

NorthPointe Middle School
2011-2012 Theme

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to

Isaiah 64:8

Yet, O LORD, you are the Father.
We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are the works of your hands.

Created to Serve God... First Marking Period

Questions to consider when thinking about the God we are created to serve

- ❑ Who is God?
- ❑ Where did God come from?
- ❑ Why is a father a good picture of who God is?
- ❑ How does our view of our own father influence our view of God?
- ❑ How do the names of God show his character?
- ❑ Does God control everything?
- ❑ Does God send disease and disaster?
- ❑ Did God create evil?
- ❑ God has many attributes: He is holy, just, all knowing, love, merciful, righteous (just to name a few). How should God's attributes influence my daily decision-making? Do I want to be like God?



List of the Names of God

THE NAMES OF GOD- not an exhaustive list

OLD TESTAMENT NAMES FOR GOD

- ELOHIM.....Genesis 1:1, Psalm 19:1 meaning "God", a reference to God's power and might.
ADONAI.....Malachi 1:6 meaning "Lord", a reference to the Lordship of God.
JEHOVAH--YAHWEH.....Genesis 2:4 a reference to God's divine salvation.
JEHOVAH-MACCADESHEM.....Exodus 31:13 meaning "The Lord thy sanctifier"
JEHOVAH-ROHI.....Psalm 23:1 meaning "The Lord my shepherd"
JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH.....Ezekiel 48:35 meaning "The Lord who is present"
JEHOVAH-RAPHA.....Exodus 15:26 meaning "The Lord our healer"
JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU.....Jeremiah 23:6 meaning "The Lord our righteousness"
JEHOVAH-JIREH.....Genesis 22:13-14 meaning "The Lord will provide"
JEHOVAH-NISSI.....Exodus 17:15 meaning "The Lord our banner"
JEHOVAH-SHALOM.....Judges 6:24 meaning "The Lord is peace"
JEHOVAH-SABBAOTH.....Isaiah 6:1-3 meaning "The Lord of Hosts"
JEHOVAH-GMOLAH.....Jeremiah 51:6 meaning "The God of Recompense"
EL-ELYON.....Genesis 14:17-20,Isaiah 14:13-14 meaning "The most high God"
EL-ROI.....Genesis 16:13 meaning "The strong one who sees"
EL-SHADDAI.....Genesis 17:1,Psalm 91:1 meaning "The God of the mountains or God Almighty"
EL-OLAM.....Isaiah 40:28-31 meaning "The everlasting God"

MORE NAMES OF GOD

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| • ABBA.....Romans 8:15 | ADVOCATE.....I John 2:1 (kjv) |
| • ALMIGHTY.....Genesis 17:1 | ALPHA.....Revelation 22:13 |
| • AMEN.....Revelation 3:14 | ANCIENT OF DAYS.....Daniel 7:9 |
| • ANOINTED ONE.....Psalm 2:2 | APOSTLE.....Hebrews 3:1 |
| • ARM OF THE LORD.....Isaiah 53:1 | AUTHOR OF LIFE.....Acts 3:15 |
| • AUTHOR OF OUR FAITH.....Hebrews 12:2 | BEGINNING.....Revelation 21:6 |
| • BLESSED & HOLY RULER.....1 Timothy 6:15 | BRANCH.....Jeremiah 33:15 |
| • BREAD OF GOD.....John 6:33 | BREAD OF LIFE.....John 6:35 |
| • BRIDEGROOM.....Isaiah 62:56 | BRIGHT MORNING STAR....Revelation 22:16 |
| • CHIEF SHEPHERD.....1 Peter 5:4 | CHOSEN ONE.....Isaiah 42:1 |
| • CHRIST.....Matthew 22:42 | CHRIST OF GOD.....Luke 9:20 |

