

## IS THAT MY PURPOSE?

Get use to asking that question! It starts sometime your junior year of high school...if not before...mostly because you have parents and others who start hounding you about where you are going to college and what do you want to do for the rest of your life. For most of us, like at 17, I don't know what I want to do for the rest of my life. Let alone after four years of college and I'm still not 100% sure that I know what I want to do with the rest of my life.

Everyone wants to know the will of God, but does His will and His purpose mean the same thing?

One of my favorite accounts from the New Testament is found in Acts 12. Every time I read it, it makes me laugh. Picture it, Paul is asleep in prison, chained to two sleeping guards, mind you. All of the sudden he feels a tap on his side, through the slits in his eyes he thinks he sees an angel. The angel tells Peter to get up, get dressed and follow him. Peter does so and out of the prison they walk. He thinks he is just seeing a vision, who gets up and just walks out of prison? You do, dude! They get outside and in the middle of the road and the angel is gone. Peter, with the mind of a steal trap, figures out this isn't a dream, this isn't a vision, but this is real! He takes off to meet with the folks who have been praying for him. This account illustrates that question we just asked, does

God's will and purpose mean the same thing. I see it intersecting here with Peter. God's will and purpose for Peter to preach the gospel both work for that to happen. It was the will of God for Peter and he preached the gospel anywhere he was, in prison or out on the streets. Now, sometimes it doesn't get so neatly wrapped up like it does here. Peter's purpose was to preach, bring others to believe in what Jesus has done and is doing. Sometimes it was God's will for Peter to be in prison. But his purpose always remained the same, preach the gospel.

Think this week on how does God lead and instruct you? How do you know God is behind a set of events or circumstances you don't understand? So often we think we see God moving in one way or other, but is it real? Just because I want to see something happen, doesn't always mean that it is from God. As we dive into what our purpose is and what the will of God is, these things become more and more clear. But if we are unclear on His purpose for our lives, that could lead to just following our heart wherever it wants to go and end up miles from where He would have us!



“God is big. He could use anything to communicate with His people. Think about it. He could fill the sky with a Star Wars presentation, leaving messages beaming in the atmosphere for hours. He could paint His words in nature using everything from tree bark to blooming flowers to freshly fallen snow. He could even use smoke signals or drop parchment from the sky. In modern times, He could send an email, call someone's cell phone or leave a voice mail message.

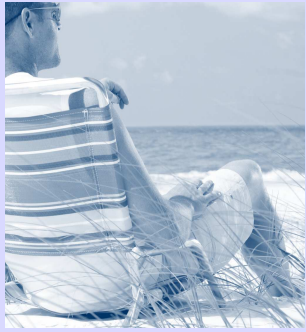
“But He doesn't. He takes a much more subtle approach. Instead of shouting, He whispers.”

*Learning to Hear His Voice* by Margaret Feinberg

**GOD WHISPERS**

## SPRING BREAK BREAK-AWAYS

Hey, with the snow coming down it makes me think of what else...spring break! Just wondering what you are up to during your spring break. Let me know if and when you'll be home or where you are going for your week of rest and relaxation! If you are heading out for a mission trip, let us know that, we'll put a prayer calendar together to know



where and some specifics, we'll pass those along to everyone so we can pray for your time away!

So pull your calendars out and send me the dates!

## LADIES...WAIT NO LONGER!!

Go on, make the most of your Leap Year! The tradition stands that on every February 29th, women are free to get down on one knee and propose to that special guy!

In 1288 this Leap Day gave women in Scotland the only *legal* day they could propose to a man. However, if she was turn down there was a fine...from a kiss on the cheek to the price of a silk dress or a pair of gloves!

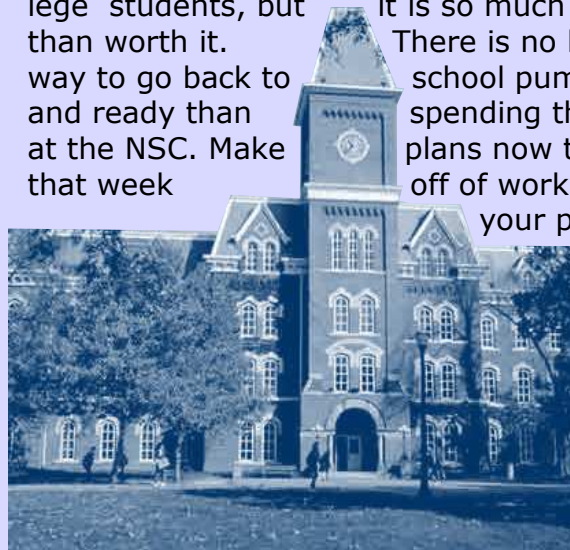
## MAKE YOUR SUMMER PLANS NOW!

Yeah, I know...it's not even spring break and I am moving on to the summer, but there are some big plans we want to make and get on your calendar!

Mainly we are talking about the National Student Conference in August. The National Student Conference attracts over 40 campus ministries and over 400 students from around the nation each year. During this event students experience dynamic praise and worship, ministry bonding time, family groups to share and learn with, and are challenged to win their campus for Christ! This years conference is August 2-6.

The conference is held at the University of Southern Indiana, Evansville, IN. The cost is \$75. I know that can be a lot for college students, but it is so much more than worth it.

There is no better way to go back to school pumped up and ready than spending the time at the NSC. Make plans now to take that week off of work, do



your packing early and be ready to have a great time!

## SPIRITUAL HIBERNATION

Every year bears curl up in a furry ball and sleep away the winter. They don't hunt, they avoid exercise, and their heart rates can slow to eight beats a minute. Wouldn't it be nice if we got a similar retreat? Even though the outside world keeps going, we can still practice some spiritual hibernation by carving out time alone with God during the cold winter months. Here's how:

### 1. Dive Into Scripture

Instead of worrying about Bible study, focus on soaking in God's Word as He rejuvenates your spirit. Pick a few verses and meditate on them, allowing God to bless you. Try starting in the Psalms or one of the Gospels.

### 2. Get Creative

If you're artistic, worship God with your gifts. Use painting, photography, or nature (better bundle up) to express love to the Creator.

### 3. Crank Up the Volume

Turn up the praise music and sing your heart out. God doesn't care what you sound like. But if you really don't feel like belting it, dance, kneel or sit silently and allow your heart to worship.

### 4. Write Away

Start a hibernation journal. Record thoughts, prayers or verses that speak to you this season. Then look back and see what God has taught you.

