

# GLORY DAYS!

**You be you. You must intentionally claim your gifts!**

*Joshua 11-22*

*Intro:*

A. **Uniqueness** is a major theme in God's creation!

1. In nature there are *billions of snowflakes every year*, yet each is *unique and different*.
2. The stars are *so numerous* they *cannot be numbered....* Yet each varies in size and countenance.
3. In the miracle of life forms.... We have hundreds of thousands all around us and *everyone is unique, and special in its own way*.
4. This is especially true of the **7.2 Billion precious souls** that inhabit the earth in 2016. Each individual, though sharing a common heritage, has unique characteristics and DNA which is distinctly different from everyone else in the world –( unless of course you have an identical twin)

B. **Think about the implications of that....**

1. *No one else in all history has your unique history.* No one else in God's great design has your Divine design.
  - a. No one else shares your *blend of personality, ability, and ancestry.*
  - b. Illust. When you were born onto this earth, the angels stood in awe and declared: *"We've never see one like that before."* And beloved, they never will again!
  - c. You are heaven's first and final attempt at *you*. You are *matchless, unprecedented, and unequalled!* **CONGRATULATIONS!**
2. Consequently, you can do something no one else can do in a way no one else can.
  - a. Others can manage a team but not with your *flair/style*.
  - b. Others can do what you do, you aren't the only person with your skill, but you are the only person with *your version of your skill*. You have entered the world *uniquely equipped*.
  - c. David: you were *"Knit together, woven together in the dark of the womb"* (Ps 139: 13, 15 *"Intricately and curiously wrought (as if embroidered with various colors"* (vs 15 *Amplified version*). Indeed, you are *"fearfully and wonderfully made."*
  - d. Call it what you wish. A *talent*. A *skill set*. A *gift*. An *anointing*. A *Divine spark*. A *call*.
    - 1). **The terms are different but the truth is the same.**
    - 2). *"The Spirit has given each of us a special way of serving others"* (I Cor 12:7).
    - 3) *Therefore, we all have our unique place in the body of Christ!*

**THESIS:**

- 1. How UNIQUENESS IS A MAJOR THEME IN THE BIBLE AND IN THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.**
- 2. WHAT IS THE APPLICATION FOR THE CHURCH?**
- 3. HOW DO WE DISCOVER OUR OWN GIFTS?**
- 4. WHAT PITFALLS MUST BE AVOIDED?**

## **I. UNIQUENESS IS A MAJOR THEME IN THE BIBLE AND IN THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.**

A. Each of us – not some of us, a few of us, or the elite among us... **EACH OF US** has a special way – a facility, a natural strength, a tendency, or an inclination.

1. A beauty that longs to be revealed and released –

Illust. An **“oak within the acorn,”** pressing against the walls of the shell.

2. This **“special way”** is quick to feel the wind at its back. It is the work for which you are ideally suited. Slow to anchor and quick to sail!

B. **Playing to your strengths and unique gifts ... this is your destiny!** You at your best...

1. When you stand at the intersection of your skill and God’s will (call) I, you are standing at the corner of **Promised Land Ave and Glory Days Boulevard.**

2. **This is your Canaan!**

C. Sadly, **many people stop short of their destiny.** They settle for **someone else’s story.** My Mom or Dad did this, so I guess that is what I will do. Maybe, but not necessarily!

1. Miss your calling and you risk leading dull, joyless, and fruitless lives.

2. How sad to **never sing the song God wrote for your own unique voice.**

3. Beloved, quarry the jewels from your own soul... and cross a finish line with arms stretched heavenward and declare... **“I was made to do this!”** I feel God’s pleasure!

4. Some fit in, settle in, and blend in, but they never find their call. Don’t make that mistake.

D. Eph 2:10 <b>“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”</b> NIV
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<b>“It is God Himself who has made us what we are and has given us new lives in Jesus</b>
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<b>Christ; and long ages ago He planned that we should spend our lives in helping</b>
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<b>others”</b> (Eph 2:10). (TLB)
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1. Your existence is not *accidental*. Your skills are not *incidental*.

2 Ps 33:15 <b><i>It is he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do.</i></b> (NIV) Ancestry, IQ, interests... etc.
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E. You can see **uniqueness is a big message in the Bible** and in the book of Joshua!