- CHRIST THE LORD.....Luke 2:11
- 16:16 COMFORTER.....John 14:26(kjv)
- CONSOLATION OF ISRAEL.....Luke 2:25
- CORNERSTONE.....Isaiah 28:16
- CREATOR.....1 Peter 4:19
- DESIRED OF ALL NATIONS.....Haggai 2:7
- END.....Revelation 21:6
- EVERLASTING FATHER.....Isaiah 9:6
- FAITHFUL WITNESS.....Revelation 1:5
- FIRSTBORN (3).....Rom.8:29,Rev.1:5,Col.1:15
- FIRSTFRUITS.....1 Cor.15:20-23
- FRIEND OF TAX COLLECTORS & SINNERS.....Matthew 11:19
- GENTLE WHISPER.....1 Kings 19:12
- GLORY OF THE LORD.....Isaiah 40:5
- GOD ALMIGHTY.....Genesis 17:1
- GOD WHO SEES ME.....Genesis 16:13
- GREAT HIGH PRIEST.....Hebrews 4:14
- GUIDE.....Psalm 48:14
- HEAD OF THE CHURCH.....Eph. 5:23
- HIGH PRIEST.....Hebrews 3:1
- HOLY ONE.....Acts 2:27
- HOPE.....Titus 2:13
- I AM.....Exodus 3:14, John 8:58
- IMMANUEL.....Isaiah 7:14
- JESUS.....Matthew 1:21
- JUDGE.....Isaiah 33:22, Acts 10:42
- KING ETERNAL.....1 Timothy 1:17
- KING OF THE AGES.....Revelation 15:3
- LAST ADAM.....1 Cor. 15:45
- LEADER.....Isaiah 55:4
- LIGHT OF THE WORLD.....John 8:12
- LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH....Revelation 5:5
- LIVING WATER.....John 4:10
- LORD GOD ALMIGHTY.....Revelation 15:3
- LORD OF ALL.....Acts 10:36
- LORD OF HOSTS.....Haggai 1:5
- LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.....Jeremiah 23:6
- MAN OF SORROWS.....Isaiah 53:3
- MEDIATOR.....1 Timothy 2:5
- MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT.....Malachi 3:1
- MIGHTY GOD.....Isaiah 9:6
- NAZARENE.....Matthew 2:23
- OMEGA.....Revelation 22:13
- OUR PEACE.....Ephesians 2:14
- PRINCE OF PEACE.....Isaiah 9:6
- PURIFIER.....Malachi 3:3
- RADIANCE OF GOD'S GLORY.....Heb.1:3
- REFINER'S FIRE.....Malachi 3:2
- RIGHTEOUS ONE.....1 John 2:1
- ROOT OF DAVID.....Rev. 22:16
- RULER OF GOD'S CREATION.....Rev. 3:14
- SAVIOR.....Luke 2:11
- SERVANT.....Isaiah 42:1
- SHIELD.....Genesis 15:1
- CHRIST, SON OF LIVING GOD.....Matthew
- COMMANDER.....Isaiah 55:
- CONSUMING FIR.....Deut. 4:24, Heb. 12:29
- COUNSELOR.....Isaiah 9:6
- DELIVERER.....Romans 11:26
- DOOR.....John 10:7(kjv)
- ETERNAL GOD.....Deut. 33:27
- FAITHFUL & TRUE.....Revelation 19:11
- FATHER.....Matthew 6:9
- FOUNDATION.....1 Cor. 3:11
- GIFT OF GOD.....John 4:10
- GOD.....Genesis 1:1
- GOD OVER ALL.....Romans 9:5
- GOOD SHEPHERD.....John 10:11
- GREAT SHEPHERD.....Hebrews 13:20
- HEAD OF THE BODY.....Col. 1:18
- HEIR OF ALL THINGS.....Hebrews 1:2
- HIGH PRIEST FOREVER.....Heb. 6:20
- HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL.....Isaiah 49:7
- HORN OF SALVATION.....Luke 1:6
- IMAGE OF GOD.....2 Cor. 4:4
- JEHOVAH.....Psalm 83:18 (kjv)
- JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.....Rom. 6:23
- KING.....Zechariah 9:9
- KING OF KINGS.....1 Timothy 6:15
- LAMB OF GOD.....John 1:29
- LAWGIVER.....Isaiah 33:22
- LIFE.....John 14:6
- LILY OF THE VALLEYS.....Song 2:1
- LIVING STONE.....1 Peter 2:4
- LORD.....John 13:13
- LORD JESUS CHRIST.....1 Cor. 15:57
- LORD OF GLORY1 Cor. 2:8
- LORD OF LORDS.....1 Tim. 6:15
- LOVE.....1 John 4:8
- MASTER.....Luke 5:5
- MERCIFUL GOD.....Jeremiah 3:12
- MESSIAH.....John 4:25
- MIGHTY ONE.....Isaiah 60:16
- OFFSPRING OF DAVID....Revelation 22:16
- OUR PASSOVER LAMB.....1 Cor. 5:7
- POTTER.....Isaiah 64:8
- PROPHET.....Acts 3:22
- RABBONI (TEACHER).....John 20:16
- REDEEMER.....Job 19:25
- RESURRECTION.....John 11:25
- ROCK.....1 Cor.10:4\
- ROSE OF SHARON.....Song 2:1
- RULER OVER KINGS OF EARTH...Rev 1:5
- SEED.....Genesis 3:15
- SHEPHERD OF OUR SOULS.....1Pet. 2:25
- SON OF DAVID.....Matthew 1:1

