

Come As You Are (CAYA) Service
July 7, 2010
Rev. Howard-John Wesley, Alfred Street Baptist Church

Discovering My Life's Purpose

Scripture Reference: Revelations 3:7-13 (New International Version)

7 "To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

8 I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.

9 I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I have loved you.

10 Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.

11 I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.

12 Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name.

13 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

Notes on scripture above from the ESV Study Bible:

V7 Jesus holds the **key of David**, meaning that his authority to admit to or exclude from God's kingdom cannot be reversed (cf. Isa. 22:22; Matt. 16:19).

V8 **an open door**. For Paul, open doors were opportunities for ministry (1 Cor. 16:9; 2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3). That sense is possible here; but since these Christians, excluded by the synagogue, would become pillars in God's temple (Rev. 3:12), probably Jesus sets before them the "door standing open" into God's heavenly sanctuary (4:1). **little power**. As Christians in Smyrna were physically poor yet spiritually rich, so those in Philadelphia were weak yet holding fast to Jesus' word (3:10–11)

V9 Members of **the synagogue of Satan** (cf. 2:9) **say that they are Jews** but instead are serving God's enemy as they persecute Christians. Christ will compel these persecutors to **bow down** at the **feet** of his followers and acknowledge that he has **loved** them, just as Isaiah foresaw Gentiles bowing before Israelites (Isa. 45:14; 49:23).

V10 To those who **have kept** his word, Christ promises, "**I will keep you**" from the coming **hour of trial**, which will put **those who dwell on the earth** to the test. Because this trial is **coming on the whole world**, it seems that before the final consummation, Revelation envisions a brief future period of intensified persecution for the church (see 19:19; 20:7–9) and of escalating manifestations of God's wrath against "those who dwell on the earth," a phrase designating rebellious humanity (6:10; 8:13; 11:10; 13:8, 12, 14; 17:2, 8). Jesus does not promise to spare believers from suffering or martyrdom but to shield them from his wrath and to transform martyrdom into triumph (6:10–11; 12:11). Many who hold a "pretribulation rapture" position believe that this verse means Christ will take them out of the world before a literal "great tribulation" period begins. Other interpreters, however, see this as God's promise to safeguard and remain faithful to believers who endure patiently in the midst of "the hour of trial that is coming," though it does not imply that he will take believers out of the world at

that time (cf. a similar but not identical Gk. expression in James 1:27, where it does not imply removal from the world).

v12 As a pillar in God's temple, inscribed with the **name of God**, the **one who conquers** can never be excluded from God's presence, for he will dwell in God's **new Jerusalem** (21:2) as David's royal heir (3:7).

The key to joy and peace is to discover God's purpose for your life and walk in it!

- You are operating in what God purposely breathed into you.

Question: What am I called to do?

- You don't want to make this decision in your 50s and 60s!
- Decision – *decidere* (latin) literally means to cut
 - o Not deciding for something, but more cutting off other options.

No one can tell you your purpose in life.

- Draw close to God and have Him tell you your purpose
- Stop jumping off of every building, changing your vision and walking with everything else that LOOKS like you should go that way.
- God knows how to find you. He knows your email address, phone number, etc. If God has something to tell you, He knows where you are. Listen to Him.

Ephesians 2:10

10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

1. Paul says God has created works BEFORE you were born.
 - a. There is a God-ordained purpose for your life.
2. WORKS – note that the word is plural, not singular. There is not ONE purpose, but multiple assignments God has for your life.

<slide> Challenges

Discerning and discovering what those < ???from slide??? >

Pastor Wesley went into a description of how when his oldest son entered Montessori school and how their learning methods are very different than other schools. He described that each day, the kids didn't really have "school work to do" (this is at age 5), but more of assignments that are placed on a whiteboard in the classroom for each student. They have various assignments (polishing silver with a Q-Tip, peeling fruit, etc.) that all develop a skill for later assignments (polishing silver with a Q-Tip develops the students' hand for writing in cursive, etc).

- If only life were that easy with our life's assignments (go look at a whiteboard everyday with what God has for us)

3. Some of us are good at many things

I Corinthians 6:12

12 "Everything is permissible for me"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me"—but I will not be mastered by anything.

- ✓ All things you can do are not necessarily meant for you to do at all times.

Remember the story of Mary and Martha? Luke 10:38-42 (New International Version)

38 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him.

39 She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said.

40 But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, 42but only one thing is needed.[a] Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

- ✓ There comes a point in your life where the devil can tempt you with evil, even as you grow in God
- ✓ As you grow, the choice becomes not just choosing *good vs. bad*, but *good vs. best* (temptation of the devil)
- ✓ Get busy so you aren't fruitful doing too much of a lot of little things and not that **ONE thing** that you are called to do
 - Thing (purpose) = stay in God's word
- ✓ Old saying: You know you are getting older because when you were younger, there are some things that you can do all day; as you get older, there are some things that take you all day to do.