1. The majority of its chapters (Chapters 13-22) advance one command: **KNOW YOUR TERRITORY AND POSSESS IT!**

a. Up to now we have been *discussing taking the land, dispossessing the enemies, eliminating the contrary seats of authority.*

b. The list of defeated Kings in Joshua 12 proclaim: **the land is taken!**

c. The rest of the book **13 -22** details the **distribution of the land.** Each tribe was given a *distinct and unique territory and assignment.*

2. Make no mistake.... **The inheritance was for everyone.** All the Hebrews were welcomed to Canaan – the *old, the young, the feeble, the forceful.* The inheritance was **universal.**

a. But the **assignments were individual** among the tribes, no one was left out.

b. Their **unique “land grants”** are listed in detail in **Chapters 13-22.**

Illust. If you can’t fall asleep tonight, read these chapters.

1). Shift from an ***action novel to a land survey.*** Like reading land grants or a will.

2). Makes for dull reading, ***unless of course you stand to inherit something.***

Illust. Since all the Israelites stood to **receive an inheritance**, they all **stood alert** as Joshua assigned the territory.

a. Each tribe was called forward. **Reuben, Gad, Manasseh.**

b. Each parcel was different. **Judah's parcel was large and central.**

c. ***Dan's section was smaller and coastal.***

d. Even the ***assignments were unique.***

ILLUST. The **Tribe of Levi** was not given land, but God Himself as their inheritance. Their role was to lead worship and teach the Torah. **HOLY ASSIGNMENT. 48 cities and the suburbs.**

3. The Big Message was this: **NO ONE GETS EVERYTHING, BUT EVERYONE GETS SOMETHING.**

a. Drive out the remaining enemies, build your farms, cultivate your fields!

b. Find your lot in life and dwell in it.

**MESSAGE: Know your territory and inherit it!**

## II. WHAT IS THE APPLICATION FOR THE CHURCH TODAY?

**A. Joshua was not the only commander to distribute territory/gifts after a massive victory.**

1. Jesus, after His victory against Satan and the establishment of His Kingdom, distributes gifts that are unique as well.

2. Illust. Paul... God "has given each one (raise your hand if that includes you?), a special gift through the generosity of Christ." That is why the scriptures say: "When he ascended to the heights, he led a crowd of captives and gave gifts to His people." (Eph 4:7-8).

a. Illust. Reference to a metaphor of a victorious king.

1). Common in Paul's day for the conquering monarch to return to his palace with prisoners and treasures.

2). He celebrated his conquest by giving gifts to his subjects.

b. The metaphor is perfect.

1) Just as God, after he fought for them and gave them victory over Canaan, he gave them gifts of inheritance according to His own purpose and design.

2). Jesus, having defeated sin and death on the cross, ascended to heaven, took His rightful place at the right hand of God and "gave gifts to His people."

Special gifts -- Unbound by time, unfettered by geography.

a. Jesus provides us with gifts after we come to Christ and claim the victory He has won for us over our sins!

b. *What a delightful thought!* Jesus, eternally crowned, distributing abilities and skills and equipping His subjects to do His bidding!

c. Rev 11:15 "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

B. Joshua shows us how to live the victorious Christian life, and this part must not be overlooked. What happens after we are saved and begin to live our PL life?

1. We must acknowledge and accept what by God's power and grace He has provided us and then claim our inheritance and live it!

2. Joshua says: "Tribe of Judah, take the high country."  
"Manasseh, occupy the valleys."  
" People of Gad, inhabit the land east of the Jordan."

3. Jesus looks down into his servants at Kirkland and says:

--Lyle and Brad, and Rick... you have the gift of administration/oversight... shepherd my people and look after their souls.

--Dave Neir and Kristy Rickman.. you have a gift for numbers and accounting... use it to be an impactful treasurer for the family of which you are a part, and Kristi help Mary Clutter and Kaylin sort out their financial aid package for college.

--Brett Bader you have a gift for and training in marketing, take your gifts that you excel in at in your work and use them to help effectively get the gospel message out... face book and the web and the radio.

--Suzanne Neir, you have the gift of teaching... use it inspire our ladies on Sunday afternoon.

--Daniel Stauss... you have a heart for teaching and preaching, use your gift whenever you can to assist brethren in need.