- SON OF GOD.....Matthew 27:54 SON OF MAN.....Matthew 8:20
- SON OF THE MOST HIGH.....Luke 1:32 SOURCE.....Hebrews 5:9
- SPIRIT OF GOD.....Genesis 1:2 STAR OUT OF JACOB.....Numbers 24:17
- STONE.....1 Peter 2:8 SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.....Malachi 4:2
- TEACHER.....John 13:13 TRUE LIGHT.....John 1:9
- TRUE WITNESS.....Revelation 3:14 TRUTH.....John 14:6
- VINE.....John 15:5 WAY.....John 14:6
- WISDOM OF GOD.....1 Cor. 1:24 WITNESS.....Isaiah 55:4
- WONDERFUL.....Isaiah 9:6 WORD.....John 1:1
- WORD OF GOD.....Revelation 19:13

[Verses to consider when we think about the God that we are created to serve](#)

Jeremiah 32:27 “I am the LORD, the God of all mankind. Is anything too hard for me?”

Proverbs 15:3 The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.

John 4:24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.

Exodus 15:11 Who among the gods is like you, LORD? Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?

Psalm 19:7-9 The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.⁸ The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes.⁹ The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the LORD are firm, and all of them are righteous.

Exodus 34:6 And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22-23 Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.²³ They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Exodus 3:14 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

Daniel 9:14 The LORD did not hesitate to bring the disaster on us, for the LORD our God is righteous in everything he does; yet we have not obeyed him.

1 John 5:20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Mark 10:18 “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone.

[Devotional thoughts to consider when we think about the God we are created to serve...](#)

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father [and the Son](#), who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And we believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Saved to Serve Others...Second Marking Period

We are the clay. Clay is a good way to remember that you should be
Changing Lives Around You

Questions to consider when thinking about being saved to serve others

- Are you saved? When did you come to know Jesus as your Savior?
- What does it mean to serve?
- What does a servant's "heart" look like? Who has been a servant to you?
- How is being a servant different from obeying your parents or teachers when they tell you to do something?
- How can you serve your classmates on a daily basis?
- We are called to serve those who don't deserve our sacrifice of service. How do you cope with this idea? How do you put this into practice?
- Serving means being available to people. Are you there for people? Can others count on you?
- Why does God call us to serve our enemies?

Verses to consider when we think about being saved to serve others...

Matthew 23:11-12 The greatest among you will be your servant. ¹² For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

Philippians 2:1-4 Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Matthew 25:37-40 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?' ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?' ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' ⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Mark 9:35 Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all."

Mark 10:44-45 And whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Galatians 5:13-14 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. ¹⁴ For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Colossians 3:12-14 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Devotional thoughts to consider when we think about being saved to serve others...

Rusty Hodges- writing about the Salvation Army

There's a saying in The Salvation Army that we are saved to serve. If you have ever wondered what those funny looking S's are on our uniform collars, it means we are saved to serve.

We follow Jesus example of serving the world. He has commissioned us to go and serve the lost, the last and the least. When we encounter the grace of God in our lives we can't help but serve others. It becomes part of our DNA.

It's a simple thing to serve. It doesn't need to be a huge task. To serve others might be as simple as befriending the lonely at school. It might mean helping look after kids in Sunday school. It might mean helping your youth group clean up someone's yard who is sick. It may be visiting someone in hospital.

It is through our witness of serving that people may see God in us.

Mother Teresa renown for working with the dying and destitute in Calcutta, India was asked once by a journalist how does she continue to serve these people year in year out when she gets nothing in return? (Many of the people she worked with were dying from AIDS). She looked at the Journalist with a smile and said, "Young man, I see Jesus in their eyes. I do it because of him."

We serve simply because we have Jesus in us. I pray that you will be challenged to Go and serve your world, where you are, and see Jesus in the eyes of those you serve. If you look you will see Jesus there.

“Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.”
John Wesley

The following excerpt was taken from The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren – pages 260-261.

Real servants do every task with equal dedication. Whatever they do, servants “*do it with all their heart.*”⁶ The size of the task is irrelevant. The only issue is, does it need to be done?

You will never arrive at the state in life where you’re too important to help with menial tasks. God will never exempt you from the mundane. It’s a vital part of your character curriculum. The Bible says, “*If you think you are too important to help someone in need, you are only fooling yourself. You are really a nobody.*”⁷ It is in these small services that we grow like Christ.

Jesus specialized in menial tasks that everyone else tried to avoid: washing feet, helping children, fixing breakfast, and serving lepers. Nothing was *beneath* him, because he came to serve. It wasn’t *in spite of* his greatness that he did these things, but *because of it*, and he expects us to follow his example.⁸

Small tasks often show a big heart. Your servant’s heart is revealed in little acts that others don’t think of doing, as when Paul gathered brushwood for a fire to warm everyone after a shipwreck.⁹ He was just as exhausted as everyone else, but he did what everyone needed. No task is beneath you when you have a servant’s heart.

Gifted to Serve Others...Third Marking Period

God gives you your SHAPE

Spiritual Gifts
Heart
Abilities
Personality
Experiences



Questions to consider when thinking about being gifted to serve others

- What are spiritual gifts?
- What are your spiritual gifts?
- How are you using your spiritual gifts?
- How are you using the natural talents God has entrusted you with?
- Are you letting God shape you or your peers?
- Why am I not like other students?
- Am I content with the way God made me?

Verses to consider when we think about being gifted to serve others...

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

Romans 12:4-8 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

1 Corinthians 12:28-30 And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

1 Corinthians 12:14-18 Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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. ¹⁷ 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? ¹⁸ But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

Below is a list of spiritual gifts.

- **Leadership**—Leadership aids the body by leading and directing members to accomplish the goals and purposes of the church. Leadership motivates people to work together in unity toward common goals (Rom. 12:8).
- **Administration**—Persons with the gift of administration lead the body by steering others to remain on task. Administration enables the body to organize according to God-given purposes and long-term goals (1 Cor. 12:28).
- **Teaching**—Teaching is instructing members in the truths and doctrines of God’s Word for the purposes of building up, unifying, and maturing the body (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7; Eph. 4:11).
- **Knowledge**—The gift of knowledge manifests itself in teaching and training in discipleship. It is the God-given ability to learn, know, and explain the precious truths of God’s Word. A word of knowledge is a Spirit-revealed truth (1 Cor. 12:28).
- **Wisdom**—Wisdom is the gift that discerns the work of the Holy Spirit in the body and applies His teachings and actions to the needs of the body (1 Cor. 12:28).
- **Prophecy**—The gift of prophecy is proclaiming the Word of God boldly. This builds up the body and leads to conviction of sin. Prophecy manifests itself in preaching and teaching (1 Cor. 12:10; Rom. 12:6).
- **Discernment**—Discernment aids the body by recognizing the true intentions of those within or related to the body. Discernment tests the message and actions of others for the protection and well-being of the body (1 Cor. 12:10).
- **Exhortation**—Possessors of this gift encourage members to be involved in and enthusiastic about the work of the Lord. Members with this gift are good counselors and motivate others to service. Exhortation exhibits itself in preaching, teaching, and ministry (Rom. 12:8).
- **Shepherding**—The gift of shepherding is manifested in persons who look out for the spiritual welfare of others. Although pastors, like shepherds, do care for members of the church, this gift is not limited to a pastor or staff member (Eph. 4:11).
- **Faith**—Faith trusts God to work beyond the human capabilities of the people. Believers with this gift encourage others to trust in God in the face of apparently insurmountable odds (1 Cor. 12:9).
- **Evangelism**—God gifts his church with evangelists to lead others to Christ effectively and enthusiastically. This gift builds up the body by adding new members to its fellowship (Eph. 4:11).
- **Apostleship**—The church sends apostles from the body to plant churches or be missionaries. Apostles motivate the body to look beyond its walls in order to carry out the Great Commission (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11).
- **Service/Helps**—Those with the gift of service/helps recognize practical needs in the body and

joyfully give assistance to meeting those needs. Christians with this gift do not mind working behind the scenes (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7).