<slide> God's gifts us with gifts, talents/ability for three reasons:

1. Support and sustain our daily living

Proverbs 18:16

16 A gift opens the way for the giver and ushers him into the presence of the great

- ✓ What God has put in you should sustain the life He's called you to live
 - We shouldn't try to live beyond what He has for us

2. For His glory

Matthew 5:16

16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

- ✓ People around you will realize that it is God working through you and only God

3. Edification of His kingdom on Earth

I Corinthians 12:18-31

18 But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

19 If they were all one part, where would the body be?

20As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"

22 On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,

23 and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty,

24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it,

25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.
 26 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.
 27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.
 28 And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.
 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?
 30 Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues[a]? Do all interpret?
 31 But eagerly desire[b] the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.

- ✓ Gifts become distorted in your young adult life
- ✓ Using your gifts is more than just paying bills and getting by

Most people think their purpose is their spiritual gift. Not necessarily true.

<slide> What is your spiritual shape?

- Spiritual Gifts
- Heart's Passion
- Abilities
- Personalities
- Experience

Read Exodus 3:1-4 – story of the calling of Moses

Read *You Are Gifted: Your Spiritual Gifts and the Kingdom of God* by Ken Hemphill

1. **Spiritual Gifts**

<slide> Spiritual Gifts (three types)

- A. Signs
- B. Equipping
- C. Serving

Gifts of the Spirit	Fruit of the Spirit
Romans 12	Galatians 5
I Corinthians 12	
Some abilities from God (actions)	Character that the gift ought to operate in
None of us has every gift of the spirit – if you did, you'd be alone in church and have no need for God	Note: FRUIT is singular, not plural, and should be exemplified in every Christian
	All nine fruits need to be developed in our lives

<slide> 15 Serving Spiritual Gifts

- ✓ Prophecy (you receive that every time you listen to a teacher or minister)
- ✓ Serving
- ✓ Teaching
- ✓ Exhorting (being an encourager)
- ✓ Giving
- ✓ Leading (influence)
- ✓ Mercy
- ✓ Wisdom (helping people grow in their maturity with Jesus)
- ✓ Word of Knowledge (explains scripture)
- ✓ Faith (in the darkest of times, they still have unshakeable faith)
- ✓ Discerning Spirits (toughest to trust that spirit; we have to have enough faith)
- ✓ Helps (be able to bear the burdens of other people)
- ✓ Administration (makes wise decisions and motivates other in completion)
- ✓ Hospitality (diffuses a tense situation, etc.; loves making others feel good)
- ✓ Love

Question: What area(s) are you gifted in?

- ✓ You can see needs and opportunities others miss because you are gifted to meet that need
- ✓ Requires unity and humility (everyone needs to work along-side one another without being mean)

NOTE: Spiritual gifts are not to be worn as a badge of honor, like some people do.

- ✓ If you have to be chair of something to work with it, you aren't operating in humility

2. <slide> Heart's Passions

- ✓ God calls you through your passions **and** your pet peeves!
 - What excites you?
 - What angers you (Holy discontent)?
 - We usually get as far away as possible from the things that anger us. God is actually calling us to be a change agent in that very area.
 - Moses' holy discontent – God sent him into the very place/thing that got his blood moving!

3. <slide> Abilities

- ✓ Sometimes referred to as a talent
- ✓ To sustain yourself, to serve others < ???from slide??? >
 - Whatever you do good in the world, you ought to do better in the kingdom

4. <slide> Personality

- ✓ You are who God made you to be!
 - You shouldn't be so sanctified that you become weird/strange. God doesn't kill your personality when you get saved.
 - You are not operating in your purpose if you are different than the nature of who you are.

5. <slide> Experiences

- ✓ God never wastes a good storm! He uses every experience you've been through to deliver others in that same situation, out of it.

- ✓ Many of us are so ashamed of what we've been through that we can't talk about it
 - Example: The Lord can allow us to go through something for three years to minister to someone else who is going through it in 3 minutes.
- ✓ Many of us are delivered but didn't learn anything from it.

Read Proverbs 3:5-6

The only way to discover your purpose is trial.

The Lord won't let you get so far out of His will to leave us out there alone.

You can't be afraid of failure!

- ✓ Failure is not a sin.
- ✓ Finding out what God has for us is a way of discernment

Joy and peace will occur when you are in the will of God.

If you'll be faithful where God has planted you, God will take you to a new level (places of prosperity).

First, surrender your life to God's plan

Housekeeping notes

Rooftop Party – Saturday, August 14, 2010 from 7pm -11pm

- ✓ If you want to know the exact location, you must find out via the CAYA, YAM or Singles Ministry listservs/email lists (must join one of them to find out).



- CAYA – <http://www.comeaya.com> and click on
- Singles Ministry ASBCsingles_ministry@googlegroups.com
- YAM - join Alfred Street YAM facebook page, or email asbcyam@aol.com