

# Living With Purpose and Power - Week 3

## “Talents, Abilities & Gifts”



### ***Ephesians 4:14-16***

*As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.*

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***Destiny:*** the sovereign **purpose** for which you have been created, that when fulfilled, brings God the greatest glory, brings you the greatest joy, and most significantly, advances the Kingdom of God here on earth.

### Review:

- Experience God, and you will experience your purpose.
- It is in the close, abiding intimate relationship with the Father that you will not only discover, but you will also live out the destiny He has purposed for you.
- You must be willing to do God's will before you know His will.

Many of us say to God, “Show me what You want me to do, and I will let You know whether I am into that or not. Let me know the plan, and I will tell You whether I plan to do it.”

- God's plan is not up for negotiation. God is only going to reveal your calling to you when you are committed to doing it ahead of time. God will not negotiate His will.
- We spend so much time doing things that may be okay within themselves but rob us of time in God's presence. When you encounter God, He will lead you to your purpose.

**We are going to see that everything we have and everything we are is a gift from God.**

Like all things in our walk with God, start your “**purpose journey**” with prayer. Ask God to help you see yourself through His eyes.

**Definitions of things that God imparts to us and that are to be discovered, uncovered, developed and used to the maximum:**

- **Talents** - Natural talents are the gift of God  
**Natural talents are imparted at our natural birth.** Natural talents are just that: “**natural**”! They can be attributed to the natural genetic material existing within all of us, passed down from generation to generation. **A talent is raw potential.**
- **Abilities** - Learned abilities are also a gift from God  
Learned abilities are the result of our informal and formal education – things we have learned to do as a result of observing other people do them [in the first instance, our parents], or by deliberately learning how to do them [at school or ‘on the job’]. Sometimes learned abilities overlap with our natural talents. For example, a person with a musical talent who has also studied music in a formal way.
- **Skills** **A skill is a honed ability.** Don’t settle for talents; develop some skills, and hone them to perfection.
- **Spiritual gifts** are God-given abilities of a particular spiritual nature and/or a spiritual purpose. **Spiritual gifts come directly from the Spirit of God.** The “Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.” **Spiritual gifts are given when we are born again.** They are an empowerment of supernatural origin.

Paul describes spiritual gifts in three places:

***1 Corinthians 12:7-11***

*But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.*

***Romans 12:3-8***

*For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

***Ephesians 4:10-12***

*He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;*

## **The Problem with Comparisons**

You cannot compare that which is unique. There is nothing to compare it to. Each person's gifts and talents are not meant to be in competition with one another, but they are to be complementary, those abilities needed to complete the whole...that is to build up the Body of Christ.

## Missing the Mark

- You can miss God's destiny for your life. People do it all the time. In fact, you can go through your entire life and miss God's purpose for your life — **by your own choices.**
- God's will is not automatic. He allows us to make choices. Many of the things that happen to you are not God's perfect will. We all have to choose between God's will and our will.
- God has a destiny for your life, but he won't force it on you.
- Pray for God to reveal the desires and passions of your heart and the motives behind those desires.

## The Parable of the Talents

**A dire warning, though, is pointed out in Matthew's the "Parable of the Talents" (Mt. 25:24–29 NIV)** about burying your gifts and talents, especially when it is done out of fear or intimidation.

*That precious memory triggers another: your honest faith—and what a rich faith it is, handed down from your grandmother Lois to your mother Eunice, and now to you! And the special gift of ministry you received when I laid hands on you and prayed—keep that ablaze! God doesn't want us to be shy with his gifts, but bold and loving and sensible. **2 Timothy 1:6-7***

Your talents, abilities, skills, spiritual gifts, interests, personality and your desires are your unique divine design. It is how God “wired” you and how God intends for you to serve Him and others.

**Next week we will discuss “Planning For Success”**