- **Mercy**—Cheerful acts of compassion characterize those with the gift of mercy. Persons with this gift aid the body by empathizing with hurting members. They keep the body healthy and unified by keeping others aware of the needs within the church (Rom. 12:8).
- **Giving**—Members with the gift of giving give freely and joyfully to the work and mission of the body. Cheerfulness and liberality are characteristics of individuals with this gift (Rom. 12:8).
- **Hospitality**—Those with this gift have the ability to make visitors, guests, and strangers feel at ease. They often use their home to entertain guests. Persons with this gift integrate new members into the body (1 Pet. 4:9).

[Devotionals about being gifted to serve others](#)

Mud Pies and Chocolate Chip Cookies

“Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. 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 4:9-10

In thinking about my childhood, I wonder exactly what impacted the strength of my servant’s heart. What did I enjoy playing as a child? What talents did I try to foster? What activities brought delight to my afternoons? Suddenly, memories started flooding my mind, and they all had a common theme: hospitality.

Running a restaurant, building a house outlined with sticks, or baking mud pies...those were usually my choices when I got to pick what we were going to play. One summer, my sisters and I decided to open a mud pie bakery. The basement was literally filled with extravagant mud pies. We used red clay, potting soil, and regular old dirt to make different types of chocolate. To mold the pies, we used various containers—even some forbidden ones from my mother’s kitchen. The finishing touches were fluffy yellow dandelions, tender blades of grass, velvety rose petals, plump pebbles, and golden acorns. Each pie was unique and loaded with tender loving care. If you tried real hard, you could smell the gooey sweets all the way up and down our road. Wonderfully colorful customers paid top prices for our pies. News spread far and wide about the tiny bakery in the basement. Of course, the customers were imaginary, but believing they had certain expectations gave me the desire to make people happy by cooking for them.

One of the first real desserts I learned to make was fried pies. I learned from my mom, and my motivation was seeing my dad smile. My grandmother had made fried pies for him all his life. I put everything into rolling out the dough, filling the pies, and frying them to perfect crispiness. My proudest moments were when he bit into the pie and the yummy filling popped out the sides; declaring their goodness. I quickly learned that I could capture his heart with banana pudding, coconut pie, and yellow cake with chocolate frosting.

Over the past couple of years, my servant heart and baking heart have collided. I have realized that I can use my gift of hospitality and baking to touch the lives of the people God places in my life. Time spent baking a batch of chocolate chip cookies for a best friend is so worth it when I know it makes them feel special. Words can't express what I feel when a grieving family enjoys a homemade chocolate cake at the funeral dinner of their loved one. My nieces and nephews make my day when they make requests for my specialties. When you can reach out to someone with a homemade treat, it proves how important they are in your life. When I use this heavenly gift, I feel closer to God and I thank Him for teaching me lessons about hospitality throughout my life.

Several years ago, two students graduated from the Chicago-Kent College of Law. The highest ranking student in the class was a blind man named Overton and, when he received his honor, he insisted that half the credit should go to his friend, Kasprzyzak. They had met one another in school when the armless Mr. Kasprzyzak had guided the blind Mr. Overton down a flight of stairs. This acquaintance ripened into friendship and a beautiful example of interdependence. The blind man carried the books which the armless man read aloud in their common study, and thus the individual deficiency of each was compensated for by the other. After their graduation, they planned to practice law together.

The great violinist, Nicolo Paganini, willed his marvelous violin to Genoa -- the city of his birth -- but only on condition that the instrument never be played upon. It was an unfortunate condition, for it is a peculiarity of wood that as long as it is used and handled, it shows little wear. As soon as it is discarded, it begins to decay.

The exquisite, mellow-toned violin has become worm-eaten in its beautiful case, valueless except as a relic. The moldering instrument is a reminder that a life withdrawn from all service to others loses its meaning.

The *Detroit News* carried a humorous little story about Bill Cosby's aged mother that illustrates how useless gifts are unless they are used. She had been raised in poverty, and the family had very little money as Bill was growing up. As a result, she never had modern conveniences and had gotten accustomed to doing things the hard way. When the children were old enough to get jobs, they often gave their mother appliances as Christmas gifts to make her life easier. But she wouldn't use them. Bill especially remembered that after a while his mother had two or three toasters. But she left them in their boxes and put them on top of the refrigerator. At breakfast she would still do the toast in the oven. If the boys protested, she would say, "Leave them on the refrigerator. I'm used to doing it the old way."

