

One Arm Tied Behind Your Back

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“If only...” I hear women then tell me why they can’t seem to conquer some issue in their lives. “Maybe when...” Other ladies then tell me why their fulfillment is postponed, yet again.

Where in your life do you feel handicapped to the point where you cannot get past an obstacle that keeps you from greatness? Maybe you can relate to Pat. The youngest of six children, she always got whatever was left. This especially manifested when her parents said they were out of money. She must work and save if she wanted to go to college. Pat applied for scholarships and financial aid, but could not acquire enough to finance one year of college. She got employment at a big box store, living at home to save money. Ten years later, Pat had only saved a few thousand dollars. She had risen to assistant manager, but the company would never promote her any higher because she didn’t have a college degree. Pat felt handicapped.

Perhaps there is an area in your life that seems stunted so that you can’t fulfill your dream or realize your full potential. What should Pat do? What should you do? Or perhaps, more appropriately, can you do anything?

I want to share four ways you can break through to see God’s purpose for your life fulfilled.

1. Ignore your handicap

Is your stumbling block something from the devil? Has the enemy set something in your way that is obviously not from God?

Esther was in a foreign land, part of a despised race of people. She became part of the powerful king’s harem. Unbelievably, she found favor with the king. But as she gained favor, her people were not so blessed. An evil advisor conspired to kill her people and sold the idea to the king through lies. Esther had favor with the king, but women were not allowed to approach the king to offer counsel. Esther felt handicapped. Her uncle exhorted her to make a difference by ignoring the evil advisor and the evil consequences if she spoke to the king. She creatively arranged circumstances so that the king would not only hear her, but dispose of the evil advisor, allowing Esther and her people to live. More than that, they lived better than they ever had before. (Book of Esther)

2. Obey God in spite of naysayers

Mary was sold out to Jesus. She, her brother Lazarus and sister Martha provided a home where Jesus could rest with his disciples. Mary’s devotion sometimes led her to be

criticized by others. The first incident was when she sat at Jesus' feet and left Martha cooking for the multitude of guests. Martha complained bitterly, but Mary was exonerated. Another time, Mary broke an alabaster box of perfume and washed Jesus' feet, using her hair to spread the nard's aroma. Jesus' disciples objected to such a "waste" of precious oil, stating the value could have been used for charity. Again, Jesus shut their mouths by honoring Mary for her obedience to God's direction to anoint Him. (Luke 10:38-42; John 12:3)

3. Rise above restrictions of society

The issue of the value of women was put to rest in the New Testament. Paul radically said there was neither male or female...(Galatians 3:28) The early church abounded with women who spread the Gospel, financed churches, and taught those who were trying to find themselves in this new Christian life. Some of these leaders were Jesus' mother Mary, Priscilla, Lydia, Phoebe, Lois, Eunice and others. (Acts 1:14; Acts 18:18; 1 Co 16:19, Romans 16:3; Acts 16:15, 40; Romans 16:1; 2 Timothy 1:5)

4. Prepare for a better life

What happens when life falls apart? What can you do when there are so many obstacles in front of you that make your life's dreams seemingly impossible? Ruth was one of those people. She became isolated from her family and society by marrying Mahlon, a Hebrew. Soon she became a widow. Either Ruth could try to find a life in Moab, or follow her mother-in-law to Israel and worship her God. In Israel, Ruth faced being an outcast, a widow, and in poverty. Through obedience to her mother-in-law, and faith in her new God, Ruth overcame to become a wife and a mother. She remains one of five women named in Jesus' genealogy. If she has remained in Moab, this would not have been possible. (Book of Ruth)

Covid has changed many lives. Some of you may feel this year has taken something away from your God-ordained goals and dreams. But nothing is too difficult for God.

Be resolute. Be obedient. Be inspired. Be prepared. God is ready to bless...the question is, are you ready to receive?