

How To Find My Purpose

A Guide

The purpose of this guide is to help you identify your gifts, talents, skills, experiences, and passions, and how these, when added to the places that your season of life finds you, will help you to identify your purpose.

"I am a little pencil in the hand of a writing God who is sending a love letter to the world."

–Mother Teresa

"The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

–Frederick Buechner

As we start exploring your purpose, let's start with some scripture. Look up the following passages. What do you observe about how these verses describe your purpose:

- Ephesians 2:10
- Romans 8:28
- Matthew 5:14–16
- Colossians 3:23–24
- Matthew 28:18–20

In light of these verses, what do you learn about your purpose as a Jesus follower?

Your Gifts

We must also consider how God has gifted us as we identify what part we play in God's redemptive mission for the world. Look at these verses on spiritual gifts:

- Romans 12:6–8
- 1 Corinthians 12:4–11
- Ephesians 4:11–13

Now, take a look at the end of this document for a list of spiritual gifts. As you read through the list, circle the gifts that you see most in yourself.

You will feel the most fulfilled and be most effective if you understand how God has gifted you, and if you use those gifts to meet a need in your church, in your work, and in your relationships.

Partnering with God's mission using your gifts in the places that you find yourself is your purpose!

Pursuit of Purpose

The What—What am I gifted to do?

Tips as you begin to explore your purpose:

- Be honest about what you are good at. Avoid pursuing gifts that you wish you had and roles that you aren't gifted for.

- Become a student of yourself. As you reflect on your experiences and try new things, make a list of things you enjoy doing and are good at, as well as things you don't enjoy and aren't that good at.
- Ask people who know you well what they see in you.
- Don't forget that your talents, skills, life experiences, training, and education are also part of your purpose.

Ask God:

- God, will you bring to my mind what I am good at? How have you gifted me?
- Will you bring to my mind an experience I have had in the past that might help me see what I am skilled at and what I enjoy?
- God, is there something that I am not as good at that I should stop pursuing?

You might also want to take a spiritual gifts assessment. [We recommend this survey from GiftTest.org](https://www.gifttest.org).

The Where—Where am I to fulfill my purpose?

In the church:

- Where do my gifts intersect with the church's needs?

Most gifts and talents can be used in multiple areas. Make an appointment with a staff member to discuss the possibilities.

In the world:

- Where has God placed me in this season of my life? (Consider workplace, neighborhood, family, etc.)
- Is there a new area he might be asking me to engage in?
- Is there an organization or ministry doing great work that is interesting to me?
- What needs to be healed in the world that I think I can contribute to?

Your Passion

As you think about your purpose, consider what needs or people group you are the most passionate about. What brokenness in the world is the most upsetting to you? Are you upset that children in our city and world are being mistreated? Is your heart stirred when you think of children in need of a safe home? Are you passionate about seeing children grow in their walk with God? Are you passionate about helping adults find Jesus and grow in their faith? Are you passionate about caring for the suffering? Is the global church important to you?

Take some time to think about both the cause and the people group that you feel drawn to.

- What needs are closest to your heart?
- What people group weighs heavily on you?

Conclusion

If you put all of these together (your talents, gifts, skills, experiences, passions, and people), what purpose is emerging?

- What next step will you take to continue discovering your purpose?

Spiritual Gifts

These gifts are identified in the New Testament, especially in passages like Romans 12:6–8, 1 Corinthians 12:4–11, and Ephesians 4:11–13. If you are struggling to identify your gifts through self-assessment, we recommend taking an assessment like this one.

Wisdom

Definition: The ability to apply knowledge, make godly decisions, and offer guidance in complex situations, particularly from a spiritual perspective.

Example: You consistently offer wise, godly advice, especially in difficult or complex situations. People often seek your counsel because they trust your judgment and insight, especially in decisions that require spiritual discernment.

Identifying: Do people frequently come to you for advice on how to handle spiritual or life matters? Are you able to see solutions to problems that others may not?

Knowledge

Definition: A supernatural understanding of God's will, purposes, or divine truth, beyond natural learning.

Example: You have a deep understanding of spiritual truths, and you're able to bring insight into scripture or complex theological matters. Sometimes, you know things about situations or people that you haven't been told, but you sense it through the Holy Spirit.

Identifying: Do you often grasp spiritual truths quickly and deeply? Do you sometimes "know" things through the Holy Spirit that you weren't told directly?

Faith

Definition: Extraordinary confidence and trust in God's power, promises, and faithfulness, especially in difficult or miraculous situations.

Example: You have a strong, unshakable confidence in God's promises, even in the face of overwhelming circumstances. Your faith encourages others to trust in God during trials.

Identifying: Do others often comment on your ability to trust God even in the hardest situations? Do you naturally inspire others to deepen their faith?

Healing

Definition: The supernatural ability to bring physical, emotional, or spiritual healing to others by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Example: You have witnessed or been a part of physical, emotional, or spiritual healing through prayer. People may come to you for prayer when they are sick or hurting, and healing often follows your intercession.

Identifying: Do you feel compelled to pray for those who are ill or in distress? Have you seen people experience healing after you've prayed for them?

