

God's Open Door Leads to Finding Purpose in Life

Does being a person of faith insulate you from the trials and tribulations of this world? Consider the life of Scott Rigsby. As an avid, life-long church goer Scott was severely injured the summer before entering college. An accident claimed one leg and severely injured the other so badly that he would voluntarily amputate it years later. The accident also caused a head injury that led to numerous other significant health problems and limited his employability. He was fired from numerous jobs because of his inability to perform in a work environment. The brain injury also caused him to have largely unchecked emotions, often saying inappropriate things. His life was full of disappointments and limitations. All together he had 26 surgeries after his accident. It took 7 years for him to complete college. He made bad choices along the way, especially when it came to managing what little money he had. The insurance settlement wasn't enough to sustain him so Scott frequently borrowed money from friends in order to survive. As a result he lived at home for a long period of time. His father disapproved of Scott's choices and lack of direction. Even though Scott attended church and shared his faith with others his life was generally a mess. He battled depression, alcohol and, at times, drug abuse. Scott described his life as a roller coaster ride of obstacles and miracles. He said, "At times it was hard to think of a reason to live and to have faith that my life was ever going to amount to anything." A lifelong faith was all he had to fall back on, but he was floundering without a purpose in life.



So, where was God in all this? Why didn't God wave a magic wand and make it all better? Isn't it true that all we have to do is ask and we will receive? Scott was a believer. Wasn't that enough? How much does Scott have to endure? He was a modern day Job.

The question may apply to you, too. How much pain and suffering can you endure before you get impatient with God? Does it make any difference to be a Christian? Do you ever resent that God doesn't snap his fingers and grant you success in your own plan?

A turning point for Scott Rigsby came when he was at a low point in his life and the door to every possibility was slammed in his face. In desperation he prayed that "if God would open a door he would run through it." Those were his words. God answered that prayer and opened the door for him to literally run through. A magazine cover provided Scott with the motivation to try the unachievable -- something no double amputee had ever done. He set his sights on completing the Hawaiian Ironman Triathlon, a three part competition that required a person to swim 2.4 miles in the ocean, bicycle 112 miles and then complete a 26.2 mile running marathon, all within 17 hours' time. It was a ridiculous goal. Scott had no legs. But Scott wanted to "dream something so big that it only could be accomplished through God." A man on a mission, Scott took on this challenge not for himself, but to inspire other people with disabilities. There were no role models for Scott to follow. No one had ever accomplished what he had set out to do. It was an unthinkable goal.

Once he set that goal everything started to fall into place. Scott had found God's purpose for his life. God placed in his path people, angels, who would help financially and provide inspiration and training when he needed it the most. It was still hard work, but Scott was on a God-inspired mission. He couldn't let other disabled people down. At one of the triathlons Scott ran in preparation for the Hawaiian Ironman completion, he received the Ford Everyday Hero award. The award "recognizes athletes who have done something to inspire others while training for the Ironman competition." At that award ceremony, the night before a training competition, Scott hinted at his purpose in life when he said, "I wish everybody the best of luck and I hope we all cross that finish line." Scott was speaking of disabled people everywhere, encouraging them to cross the same finish line as people with full physical capabilities. He did qualify for the Hawaiian Ironman competition and thanks to the many angels God had placed at precisely the right time and place; Scott did miraculously complete the Hawaiian Ironman event.



Completing the Hawaiian Ironman competition was only the catalyst in God's plan for Scott. Scott created a foundation with a mission of helping disabled people to lead active lifestyles. Scott concluded that God's purpose for him was to run through the door so that he could "give people a glimpse of a different future than they might have envisioned for themselves." When he enters a rehab center or VA clinic on two prosthetic legs people instantly recognize that "He is one of us." He knows what

they are going through because he has been there. Scott is evidence that it is possible for people with significant physical limitations to not only lead a productive life but to achieve a seemingly unachievable dream. Scott gives people hope and inspiration.

When we seek God's purpose for our lives we need to know that His purpose for us might be much different than we imagined. *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5-6).* When we seek God's plan He enables our success. When things are tough for you, be patient and seek God's open door so that you can be a blessing and inspire others. God will speak to you when you are ready to listen. How long that takes is up to you.

The Bible Says: *You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised (Hebrews 10:36).*

Prayer: Heavenly Father. Life is full of obstacles and crisis situations. You help us through the tough times and if we are following your path for us, You help us to excel. Let us seek your path. Amen.

About Scott Rigsby: I have personally met Scott Rigsby twice when he spoke at Christian Leadership Conferences. I gained insight for this devotion by reading his book, Unthinkable. It is a highly inspirational book, not only because of what he accomplished, but especially because you can see how his life turned around after discovering how he could be an inspiration to others. It was a long process. In his book he outlines the steps to overcoming obstacles and leading to success. A key step is overcoming Fear with Faith. I highly recommend this book.