

Opportunities Presented to you by God

Isaiah 61: [*The Year of the Lord's Favor*] The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's **favor** and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor.

John 8:31-32 - Jesus said to his followers, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free".

Ephesians 5:15-17: ¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

As we read Eph. 5:15 - God instructs us to be wise in our decisions and **alert to the opportunities** He provides. If we are paying attention, we get to choose to respond to God. If you know God's voice by knowing His word you should have no problems stepping into something out of faith.

As believers we sometimes fail to notice an opportunity to serve because **we see it** as an obstacle or interruption to our lives.

In the Bible the **Good Samaritan** recognized a divine opportunity when he saw one. His godly actions revealed his devotion to the Lord. We, too, demonstrate our spiritual condition by how we respond to the opportunities He sends.

The priest and Levite viewed the man lying by the roadside as an inconvenience. As spiritual leaders, they should have been the first to help a suffering man. God's Word/Law commanded them to love their neighbors as themselves. (**Lev. 19:18**) and **Luke 10:27**; ¹⁸“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

Seven biblical passages where people had the choice of responding to or ignoring the Lord.

God provides all of us an opportunity to . . .

1. **Share: - John 6:1-14** – 6 Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias),² and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick.³ Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples.⁴ The Jewish Passover Festival was near.

⁵ When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, “Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?”⁶ He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

⁷ Philip answered him, “It would take more than half a year’s wages to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!”

⁸ Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up,

⁹ “**Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish**, but how far will they go among so many?”

¹⁰ Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (**about five thousand men were there**).

¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

¹² When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.” ¹³ So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

¹⁴ After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, “Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world.”

2. God provides all of us an opportunity to Serve Him: Matt. 4:18-20

3. God provides all of us an opportunity to Grow in Intimacy with Him: Luke 10:38-42

4. God provides all of us an opportunity to Help Others: Luke 5:17-26 - ¹⁷ One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. **And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick.** ¹⁸ Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. ¹⁹ When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

²⁰ When Jesus saw their faith, he said, “Friend, your sins are forgiven.”

²¹ The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, “Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

²² Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, “Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? ²³ Which is easier: to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’? ²⁴ But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.” So he said to the paralyzed man, “I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home.”

²⁵ Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. ²⁶ Everyone was amazed and gave

praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, “We have seen remarkable things today.”

5. God provides all of us an opportunity to Witness for Jesus: In **Acts 16**, Paul had the opportunity to tell his jailer how to be saved. ³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” ³¹ They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

6. God provides all of us an opportunity to Understand Who Jesus Is: Luke 19:1-10

7. God provides all of us an opportunity to Receive Salvation: In Mark 10:17-22

Our actions reveal our heart. If we are reluctant to give our time, attention, money, and effort to help others, then **we need to take a good look at our relationship with God.**