4. Everybody gets a gift. And these gifts come in different *doses and combinations*.

**1 Cor 12:7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. NASU**

*Each person is given something to do so that the body works together well.*

**C. Our inheritance is grace based and salvation is for all... but our assignments are tailor-made.**

1. No two finger prints are the same... why would two skill sets be the same?

2. No wonder Paul said: Eph 5:17-18

"So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."NASU

*In this context. Make sure you understand what the Master wants!*

***D. There were some gifts of a miraculous nature that the early church had whose purposes have been fulfilled and do not apply today, but there are many spiritual gifts/talents that the Bible mentions that are very much apart of the church today.***

***1. Romans 12, I Cor 12, Eph 4, and I Peter 4*** contain lists of spiritual gifts and talents that are God given and that are important to the functioning of a healthy church family. There are more, but the fact that these are highlighted by the HS shows their importance.

***2. Evangelists, pastor (Shepherd), teacher, exhortation, wisdom, knowledge, serving, helps, leadership, administration, giving, mercy, discernment, faith.***

***3. This concept shows how this principle applies to us today!***

### **III. HOW DO WE DISCOVER OUR OWN GIFTS?**

***A. Do you understand what the Master wants? Do you know what makes you, you?***

***1.*** Have you identified the features that distinguish you from every other human being who has inhaled oxygen?

***2. You have a parcel, “acreage” to develop, a lot in life. So, “make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then commit yourself to it.” MSG... Gal 6:4-5***

***3. “But each one must examine his own work”, NASU Make a careful exploration of it! WHY?***

***Because you will be held accountable before God for your work, how you used your talents, and not another. (Matt 25)***

***B. Peter said: “IF anyone ministers, let him do it with the ability which God supplies” (I Peter 4:11).***

***1. Ability reveals destiny!***

***2 What are your abilities?*** What do you do well? What do people ask you to do again? What task comes easily?

***3. Your “skill set” is your road map. It leads you to your territory. Take note of your strengths. They are bread crumbs that will lead you out of the wilderness.***

***4. God loves you too much to give you a job and not the skills.***  
***Identify yours!***

***Illust. Ideally, what you do for a living should conform to your design.***

***a. Few situations*** are more miserable than a job “misfit.”

***b.*** Yet few maladies are more common.

***c. Study:*** Only 13 per cent of all workers find their work truly meaningful.

***d.*** Nearly 9/10 of folks wake up on Monday morning and don’t want to go to work.

- 1). Imagine the impact this unhappiness has on health, family, and productivity.
- 2). Young people – find something you like to do, and do it so well that people pay you to do it.
4. **Be Great if you could align your career with your spiritual giftedness?**  
Capitalize on that special talent, pour yourself into that—that's GLORY DAYS! You at your best!
5. The **Direction For Discipleship is a 70 question test** which I have made available for you.... Fill it out and tabulate your results and it will help you discern your current strengths in these 14 special area of service.
  - a. **Glory days home work...** fill it out and prayerfully make sure you are actively involved in using your gifts in the body for the kingdom of God.
  - b. If not, meet with the elders and brain storm with them how you might find your nitch in the kingdom.
  - c. Our goal is more and more to have our members not just *spectators* but **participants** in the kingdom work we are doing.

***B. Important... we will be held accountable for how we use our gifts/talents.***

***1. You don't want to be like the one talent man who buried his talent in the ground because he was afraid, and was told he "was a wicked and slothful servant" and was sent away into outer darkness.***

#### **IV. WHAT PITFALLS MUST BE AVOIDED?**

**A. Using God's gifts for worldly success and self interest instead of spiritual success to God's glory.**

1. Whatever gifts and talents you have, they have been given, not just so you can be **a worldly success and makes lots of money**, but so you can **better help others, lay up treasures in heaven, and give Glory to God!**
  - a. So at the end... **"Well done, thou good and faithful servant."**
2. Be assured, once you dedicate your life to Christ there will be **hundreds of distractions** pulling you away from your *most important task*.  
**Priority job #1: Seeking the Kingdom first! Getting you and your children to heaven!**
3. This is ***foreshadowed*** for us in the OT. When so many of the **stubborn Canaanites came back after being forced to retreat and then resettled in the land.**
4. Joshua admonishes them at the end of the book to get busy **and live out their glory days! Finish the job**. Get rid of these pockets of evil resistance! Sadly, they many did not!

a). "The children of Israel did not drive out the Geshurites or the Maachathites" (Josh 13:13).

b) "They did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer" (16:10).

c) SUMMARY STATEMENT: "Many did not drive out the Canaanites who were determined to dwell in the land" (17:12). Could have, but just did not!

