

It Wasn't My Idea, But It Has to Be My Choice

1 Thessalonians 5:17-24 | Isaiah Huddleston | Hope City Church

CENTRAL QUESTION

What will you do with a purpose you did not come up with?

I. Spirit, Soul, and Body

Key Text: 1 Thessalonians 5:17-24

- Paul says to pray without ceasing and give thanks in everything. We are body, soul, and spirit, but which part is leading us?
- David went to the high priest for the ephod after Ziklag burned. He had to get hold of God, even without every requirement.
- A thankful mind stays fixed on God's will. An unthankful mind drifts into isolation and takes all the credit and all the blame.
- Isaiah 43:19: God makes a way in the wilderness. If your first thought is "how?", the enemy has a window into your mind.

The body

- Genesis 1:26 and 2:7: God formed the body from dust, breathed in life, and man became a living soul.
- The body is a vehicle and a temple, but it is not where the soul and spirit live forever.
- Hebrews 9:27: Live on purpose to make it to heaven, not "maybe I'll get there." Matthew 25:21: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

The soul

- The soul holds your will, emotions, desires, memories, and dreams. It is where your mind lives.
- Fear can rob you of the joy and peace God wants to give. Wrong decisions, made day after day, change your direction one degree at a time.
- Proverbs 23:7 and Luke 6:45: As a man thinks in his heart, so he is. You can talk yourself into or out of God's will.

The spirit

- Your spirit came from God and wants to serve Him. God gave it so you could live out His purpose.

II. The War for the Mind

Key Text: Romans 12:1-2

- The world cannot contaminate your spirit on its own. It shapes your mind through the pressure of daily choices.

- Romans 7:21-25: The law of the mind and the law of the members are at war. With the mind, Paul serves God. With the flesh, the law of sin.
- Do not give the devil too much credit. A 25-year-old roof, a rotten tree, and a car with 200,000 miles are not spiritual attacks.
- But the enemy uses situations that are not ideal to push you toward anger and self-pity. That is spiritual warfare.
- The devil does not need your house or your bank account. He wants your mind.
- 2 Timothy 1:7-9: God gave us power, love, and a sound mind. His purpose and grace for us were given before the world began. God had us in mind before He formed Adam.

III. Two Voices on the Plan for Your Life

Key Text: 1 Corinthians 2:9-11

- Your mind recounts your faults more easily than it imagines God's plan. Your spirit says God is able to do far more than we ask (Ephesians 3:20).
- The things of God are revealed by the Holy Spirit. Verse 11 separates the Spirit (capital S) from the spirit of a man (lowercase s).
- Your eyes and ears are the gates into your soul. What you see and hear may be factual, but it is not always true. Walk by faith, not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7).
- Each person is called to a certain time, place, and people. We are the body of Christ: some are feet, some are hands.
- Romans 12:3: The measure of faith is the capacity of the life God designed for you. It is not a ceiling.
- Jeremiah 1:5: God knew and chose Jeremiah before he was formed, before he had a body or a mind. God's plan comes before us. Why do we count ourselves lesser?
- The modern church wants a microwave blessing. When it takes too long, we throw it down, walk away, and come back asking, "Where's my stuff?"
- Anxiety and depression are real, and some people deal with chemical imbalances. But a believer whose mind is never renewed can feel friction between the mind and the spirit and mistake it for something else.

IV. It Wasn't My Idea

- Jonah did not run from Nineveh or its wicked people. He ran from the presence of God.
- God put a shade over Jonah's head, and he got comfortable. He moved only when God took the shade away. Do not go looking for shade.
- Personal testimony: He grew up in a preacher's home, saw what pastors go through, and wanted to sit in the band and play bass. He was afraid of God's presence, not of obedience. God pulled the shade off.
- Many people live angry at God because He did not call them to what they wanted.
- If you would run from God's presence before you run from wicked people, there is already enough in you that you are responsible to choose.

V. Found, Not Made

- The place God prepared for you already exists. It cannot be made or fabricated. It has to be found.
- Ruth followed the spirit within her. She went with Naomi to Bethlehem and found favor in Boaz's field.
- Matthew 13:44: The man found treasure in a field and sold everything to buy it. When you find your purpose, get rid of whatever keeps you from holding on to it.

VI. Facts Are Not the Truth

- What happened to you is a fact from your side of the fence. God sees the whole hallway and around the corner.
- 1 Kings 19:10 and 18: Elijah said he alone was left. God said He had 7,000 who had not bowed to Baal. Elijah's view did not change what God already knew.
- When Elijah left the cave, he found Elisha. Someone is waiting on you to keep going.
- John the Baptist: His birth was announced to his father Zachariah, and Isaiah foretold a voice in the wilderness. He left Jerusalem for the wilderness and preached the One coming after him. In prison, he asked whether Jesus was the one.

VII. Closing

- Hebrews 4:12: God's Word divides soul and spirit. It shows you where you are supposed to be and who you are called to touch.
- Renewing your mind is daily. To renew is to make new again.
- Pray: "God, this was not my idea, but it is my choice." You may not see the 7,000 or the Elisha in the field, but God has a purpose for you.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

1. Which part of you has been leading lately: body, soul, or spirit?
2. What thought do you keep repeating about your life? Does it line up with Scripture?
3. Where are you sitting in the shade like Jonah? What would it cost you to leave it?
4. Where have you mistaken what you saw (the facts) for what God knows (the truth)?
5. What would renewing your mind look like this week, day by day?

Scripture References: 1 Thessalonians 5:17-24 | Isaiah 43:19 | Genesis 1:26 | Genesis 2:7 | Hebrews 9:27 | Matthew 25:21 | Proverbs 23:7 | Luke 6:45 | Romans 12:1-3 | Romans 7:21-25 | 2 Timothy 1:7-9 | 1 Corinthians 2:9-11 | Ephesians 3:20 | 2 Corinthians 5:7 | Jeremiah 1:5 | Matthew 13:44 | 1 Kings 19:10, 18-19 | Hebrews 4:12