



Achieving God's Purposes for your Life

Extending those Purposes beyond your Life

The Purposes of a Man's Heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.

(Proverbs 20:5)

People of faith readily agree that God has a distinct purpose for their life.

Psalms 139 tells us that we “were known” by the Father even before our birth. It tells us that God has sovereignly directed the sum total of our experiences in life—He is familiar with “all my ways.” Luke 12 tells us that the smallest detail of our experience matters to God—even the number of hairs on our head. I Corinthians 12 tells us that, when we accept Jesus as our Savior and Lord, God breathes into us individual spiritual gifts to be used within our calling and to His glory—whether we are called to be professional preachers, school teachers, doctors, farmers our stay-at-home moms. *Understanding those gifts and offering them to God for His use is the largest share of our directive to “discern and do God’s Will” in our lives.*

People of faith readily agree that God owns everything.

If we understand this, then we embrace the fact that we don't “own” anything. Instead, we are stewards or caretakers of the gifts and abilities He has entrusted us with. This includes the financial resources He has entrusted us with as well. The Bible clearly directs us to tithe of our first fruits, and to give offerings to Kingdom work. We do this knowing that God doesn't need our help. Understanding that “our righteousness (our best stuff—my paraphrase) is as filthy rags,” when our best is humbly offered to God He redeems it to His glory. *Humbly offering the best of our abilities and gifts, and giving of finances to God's work allows us to participate in His Kingdom Purposes, and becomes the main source of spiritual growth and joy in our lives.*

God places desires in our hearts for a reason.

The further we get in our walk with the Lord, as time passes and our relationship grows deeper, the more we find that the “desires of our heart” match His intentions for us. God will use our past experiences, the spiritual gifts He has given us, and desires He places in us through the Holy Spirit to direct us. If we pay attention to this, we find we are not only led to serve in the church—we may be led to teach teen-agers, for instance. We not are not only led to use our hospitality gifts in our home—we may be led to prepare meals for elderly shut-ins. And, after our tithe to the church, we may be led to give offerings to very specific types of Kingdom work. *When we discern the spiritual “wiring” God has created in us, and learn to walk within it, we can perform His will and experience great joy in our lives.*

Mature Stewards understand that they can impact God’s Purposes even after they’re gone.

The largest single act of financial stewardship most people will take is in their estate plan, which could consist of a last will and testament, or a living will. At the point of your death, one of two things will happen. Neither the purposes and intentions you have prayed about will be achieved—leaving a legacy that reflects your values, or the laws of your local state and courts will make those decisions. And, depending on the resources God has entrusted to you, either the state and federal government will tax those resources or you have created a plan that avoids taxes and can direct funds to your family and loved ones, to your church, and to ministries and causes that are dear to you. *Completing an estate plan can be one of the most rewarding things you ever experience, knowing that you have cared for your family, you have completed the task of stewarding God’s resources, and you may have sewn financial seed into the lives of others through ministries you support.*

The Journey begins with the First Step—Finding Trustworthy Counsel.

The Southern Baptist Foundation exists to help people grow in personal stewardship, and to provide counsel and resources to achieve the maximum benefit, efficiency and impact. We work in close cooperation with State Foundations, where they exist, and the full array of Baptist entities. Our role is not to convince you who to give to and which organizations to support; our role is to help you achieve God’s best in the purposes He has laid on your heart. *Pray about taking the first step today.*