5. Once you receive salvation and the forgiveness of your sins, you will be continually tempted by Satan and he will attempt to reassert Himself in your life any way he can.

a) Your enemy, Satan, is determined to *linger in your land, and provide stubborn pockets of resistance* to your spiritual focus as well.

b). You must drive him out and cast down those strongholds. He will lure you with greed, recreation, pride, power, other types of worldliness.

c). Lk 8 "The thorns and thistles of this life... cares and concerns of this world", that will choke out your spiritual sustenance if you allow it

d). Be on guard lest you drift away from *spiritual focus* and allow compromises to enter your life!

#### **B. Compare and compete instead of doing what you were called to do.**

1. ***You be you***. Not your ***parents, grandparents, or your big brother***, or other members of the church family.

2. Admire them, appreciate them, learn from them. But you **cannot be them**. *You are not them*.

3. ***"Don't compare yourself with others. Each of you must act responsibly doing the creative best you can with your own life"*** (Gal 6: 4-5) MSG

4. Illust. After the resurrection Jesus appeared to some of his followers. He gave Peter a specific goal and work that would include great sacrifice.

a. Peter responded by pointing to John and saying: **"Lord, what about Him?"** Jesus answered,

**"If I want him to live until I come back, that is not your business." You follow ME!"** (John 21:21-22) NCV.

b. Don't ***occupy yourself with another person's assignment; stay focused on your own!***

c. Don't try to ***do someone else's job, or get in their business... rejoice and be thankful when others blossom and don't compare yourself to others.***

d. Be content to follow your own niche in the kingdom.

5. ***Stay in your own lane. Run your own race. Nothing good happens when you compare and compete.***

6. God does not judge you according to **the talents of others**. He judges you according to yours.

a. His yardstick for measuring faithfulness is **how faithful you are with your own gifts/talents**.

b. You are **not responsible for your gift**. But you are **responsible for how you use it!** See Matt 25 -- The Parable of the Talents..

C. Becoming **lazy and not intentionally receiving and cultivating your gifts**.

1. This is not about arriving into your *mature place in the kingdom to His glory overnight*. (*Crawl before you walk, and walk before you run*).

2. After you assess what your talents and gifts are... **you must choose to develop your potential**.

Illust. Paul told Timothy – **“Stir up the gift of God which is in you”** (2 Tim 1:6)

a. You have been appointed to the ministry.... **Be devoted to it, spend time in much reading and study, be courageous....**

b. II Tim 1:12 **“We have not been given a spirit of timidity or fear, but of power and love and discipline.”**

c. **Plug into God’s power and learn to overcome your shyness** which can get in the way of your calling and God’s will for your life!

3. **Don’t be Lazy.**

a. Illust. Luck = *“Hard work meets opportunity.”*

b. I wish I could report that each tribe moved quickly into their inheritance, and put the acreage to good use.

1). **Sadly, 7 of the 12 became war weary and distracted by other things and were still in the safety of the military camp at Gilgal. Joshua had to scold them...**

a). **“How long will you neglect to go and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers has given you?”**  
(Joshua 18:3).

b). You must leave the safety of the camp.. **get out of your comfort zone and live a life of faith to God’s glory!**

c). God had given them a great land, but they had to intentionally receive what God had given them!

4). **How do you explain their indolence?**

a. They marched out of the wilderness and conquered the land and rejoiced... yet...



b. *when the time came to inherit their unique parcels*, they chocked. many grew *war weary, lazy, and cowardly!*

5. Don't make the same mistake many of them did.

a. You and I are an heir with Christ of God's estate.

b. He has placed His Spirit in your heart as a down payment. What God said to Joshua, he says to you...

<p><b>"Every place that the sole of your foot will tread I have given to you."</b></p>
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c. But you must *possess it*. Deliberatively receive what God so graciously gives.

**Con.**

A. To enter your glory days and live your promised land life you must identify your gifts, thank God for your life purpose and...

B. Live your lot in life and fulfill your potential by stirring up your gifts.

1. **Think beyond these four walls!**

2. **Think beyond what you do on Sundays.**

3. **Bear fruit and really live!**

C. You can do in a **special way what no one else can do**.

D The message of the book of Joshua is that we must stay focused, avoid wordly distractions, and find ways to invest yourself in the kingdom to God's glory!