 12:3-6 (New Living Translation)

³ *Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.* ⁴ *Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function,* ⁵ *so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.* ⁶ *In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you.*

Answer:

What does God say we must do in Psalms 37:3-5 in order for God to give us the desires of our heart?

Psalm 37:3-5 (New Living Translation) ³ *Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.* ⁴ *Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.* ⁵ *Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this.*

Answer:

What does Christ teach us in Luke 22:42 and how does that correlate to our desires and how we are to use them on earth? Whose will shall prevail?

Luke 22:42 (New Living Translation)

“Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.”

Answer:

LIVE...What will you do now?

God gives us all special gifts. Have you taken the time to determine what your gifts are? If so, outline those special gifts here and jot down the top three ways that you use those gifts here at CedarCreek and beyond our walls. If you do not know your spiritual gifts, complete the spiritual gifts survey by going to cedarcreek.tv, click on “get connected,” then “classes and seminars” and you’ll find where to download the survey to the right of the screen.

	CedarCreek	Beyond our Walls
1. Gift: _____	_____	_____
2. Gift: _____	_____	_____
3. Gift: _____	_____	_____

Do you ever find yourself in conflict with the gifts that God has given you, what God expects of you, and what you most desire to do with your life? If so, describe how you are conflicted.

We realize that conflicts may occur and it may be hard to understand what God’s will is for your life. Describe the times when you have found yourself saying, “Not my will God, but your will be done.”

NOTE: *If you have never had to say that, we guarantee that once you place God’s will as the desire of your heart, you will likely say such a statement.*

PRAY...God, What do you want me to know & do?

Thank God for the gifts that He has given you. Ask for His strength to live the life that He has planned for you, seeking His will above all else. Ask Him to teach you how to make His will the desire of your heart so that you can take advantage of every opportunity that He provides for you to bless others.