God gave us each gifts to use, not sit in a "box." Who ever heard of a present, you did not unwrap. Make sure you unwrap and use your gifts from God.



Serving with a Purpose...Fourth Marking Period

□ There are several actions that we know are God's will for our lives right now. God wants each of us to pray, to be obedient to our parents, to work at all things for Him (showing effort), to

witness, to love others, to read his Word. What else do we know is God's plan for our lives right now?

- How can we know God's plan for our lives?
- God desires that we repent of sin! How often do you come to God and ask him to cleanse you from your sin? Do you know what you have done to offend God?
- Does God value reading Scripture?
- Is it possible to mistake our plan for God's plan?
- We know God wants us to be honest, yet cheating is a great temptation for many students. Is being dishonest (and getting the better grade) more important than your spiritual integrity?
- Why does God let me go through hard times, is that part of his purpose?

Verses to consider when we think about serving with a purpose...

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

John 6:40 "*Believe, and You are Saved*" For this is **the will of God**, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Ephesians 1: 5-12 "*Praise His Glory*" He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of **his will**, to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us. For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of **his will**, according to **his purpose** which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him, according to **the purpose of Him** who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of **his will**, we who first hoped in Christ have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 5:1-20 "*Live in His Grace*" Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person (such a man is an idolater) has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand **what the Lord's will is**. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

Colossians 1:9-12 "*Bear Fruit*" For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the **knowledge of his will** through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way, bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

1 John 2:15-17 "*Do Not Be Conformed to this Age*" Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world--the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does--comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does **the will of God** lives forever.

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 "*Abstain from Immorality*" Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. **It is God's will** that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and

warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit

Ephesians 5, 15-17 "*Be Wise*" Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand **what the Lord's will is**.

[Devotional ideas to consider when we think about serving with a purpose....](#)

God's will for us is: I. Sanctification is God's will for us

A. Avoiding sexual immorality and impurity is God's will for us - I Thessalonians 4:1-8

B. Wise living is God's will for us - Ephesians 5:15-21

C. Non-conformation, transformation, and renewal are God's will for us - Romans 12:1-2

D. Continual rejoicing, ceaseless prayer, and constant thanksgiving are God's will for us - I Thessalonians 5:16-18

II. Security is God's will for us - John 6:38-40

III. Service is God's will for us - Ephesians 6:5-9; I Peter 5:2

IV. Suffering is God's will for us - I Peter 3:17; I Peter 4:19

God leads you into His Will. Discontentment drives you out of His will. --Kent Crockett

Wrestling with God

People wrestle with God for one of two reasons:

1. They don't know God's will and are trying to find it.
 2. They know God's will and are trying to decide whether or not to do it.
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Why God Changes Our Plans

Sudden changes in our plans may be hard to accept. But they may be forced upon us by some circumstance over which we may have no control. And God may be back of the circumstance. Yet the plans were very dear to us, and we had set our

hearts upon carrying them through. Why should God have permitted them to be changed, or to be set aside completely?

Someone has written: " 'Thou God seest me' is a precious thought. He sees us and our path beset with danger, and He plans our ways and guides us accordingly. That is why he often permits reverses and failure to come our way. He changes our plans, for He sees the danger in them." What a blessing, then, that God does not always let us carry out our plans!

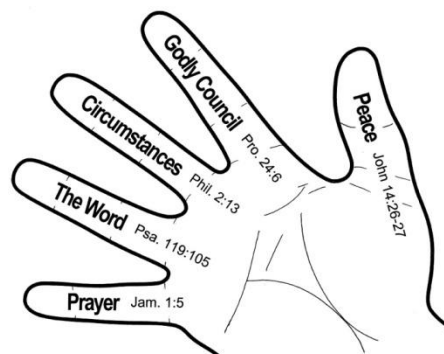
When a baby plans, with great interest and pleasure, to play with brightly burning fire, a loving parent is likely to change the baby's plans. Yet that brightly burning fire, dangerous as it is, may not be as grave a danger as would be the result of some plans that we are prevented by God's love from carrying through. As this writer reminds us: "knowing the end from the beginning, He cannot mistake." Our plans are sometimes mistaken; God's plans are always perfect.—*The Sunday School Times*.

