

## "Made for Purpose"

### Romans 12:3-8

#### I. Introduction

##### A. God's creation is truly wonderful

1. Psalm 19:1
2. We are God's greatest masterpiece

##### B. You don't have to go far to see God's greatest work of art—the uniqueness, wonder, and magnitude of His greatest creation: mankind

1. Ephesians 2:10
2. Without question, man is God's crowning achievement, and each of us are made on purpose for purpose
  - a. There's a unique, custom-designed work, plan, and purpose that God wants to do in and through your life, and you were created for it
  - b. God not only created each of us unique in DNA, physical appearance, and personality, but He has given to each of us a unique set of spiritual gifts

##### C. What were you made for?

1. Finding your purpose and living for purpose are two very different things
2. Some people know their gifts and know how they're wired, but refuse to use them
  - a. Many of us fight against the way we were created; we want to be somebody different, or we want different gifts than we've been given
  - b. There's a big difference between knowing your purpose, finding your purpose, and living for purpose

##### D. You are burdened with glorious purpose and you are blessed with glorious purpose

1. God has a plan for your life; He wants to use you to do things above and beyond what you could do on your own
2. You have a purpose within the purpose of the church, and once you find it, you can begin living for purpose
  - a. Being alive isn't just a physical state, because we aren't just physical beings
  - b. God spoke all of creation into existence, and Jesus made a way for us to get to the Father
  - c. In Jesus, we are made alive, and through the Holy Spirit, we are made for purpose

##### E. We reach our full potential and beauty only when we find purpose through Jesus Christ

1. In Romans 12:1, Paul urged us to present our bodies as "a living sacrifice"
2. God has given us something as well, but it's not a fair trade, because God has given us something far greater
  - a. He's given us the assurance of salvation, hope, belonging, the knowledge of eternity in heaven, and a sense of purpose
  - b. He's also given us the Holy Spirit, and through the Spirit, a specific set of gifts

3. Paul explained how important these gifts are and how integral they are to a believer's life
- II. The Identity of Your Purpose
- A. It's important to understand who the Holy Spirit is and what role He plays in the lives of believers today
    1. The Holy Spirit is controversial, as are the gifts He gives to the church
    2. Some believe that certain gifts of the Spirit were only relevant to the first century church and are no longer available to Christians today
    3. The Holy Spirit is the chief means of identifying our purpose
  - B. Are the gifts of the Spirit available to Christians today?
    1. The church of the first century, which clearly had and utilized these gifts, had a far more profound effect on their society and culture than the church of today
    2. What the early church lacked in size, they made up for in power and effectiveness
      - a. This small group of people turned their world upside down and spread the gospel across the globe through the power of the Holy Spirit
      - b. This was the power of God working in and through them as they worked in unison, finding their purpose within the body of Christ
  - C. The modern church isn't having the same impact on our world as the early church
    1. The question is whether the gifts utilized by the early church are available today
    2. Two distinct camps have formed:
      - a. The charismatics
        - i. Known as Pentecostals or charismatics
        - ii. Emphasize signs and miracles
      - b. The noncharismatics
        - i. Fundamentalists or evangelicals
        - ii. Emphasize teaching and making disciples
    3. But why should the two be mutually exclusive?
      - a. The reality is that some things don't fit in a neat little box
      - b. The problem with polarizing is that you end up with passages and ideas that don't fit with what you believe
    4. The goal should be balance
      - a. With too much Scripture and no Spirit, you'll dry up
      - b. With too much Spirit and no Scripture, you'll blow up
      - c. Enough of both, and you'll grow up
    5. If the Bible doesn't take sides, you don't need to, either
      - a. We can be thankful for salvation even if we don't understand how the free will of man and the election of God balances out
      - b. If we could understand every facet of God, He probably couldn't deal with your sin or your issues
  - D. There's a great danger in interpreting Scripture in light of our experiences or lack thereof; we should interpret our experiences in light of Scripture
    1. There are two ways we can go wrong in relating our experiences to Scripture
      - a. Claiming things that go beyond Scripture or even contradict Scripture

