

Between Now and Then

I watched a movie the other night. The opening scene was in a nursing home with most residents in their 80's and 90's. It made me wonder at what age I will have limited mobility and not be able to function physically as I do now. How many years do I have left when I can run, swim, drive a car and be active out in the community? It hit me that I never will know in advance when my life will take a 180 degree turn and some opportunities will no longer be possible. What will I do then?

The real question is: What will I do between now and then?

We all go through stages of our lives, but every stage – except one -- has the opportunity for Christian service. The one remaining stage – the end of life – is when all my activity on this earth ceases and I hope I made a positive impact on the world.



Let's focus, however, on the time between now and then. This is the opportunity to make something happen. Was I a spectator to life, taking one day at a time, but not charting and following a productive game plan for life? While I need down time to rest and recharge my batteries, what am I resting for? Am I resting to rest, or resting so that I can give renewed energies to serving the Lord? Do I have goals of what I want to accomplish – in my family, the workplace and in the community? Do I see ways I can make a difference in the life of someone else? Are there people who need my help? Are there people in my path I can encourage in the faith?

What God wants you and me to do with our lives is to honor Him and lead people to faith in Him. It is that simple. God provides the ability to be successful in a way that sustains us financially. More importantly, our gifts and abilities reveal the direction God has in mind for us to serve Him. He created each of us for a definite purpose and He equips us uniquely to accomplish that purpose. He further enables us with the passion, personality, experiences and opportunities to carry out that purpose. We can be assured that we are on the right path when everything lines up for us to make a significant impact upon people in our path.

Apart from living a life of purpose, we would just merely exist. That would be a tragic waste of our greatest opportunity at this stage in life.

All of our experiences are the preparation for the impact we can make in the future. That future starts right now. The sum total of what has happened in our life is how God has positioned us for future opportunities. Actively seek out ways to use the preparation God has made in you for what you can accomplish before the "then" when you pass on from this world. And, about that nursing home in the movie: if I am someday confined to a wheelchair in a nursing home I will still have opportunities to win souls for Christ. As long as I have breath I have the opportunity to serve. When "then" comes I hope to hear God say. "Well done, good and faithful servant."

What will you accomplish between now and then? Between **now** – today- and **then** is the only opportunity you have left. Tomorrow is one day less of an opportunity to make a difference in someone's life.

Scripture: *Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms (1 Peter 4:10).*

Prayer: We thank You, Lord, for the life you have given us. We thank You for the unique skills and abilities you gift us with. We thank You for the experiences You place in our path, all in preparation for the opportunities ahead of us. We never know when the "then" will occur, but we pray we will seek to honor You in what we do with the life You give us, and we hope others will come to faith because of our efforts. Amen.