

Sermon Title: Gifted: A Life of Adventure

Occasion: Youth Sunday / Graduation Sunday

Response Song: "Make Room"

INTRO: "Oh, the Places You'll Go..."

Graduation season is one of the most inspiring times of the year.

There's an electricity in the air—a sense that something new is coming. You hear familiar phrases like:

- "Oh, the places you'll go."
- "The people you'll meet."
- "The things you'll learn."
- "The adventures you'll experience."

It's all meant to celebrate potential. But I wonder...

Do we still believe that kind of potential exists for us—for every stage of life?

Because here's the truth:

God isn't finished writing your story.

No matter your age, stage, or season—if you are breathing, you are called.

The journey with God is full of **awe and wonder**. It's full of unexpected turns and divine appointments. It's unpredictable, but it's never pointless. It's full of **peace, rest, strength, joy, hope, and love**. In Jesus, we are invited to a life that is not easy—but is truly abundant.

And what if we lived with that kind of anticipation? What if we actually believed that a life with God is the greatest adventure we could ever go on?

Oh, the places God will take you—if you say: Here I am. Use me.

Let's read a passage that sets the tone for this entire journey:

Psalm 16:7–11 (CSB):

"I will bless the Lord who counsels me— even at night when my thoughts trouble me. I always let the Lord guide me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my whole being rejoices; my body also rests securely. For you will not abandon me to Sheol; you will not allow your faithful one to see decay. You reveal the path of life to me; in your presence is abundant joy; at your right hand are eternal pleasures."

POINT 1: The Journey Is Full of Awe, Wonder, and Purpose

Life with Jesus is not small or shallow. It is deeply rich and full.

It's not just a one-time decision. It's a day-by-day journey—a relationship that takes you places you never imagined, strengthens you in seasons you didn't see coming, and surrounds you with people who walk with you in both the mountaintops and the valleys.

God doesn't promise a life without storms, but He promises His presence through them.

A life with God is not always safe—but it's always secure. It's not always comfortable—but it's always filled with purpose.

John 10:9–10 (CSB):

"I am the gate. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance."

When we live surrendered, we begin to see that life as an invitation—not a burden.

Oh, the places you'll go... when you walk with Jesus.

Oh, the people you'll meet... when you let Him use you.

Oh, the growth you'll experience... when you stay rooted in Him.

Maybe like Esther, you're exactly where you are *for such a time as this*.

Maybe like Habakkuk, God is saying to you: *"Look at the nations and be utterly amazed."*

Let's not settle for surviving faith. Let's pursue the awe and wonder of an abundant life with Jesus.

POINT 2: God Equips You for the Journey

You are not sent out empty-handed. The God who calls you equips you—with gifts, talents, wisdom, and the presence of His Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:4–6 (CSB):

"Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different ministries, but the same Lord. And there are different activities, but the same God produces each gift in each person."

Romans 12:6–8 (CSB):

"According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts: If prophecy, use it according to the proportion of one's faith; if service, use it in service; if teaching, in teaching; if exhorting, in exhortation; giving, with generosity; leading, with diligence; showing mercy, with cheerfulness."

1 Peter 4:10 (CSB):

"Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God."

Ephesians 4:11–12 (CSB):

“And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, equipping the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ.”

1 Corinthians 12:26–27 (CSB):

“So if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it.”

We’re not all the same—but we are all needed. Whether your role is behind-the-scenes or up front, God placed that gift inside you for a reason.

This is where you grow—to help others grow.

The church is your equipping ground. It’s the place where you grow so you can help others grow. It’s the basecamp before the climb, the classroom before the calling, the family before the field.

Let’s not be passive attendees. Let’s be active participants. The world needs what God has placed in you.

POINT 3: The World Is Your Mission Field

Your mission doesn’t stop at the church doors. It begins there.

The world is not the enemy—it’s the mission field. And your gifts were meant to go with you.

John 13:34–35 (CSB):

“I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Galatians 5:13–14 (CSB):

“For you were called to be free, brothers and sisters; only don’t use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love. For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement: Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Philippians 2:3–4 (CSB):

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look not to his own interests, but rather to the interests of others.”

Everywhere you go—school, work, neighborhood, the grocery store, practice, the gym—your mission travels with you.

Your everyday life is your greatest opportunity for impact.

Oh, the places you’ll go... when you see every space as sacred.

Oh, the people you’ll meet... when you bring love to every encounter.

Let your life be proof of the Gospel you believe.

The adventure isn't always loud. Sometimes it looks like faithfulness.

Point 4: God Uses the Willing

Let's be clear: God doesn't use the most talented. He uses the most surrendered.

Isaiah 6:8 (CSB):

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord asking: Who will I send? Who will go for us? I said: Here I am. Send me."

Isaiah didn't know the mission details. He just knew the heart behind it:

God is holy. God is good. God is worth following.

Matthew 9:37–38 (CSB):

"The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few..."

Ephesians 3:20–21 (CSB):

"Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think..."

God is able—but He invites you to join Him.

He can move mountains—but He invites your obedience.

He can transform hearts—but He gives you the privilege of planting seeds.

Don't wait for perfect conditions. Say yes now. Trust that God will equip you as you go.

GOSPEL MOMENT: The Journey Starts with Jesus

The abundant life isn't found by trying harder—it's found in Jesus.

John 15:5 (CSB):

"I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me."

If you want to live the life you were created for, it starts with Him.

If you don't know Jesus yet, He's inviting you to the journey today.

If you've known Him but lost your wonder, He's calling you back.

Jesus died and rose to give you life—abundant life. Life with awe. Life with purpose.

Let your prayer be: **"Here I am. Use me. I'm ready to go again."**

CLOSING CHALLENGE: The Next Step Starts Now

If you choose to walk this journey—wherever it leads—do it for Jesus.

Colossians 3:23–24 (CSB):

“Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people, knowing that you will receive the reward of an inheritance from the Lord. You serve the Lord Christ.”

Let’s not walk away from today unchanged.

Ask yourself:

- Where have I stopped expecting God to move?
- Where have I gotten stuck in routine?
- What is God equipping me for in this season?

Oh, the places you’ll go—if you say yes to the journey.

Let’s surrender together. Let’s pray. Let’s respond.

Let’s make room for God to do more than we ever imagined.

Let’s pray.

FINAL WORD AFTER THE SONG:

Before we dismiss, we want to take a special moment to welcome and celebrate a new season in our church family. Today we officially welcome our new Youth Pastor, Stephen Wallace, along with his wife Mallory and their beautiful new baby, Jovie.

Stephen and Mallory are stepping into this role with hearts ready to love, lead, and serve. We are incredibly grateful for the calling God has placed on their lives and for the blessing their family already is to our students and church community.

Let’s take this moment to pray over them—asking God to bless their ministry, their family, and their impact in the years to come. After the service, Stephen, Mallory, and baby Jovie will be around if you’d like to meet them. Also, be sure to enjoy some refreshments in the lobby as we celebrate our graduates together.