Prophecy

Definition: The gift of proclaiming God's message, sometimes involving future events or specific divine guidance, for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the church.

Example: You feel compelled to speak God's truth in situations, often sharing messages that challenge, encourage, or direct others. Sometimes, this includes foreseeing future events or offering insight that you couldn't have known otherwise.

Identifying: Do you feel prompted to speak truth into situations, sometimes with clarity that surprises others? Have others confirmed that what you've said was a message from God?

Discernment

Definition: The supernatural ability to distinguish between divine, demonic, and human spirits or motives in situations, teachings, or individuals.

Example: You have a keen ability to sense whether something is from God or not. Whether in spiritual matters, people's intentions, or distinguishing truth from error, you often have a "gut feeling" that proves to be correct.

Identifying: Do you often have an inner sense of spiritual truth that others rely on? Do you feel a heightened sensitivity to good and evil?

Serving (Helps)

Definition: A special ability to meet practical needs and assist others, often with humility and compassion.

Example: You feel a natural urge to assist with practical needs, whether it's setting up for an event, cooking for someone in need, or doing behind-the-scenes work. You often notice opportunities to help that others might overlook.

Identifying: Do you derive joy from serving others without needing recognition? Do you frequently step in to meet practical needs?

Teaching

Definition: The ability to explain and apply God's Word effectively, making complex truths accessible and understandable.

Example: You often find yourself explaining concepts to others, helping them understand difficult ideas in a clear and meaningful way. Whether it's in a formal setting like a Bible study or informally in conversations, people tend to seek out your guidance when they need clarity.

Identifying: Do you feel energized and fulfilled when helping others learn? Do people appreciate your ability to break down complex ideas?

Encouragement (Exhortation)

Definition: The capacity to offer comfort, motivation, or challenge to others, helping them grow spiritually and emotionally.

Example: You often find yourself comforting or motivating others during tough times. You might write notes of encouragement or speak life into people when they're discouraged, reminding them of God's promises.

Identifying: Do people come to you for support when they need motivation or reassurance? Do you enjoy building others up with your words?

Giving

Definition: The gift of generously and cheerfully sharing resources, time, or finances to support the church and others in need.

Example: You regularly look for ways to share your resources—whether it's money, time, or possessions—with others in need. You find joy in meeting others' financial or practical needs and often give above and beyond what's expected.

Identifying: Do you feel fulfilled when you can give to others? Are you always thinking about ways to bless others through your resources?

Mercy

Definition: The ability to show deep compassion and empathy, ministering to the hurting, marginalized, or suffering with love and care.

Example: You feel deeply moved by the suffering of others, and you are quick to show compassion. Whether through listening, comforting, or providing physical help, you're often present in times of crisis or emotional need.

Identifying: Do you have a strong desire to help those who are hurting? Do you feel deeply empathetic and are naturally drawn to people in distress?

Evangelism

Definition: The special ability to effectively communicate the gospel and lead others to faith in Christ.

Example: You often find yourself bringing up spiritual matters in everyday conversations with ease and enthusiasm. You may share your testimony or explain the gospel in a clear and relatable way, even in casual settings. You are often unafraid to share their faith, even in situations where others might feel hesitant. You have a burning desire to reach those who do not know Christ.

Identifying: Do you have a strong inner drive to tell others about Jesus, especially those who do not yet know Him? Do you find yourself regularly thinking about how to communicate the gospel to people in your life? Do you naturally start conversations about faith, even in environments where others might feel uncomfortable doing so? Are you able to talk about Jesus in a way that feels genuine and not forced?

Apostleship

Definition: The gift of being sent to pioneer new works or missions, often with a strong sense of spiritual authority and vision.

Example: You have a strong desire to spread the gospel, particularly in new or unfamiliar places. Whether it's through starting ministries, going on mission trips, or reaching out to unchurched communities, you thrive in cross-cultural or pioneering environments.

Identifying: Do you feel a burden for people who have never heard the gospel? Are you energized by the idea of starting something new for God's kingdom?

Leadership (Administration)

Definition: The gift of organizing, leading, and managing resources or people to advance the mission of the church effectively.

Example: You have a natural ability to organize people and resources toward a common goal. You often find yourself stepping into leadership roles, either formally or informally, and people seem to trust your guidance.

Identifying: Do you feel drawn to lead when there's a need for direction? Do people look to you for decision-making or vision-casting?

Pastoring (Shepherding)

Definition: The gift of nurturing, guiding, and protecting believers, often providing spiritual care and oversight for a congregation with a focus on their spiritual growth.

Example: You find yourself deeply invested in the spiritual well-being of people. You check in on them, mentor them in their faith, and feel responsible for their spiritual growth. In a church or small group setting, you might step in to correct misunderstandings about the Bible or address conflicts within the group in a gentle, loving way. You're aware of the spiritual dangers that could harm the people in your care.

Identifying: Do you naturally feel a responsibility for the well-being of those around you, especially in their spiritual lives? Do you feel joy when you see people grow in their faith? Are you willing to walk with people through long journeys of spiritual growth, through both the highs and lows of life? Do you feel a burden to guard others from harmful influences or wrong thinking, and do you provide correction in a loving way when needed?