

## Living With Purpose

This past weekend over 3,700 ladies gathered in Charlotte, North Carolina for an international convention of the P.E.O. Sisterhood. I attended it with my wife, who is deeply involved in the organization. Observing the massive crowd was impressive, but even more so when you realize the charitable purpose of this organization. One of their main goals is to support higher education of women. They provide educational scholarships and student loans to women, from undergraduate programs to doctoral degrees. They provide for continuing education as an encouragement for women who have had to delay higher education because of life circumstances. The organization also brings promising young ladies to the United States for training so that they can return to their home country and make a difference around the world. They do great work!



The P.E.O. Sisterhood is a 148-year old organization with chapters in all 50 states and the six Canadian provinces. Just in the past year \$1.67 million dollars of support was raised to help women increase their potential to achieve through further education. The members of P.E.O. chapters internationally have a passion for helping women achieve. They have big goals but accomplish it by combining small fund raising events, such as yard sales, bake sales, etc. in the local chapters.

God has created us for a reason – to spread His love with others, to help the less fortunate and to share our blessings with others. We do this in multiple ways and places: our families, our church and out in the community. We also serve God when we help one person in need. I view this as living a purposeful life.

God makes our service possible by giving us different skills, abilities and interests. While each act of service may seem small, when combined with the efforts of others, they accomplish something significant. Even the smallest act of service helps someone but, when combined with others, we can do big things. Collectively, we can accomplish a wide variety of tasks because each person brings something special to the table. The combination of everyone working together with their unique skills is a powerful force.

How has God gifted you? Are you a good behind-the-scenes organizer? Are you a hard worker that gets things done? Maybe you are adept at woodworking or landscaping. Perhaps you have a passion for the out-of-doors. Maybe you are athletic. Do you relate well to youth, or perhaps seniors? Are you an encourager? Perhaps you are a good listener or just fun to be around. Regardless of your abilities, interests or passions, God has many purposeful uses for your skills in a way that benefits others.

There is much satisfaction in seeing your uniqueness bring out happiness or the potential in others. Everyone needs someone who believes and cares for them. People often just need a friend. Whether your skills helps just one person or thousands, it is worthwhile. God loves each person as an individual. He places in their path a person – perhaps you – to help them. God gifted you for such a time as this. The time is now. The place is right here. Open your heart to giving to the Lord by being someone special to someone else.

Most of us have a general purpose for our life, but spread our efforts through a number of organizations, the church, family and with individuals. The end result is: You can help others to achieve something that wouldn't have happened without your contribution to their life. That is living your life with purpose.

**Scripture:** Many gifts – one spirit: *Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines (1 Corinthians 12:1-10).*

Every act of service is equally important for us serving as the body of Christ: *Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.*