



BIBLEWAY MINISTRIES

MAKING A DIFFERENCE—THE BIBLE WAY



Have You Found Your Ticket?

Famed scientist Albert Einstein sometimes had more trouble finding his way home from work than he did in finding the key to atomic power. One evening as the physicist sat deep in thought aboard the train that brought him home each night, the porter approached to collect his ticket. Einstein rummaged around in his coat, through his pockets, in his shirt and everywhere else he could think of, growing alarmed at his inability to find the ticket.

"That's okay, Dr. Einstein," said the porter. "I know you ride this train every day. I can collect tomorrow."

"That's fine for you, young man," Einstein replied, "but how am I supposed to know where to get off the train without my ticket?" (Source Unknown)

Sometimes as we travel life's road, we struggle to find our ticket and have no idea where we are going without it. The ticket I'm referring to is our purpose. Knowing this will help us determine when and where to make the next move God has prepared for us.

The Word Reference Dictionary defines purpose as the reason for which something is done or created or for which something exists. God has given each of us exactly what we need to fulfill His purpose for us. None of God's creation is wasted.

Paul said in Romans 12:4–8, "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function,⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;⁷ if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching;⁸ the one who exhorts,

in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness."

Like the human body which has many individual parts, everyone in Christ forms a part of His spiritual body on Earth. Through the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, the individual parts can function as a whole. Our gifts may be different, but they work together for His purpose in the world.

Yet without an understanding of our purpose, we will be lost on the train like Einstein.

Our understanding of purpose begins with an awareness of the gifts and talents God has already given to us. If we are good at encouraging others, then we can consider it our purpose to encourage others. If we are good at teaching, then it is our purpose to teach others. The more we use our gifts for God, the more He will open doors for us to use them.

In moments of despair when nothing seems right, it is a challenge to see the reality of the Spirit's power moving behind the scenes in our lives. As you are reading this article, you may be in a state of ho-hum living. You get up every day on the same side of the bed. You do the same rituals day after day without giving it much thought. At best, life finds you hopelessly existing. Your abilities and gifts were not given by mistake. This message is your reminder of where you can find the ticket of God's purpose for your life.

Allow God's power to work in you by becoming available to Him. This happens when you use those gifts He has given you. With your purpose ticket in hand, you can confidently exit the train at the right stop, one step closer to a fulfilled life! - *Dr. L.W. Edwards*

The Ruse of What Matters Most

“Ding-dong,” the doorbell chimes.

A man in a baseball cap, button-down shirt, work pants and work shoes stands outside. You take a quick look through the window and then open the door. “Hi, how can I help you?”

“The village is doing inspections on home water lines after the recent storm. Can you show me where yours is located?”

“Sure, it’s out back.” You grab your shoes, close the front door behind you and lead the worker to the back of your house.

When you return, you find footprints inside but they aren’t your own, or anyone else’s in your family. A few items are missing from your jewelry box. Your wallet is gone.

You feel betrayed and cheated. You’ve just become the victim of a ruse burglary.

The Anatomy of a Ruse

Ruse victims are tricked into following someone they believe wants to help them. The perpetrator leads the victim to believe one thing is important so they will leave what is most important exposed. Another individual then comes behind the first and raids the house. The homeowner falls victim through distraction.

What Really Matters

Jesus said only two things matter in life: To love God with all our heart, soul and mind and to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:37–40).

Practically speaking, loving God is recognizing Him as first. It is an eternal, heavenly perspective which sees Him as the Ruler of all things. It views all of life in light of His ultimate Kingdom purpose to bring glory to His name. Loving our neighbors is a perspective that values and prioritizes others, their needs and feelings.

When we are distracted from these all-important principles, which I’ll refer to as first principles, we will fall for a spiritual ruse.

The Ruse of Conflict

The devil knows this, so he approaches our doorstep disguised as someone who wants to help us in our times of physical, emotional, relational or spiritual need. He steps into our chaos and confusion and quietly offers his tips for dealing with our conflicts:

- “It’s never your fault. Always blame the other person.”
- “Avoid the person or setting which caused the conflict and it will go away. Talking through problems is a waste of time and energy.”
- “Don’t forgive until they apologize. Grudges and resentment are the best way to show your anger.”
- “Your perspective of the situation is all that matters. It doesn’t matter that they see things differently. Trust your feelings — they’re never wrong.”
- “Even the score to win the game. You’ll never defeat your opponent unless you make them pay for their wrongdoing.”

Following this advice may feel good at first. We’re standing up for our rights. We’re being strong and not letting the other person take advantage of us. We’re getting even. We’re taking control of our destiny. We’re winning. . . .

All the while, our hearts are being robbed. Our pre-occupation with the other person’s actions leaves us feeling empty, betrayed and cheated out of the first principles which make for thriving relationships.

We’ve fallen for a ruse. And we’ve forgotten what really matters.

Ruse-Proofing Our Souls

In 2 Corinthians 2, the Apostle Paul wrote to Christians who had to address another believer’s wrongdoing. Paul encouraged them to forgive and comfort him, reaffirming their love so he would not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. He warned their refusal to forgive this brother would play into Satan’s trap to divide and conquer through distraction. “We are not ignorant of his designs,” he said. (2 Corinthians 2:11)

Knowing our enemy’s battle strategy will help us recognize his attacks when they come wrapped in the package of a difficult person, situation or setting. Rather than seeing these things as the enemy, we will see the devil as the source. This will give us discernment to see and care for the hurting people behind many of our conflicts. And it will remind us to pursue God’s glory above our own, because He rules.

First principles (our love for God and others) help us recognize the enemy’s deception by empowering us to own our mistakes, seek understanding and reconciliation, forgive others’ offenses and trust God to right every wrong. In the end, this is what matters most. - *Cam Edwards*