- i. Much of the charismatic movement does this by claiming health and wealth for all believers
        - ii. Some claim things for themselves that Scripture doesn't mention
      - b. Being satisfied with much less than what God has offered in Scripture
    - 2. If you have to experience something yourself in order to believe that it's true, you'll have to explain away the Bible
  - E. Some people say that the power of the Spirit was only meant for the early church
    - 1. This theology is called secessionism, or quenching the Spirit
    - 2. The belief is that once Scripture was completed and made whole, there was no longer any use for certain gifts of the Spirit
      - a. The Scripture most often used to support this is I Corinthians 13:8-10
        - i. The defining word in this text is *perfect*
        - ii. Many secessionists say this word refers to the fulfillment of Scripture, but if that were true, all of it would have been fulfilled
        - iii. If this refers to the completion of Scripture, then our knowledge of God and His Word as believers today would exceed that of those who wrote the Scriptures
      - b. Paul wasn't referring to Scripture, but to Jesus and His return to earth
        - i. Jesus used the same word to describe His Father in Matthew 5:48
        - ii. We are to keep using the gifts as we wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ (see I Corinthians 1:7)
  - F. When Jesus returns, we won't have any need or use for these gifts anymore
    - 1. John 14:16
    - 2. Until that day comes, we need all the help we can get
    - 3. The result of the Holy Spirit's power in your life lies in receiving the much-needed gifts of the Holy Spirit
    - 4. The gifts of the Spirit are not the goal—they're the gateway
- III. The Impairment to Your Purpose
  - A. Nothing can put a stop to you being used by God faster than pride and arrogance
    - 1. We can begin to think that God chooses to use us because we're special
    - 2. God could easily replace us in the blink of an eye, yet He has chosen people to do His work among people
      - a. Acts 14:15
      - b. We can never forget that these gifts which God has instilled in our lives are given according to His grace
        - i. They have nothing to do with merit
        - ii. You don't deserve them; God gave them to you because He loves you
  - B. We should never become arrogant, as God graciously chooses to use us
    - 1. Although God has chosen to work through us as human vessels, it is not out of necessity, but desire
      - a. He doesn't need us, but He wants us; God can easily get the job done without us
      - b. It's a privilege and an honor that He uses me as His instrument in any capacity, and it's certainly not because of my skills and abilities

2. It's His power working in and through us, and if we forget that, our work will have absolutely zero impact
  - a. It's only when He's working through us that we are effective
  - b. 1 Peter 5:5
3. You can never be too small for God to use, but you can become too big

#### IV. The Importance of Your Purpose

- A. Attending church is not a spectator sport
  1. It is important that you use the purpose God has given you to impact people
  2. The Bible compares our involvement in the church to being part of a family; Paul compared it to being part of a body
    - a. Any part of the body can't exist without the rest of the body to support it
    - b. God has commanded each of us to be a functioning, vital part of the church
  3. The purpose for which God has called the church will be impaired if you refuse to fulfill your purpose as part of the body
- B. If you refuse to step up and be active in the body of Christ, you're hurting the body, the people around you, and yourself
  1. Ephesians 4:15
  2. The body grows and builds itself up as each part does its work
- C. God has put you exactly where He wants you
  1. He's made you for the purpose that He wants you to fulfill (see 1 Corinthians 12:18)
    - a. If you question your gifting and function in the body, you're questioning God
    - b. Each part of the body—visible and non-visible—is necessary
  2. We're not called to question the purpose we were created for
    - a. We're meant to serve the purpose that God has given us
    - b. When we recognize that each of us serves our own purpose, we can accomplish a far greater work than we ever could individually
- D. When you serve your purpose within the body of Christ, you enable the body to do things it couldn't do without you
  1. You are necessary; without you, the church can't do what it's called to do
  2. If you're not serving as part of the body of Christ, there are things that we could be accomplishing but can't because you're unwilling to serve
- E. The early church was effective not just because they had the power of the Holy Spirit, but because every one of them utilized that power
  1. Each of them was volunteering
  2. Each of them was operating in their gift set, so they were able to move in unison and accomplish incredible things

#### V. Conclusion

- A. Paul encouraged us in 1 Corinthians 12:31 to "desire the best gifts"
  1. What are the best gifts? It depends on what your needs are
  2. The NLT translates it as "the most helpful gifts"
- B. Each gift has its place, and we should not ignore any of the gifts we've received because they're not important enough to use

1. Although there is a danger of becoming prideful in the gifts God has given us, there's also the danger of having a false sense of humility and not using those gifts
2. Every gift is vital, with its own role to play within the church, just as the church has a purpose to fulfill in the world
  - a. What would your church be like if every single member was just like you?
  - b. What are the gifts the Holy Spirit has given you?
- C. You need to identify your individual purpose within the body of Christ in order for you to be a part of our purpose as the body of Christ
  1. What are we doing?
  2. Why are we doing it?
  3. Where do I fit in?
- D. What we are doing is what makes each of us important
  1. Everything that God wants to do in and through this church exists in the congregation of this church
  2. If you're not connected to what you were born to do, the purpose you were made for, you're impairing the church from doing what God wants us to do
  3. Too many people today are consumers instead of servants

**Cross references:** Psalm 19:1; Matthew 5:48; John 14:16; Acts 14:15; Romans 12:1; I Corinthians 1:7; 12:18, 31; 13:8-10; Ephesians 2:10; 4:15; I Peter 5:5

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