One or the Other Must Go

At a meeting in Massachusetts, a speaker, who had just delivered an urgent appeal to a group of young people to accept Christ, was asked this startling question by a young girl, "Sir, I should like to know how we can be Christians, and have our own way." Perhaps many of us have either consciously or unconsciously asked this same question. We have sought, in a measure at least, to do God's will, but we have reserved the right to have our own way whenever it pleases us. This is not God's plan for Christian living and service, however, and it always brings conflict, and unrest, and lack of joy and power.—*John W. Lane, Jr., in the Sunday School Times and Christian Youth*

Knowing and Doing God's Will

Why do we want to know God's will? Most Christians would feel that this was a strange question, for those whose lives are yielded to God have a real desire to know His plan for them in order that they may follow it in their lives. But is there not sometimes too great a lapse of time between knowledge and obedience? Dr. W. L. Pettingill, the well-known Bible teacher made a penetrating remark on this subject. "Most people, don't want to know the will of God in order to do it; they want to know it in order to consider it." It often takes time to learn just what God wants us to do in any particular matter, but once we know His purpose we ought not to delay in at least beginning to carry it out by His grace. And when obedience is prompt, "when we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word, what a glory he sheds on our way!"—*Sunday School Times*



A Greater Strategist than the Best Chess Player

If you've ever played chess, you know it's a very complicated game. If you want to be good at the game, you have to be able to look at the entire board, recognize a variety of possibilities, and see several moves ahead. An excellent chess player has to see all sixty-four squares and all the pieces on the board.

An excellent chess player won't move his bishop and think: "I moved my bishop there because it puts his king in check." Instead, an excellent chess player will be thinking: "I moved my bishop there because it puts his king in check, blocks him from moving his knight where he wants to, protects my queen, opens up space to move my rook, and sets me up to take his bishop two moves down the road."

When I'm watching an excellent chess player in a game, I can't possibly even *guess* his reasons for making the moves he makes. But I know he's got plans that are wise and sensible.

In some ways God is like an excellent chess player - except He's dealing not with sixty-four squares, but an entire universe. Instead of thirty-two pieces, He's dealing with billions of people. And instead of looking a few moves ahead, God is seeing the entirety of human history.

Sometimes we want to understand *why* God does the things He does, but as little as I understand why a chess player does what he does, I have even *less* chance of understanding why God does what He does. The Bible says that God's ways are not out ways, but it also says in **Deuteronomy 32:4** that His works are *perfect*, and His ways are *just*.

It is fun sometimes to try to guess God's reasons for what He does, but ultimately we must learn to trust in Him even when we have no idea what He is doing.

Micah 6:8 - Justice, Mercy, Humility, the Will of God

I was thinking recently about the time I spent in the University Orchestra while I was a college student. I particularly remember our orchestra conductor, Anatole, who told many stories. Here's one he told during an orchestra rehearsal.

He was once part of a quartet that was working on a piece of music by a modern composer. It was a piece of music that had "more black than white on the page", which is a way of saying that there were lots and lots and lots of very fast notes! So this quartet worked and worked and worked to get every last note perfect. Then, a couple weeks before they were supposed to perform the premiere of this quartet, the composer showed up to hear them practice.

"*WHAT* are you doing?" he demanded as they played his composition for him.

"What do you mean?" they asked.

"Why are you playing *all those notes*?"

"That's what's on the page," they said.



The composer was disgusted. "I didn't put those notes down because I wanted you to play *every single one of them* - they were just to give you a *general idea* of what to play."

Now, I don't know about you, but I would have been pretty disgusted with the composer if I'd worked for so long to play what he had written, only to find out "he didn't really mean it."

That got me thinking, I'm awfully glad God isn't like that. God doesn't play guessing games with us...he makes it very clear what He expects of us.

In **Micah 6:8**, the Israelites are asking God, "What do you want us to do to please you?" And God essentially says "This is no guessing game...I've already *told* you!"

He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?

These are the "notes" God has written on the page, and they are the notes he wants us to play. Unfortunately I think we lose sight of what is written on the page because we think God is playing guessing games with us. We spend all our time worrying about "What school am I going to go to?" or "What job will I take?" or "What color shirt does God want me to wear this morning?"

Perhaps if we spent our time worrying about the notes which are actually *written down*, everything else would just fall into place. But, of course, if we spend all our time worrying about those other things, we'll lose sight of the *really* important stuff...
...and once we've lost sight of those things, it really doesn't *matter* what school we go to, what job we take, or what shirt we wear, because we're not playing the music God has written for us anyway!