

Hidden Gifts

In the recent movie Hidden Figures, three talented people work for NASA during the early stages of the space program. One is a math genius, the second is an engineer and the third a supervisor at NASA's West Area Computing Unit. All three excel in their respective jobs. This comes at a period of time when the United States and Russia are in a race to be the world leader in space exploration. Both are seeking to launch the first human being in orbit.

The work of the three precedes the use of computers for complex calculations critical to the space program. They take the challenge head on. How often is it that we have the ability to do something important that would make a big difference, but we hold back? For whatever reason, we sit back and miss the opportunity to use God's gifts to help others. These extraordinary people enabled the United States to successfully launch John Glenn into space for three orbits of the earth.

Being a pioneer at anything is not without its challenges. The challenges they faced were far greater than just using their talents in math, science and engineering. Their challenges attacked the very core of who they were as human beings. Everywhere they turned people were trying to suppress them, yet they remained committed to overcoming the obstacles in their path.

What were the challenges to their core? They were three black women in the early 1960's. The culture at the time was a country dominated by white males. The three women were employed at Langley Research Center in Hampton, Virginia, located in a state that hadn't been integrated. With pure motives the three women were determined to overcome the odds. Their goal was to help the US space program succeed. In order to do this they had to integrate a college in order to earn the educational degree required of their work. They had to rush 40 minutes round trip to the nearest "colored only" restroom on the Langley campus. Prior to the realization of their exceptional skills they were excluded from critical decision-making meetings. They continued to use God's gifts to overcome all these obstacles.

God gives each of us unique abilities, but that is only half what it takes to be successful. We still have to overcome the factors that could otherwise stop us from reaching our potential. *Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him (James 1:12).* Don't let other things stand in the way of accomplishing your goal. With God's help you can do the job. ... *Human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires (James 1:20).* Be resolved to not let anything hold you back from realizing your full potential.

On February 20, 1962 a Mercury 7 rocket propelled John Glenn into orbit. John Glenn became a hero that day when he splashed down in the Atlantic Ocean. The unsung heroes were those who worked behind the scenes to not only accomplish the task but also to open doors for fellow human beings who followed. It took courage to sit on the top of the Mercury rocket, but it also took courage for three women to succeed in spite of the societal issues of the time.

"Genius has no race. Strength has no gender. Courage has no limit." Don't hide your gifts but instead, do the great things God has prepared you to do.

Question: What holds you back from accomplishing great things with the gifts and abilities God has given you?

Prayer: Heavenly Father. Because of the strength and courage you offer to us, we can do great things in your name. Let us do what you placed us here on earth to do. Amen.

