



WHAT HAS GOD MADE YOU TO DO?

Paul instructed Christians to think soberly about their spiritual gifts (Romans 12:3). We all have at least one gift. So, we study passages like Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12, and we identify the gift or gifts we have. When we begin using and honing our gifts, our churches become better as we work together (1 Corinthians 12).

Psalm 139:14-15 says you are fearfully and wonderfully made, that your substance was not hidden from God. That gets down to your DNA, which influences your interests and personality. God makes all kinds of people for His purpose, and we need them all. So, as you identify how God made you, don't wish you were like someone else. Your talents were given to you specifically. **Be the person God made you to be.**

Isaiah told us not to argue with God because of the way He made us (Isaiah 45:9). Our uniqueness is what makes us special. Over the years I've been involved in selecting students for various programs, and people are not looking for someone who is just like everyone else. It was not unusual to hear someone on a selection committee say, "We don't need everyone to be the same!"

This is not an excuse to stay in our comfort zones rather than trying to improve ourselves. As Paul said, God is working in us (Philippians 2:13), and we do his work heartily (Colossians 3:23) to become the person He wants us to be.

What is your aptitude, your ability? What can you do? A sovereign God uses your experiences to prepare you to serve Him. David's experiences saving sheep from lions and bears prepared him to defeat Goliath (1 Samuel 17:34, 36).

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God uses bad experiences, too. Joseph made it clear the abuse he received from his brothers led to many lives being saved (Genesis 50:20), including those of his brothers. What his brothers intended as evil God used for good.

What training have you received? Stephen reminded us Moses received specialized training in Egypt, and he stewarded that training well by leading Israel out of Egypt (Acts 7:22).

Where are you placed? Where do you live, work, or go to school? Nehemiah's protective services job put him in a position to serve Israel and prepared him for dealing with Sanballat and other naysayers (Nehemiah 1:1).

Romans 8:28 tells us all things work together for good. Does that include past sins? Think of Paul's persecution of Christians. God used his actions to propel the faith. Why didn't Jesus allow the demoniac to travel with Him? He told him to go home to his friends, where his testimony would have the greatest impact (Mark 5:19).

Why? Because **God uses everything, even things that you might wish to forget or that embarrass you.** Think about it. If you have an addiction to alcohol, would you prefer to get help from someone who has never had a drink, or someone who has been addicted and God has showed them the way out? If you are struggling with same-sex attraction, do you want to hear from a former lesbian, or someone who can't fathom the difficulty of the struggle?

God isn't like the world, which "cancels" people because of past sins or a mindless tweet or post from a decade ago. You know, Rahab is called a harlot five times in the Bible (Joshua 2:1; 6:17, 25; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25). God didn't sweep her past under the rug. Instead, he used Rahab's past as a glowing witness of how God changed her from a harlot to the faithful mother who reared a godly gentleman named Boaz. Rahab even took her place in the ancestry of David, Israel's greatest king, and Joseph, the adoptive father of Jesus.

I think you could even make a case for good looks being a talent or a resource. Now, that talent may have bypassed most of us, but Queen Esther had it (Esther 2:7). Her appearance gave her access to the king's palace, where she appealed to him for justice and saved her people from destruction.

You were made to do what God wants you to do. And if you will look over your life and obediently serve the Lord, you will have many Esther 4:14 moments, when you realize **God designed you "for such a time as this."**



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