

Turning your TALENT
into
MONEY

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Isaac John Akagu

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FORWARD

The Bible book of proverbs 18:16 says that **“a man’s gift maketh room for him and bringeth him before great men.”**

Talents or gifts, if you may, are those resources or skills which God has endowed man with and which man is expected to make use of in order to fulfill his destiny or purpose on earth; affecting his generation in the process. Everyone born on earth is born with a divine purpose or assignment in life as ordained by God. *Apostle Paul declared this in 1 Corinthians 7:7a (NIV) “I wish that everyone are like me, but each person has his own gift from God.”* God does not send anyone on a mission without equipping him for it. He deposited various skills in man to help him carry out and fulfill his ordained assignment. These skills or Talents are usually naturally possessed by us.

A story is told about a man in Matthew 25:14-30, who on the eve of his departure on a long journey equipped his servants with skills, with which they were to fend for themselves until his return. Verse 16 reads: *“and unto one he gave five talents, to another two and to another one; to every man according to his several abilities and straightway took his journey.”* The implication of this statement is that everyone has a number of unique and peculiar talents bestowed by God. So do not think or conclude that you do not have any gift or talent; the problem is that you have not searched deep enough within you to unearth it.

Isaac John Akagu, in this wisdom-packed, thought-provoking and action-inciting book of his, tells us the source of all gifts and how these gifts can be of benefit to us. He mentions that God gives us talents to appreciate and to put to work in order to make profit of them to His Glory. He also examines in the second section, some crucial ingredients every talented person would need to fulfill destiny. As you read on, you will learn how to discover and stir up the talents you are endowed with and how to be empowered to maximize and maintain the flow of Grace throughout your journey.

Don’t forget that your talents are for profit making because *“...the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man TO PROFIT withal!”* (1 Corinthians 12:7). God bless you as you put your gifts to work in the Name of Jesus Christ!

Pastor David Popoola

Living Faith Church, Worldwide!

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to my father; Lt. Deacon John A. Akagu. You left me spiritual legacies I'll do my best to pass on to generations after me.

INTRODUCTION

Is everybody on earth gifted? Does everyone have talents or are there “gift-less” people somewhere on the surface of the earth? Are some people more endowed than others? ...and are there some that aren’t endowed at all? Now here’s the big one ...Are you gifted or gift-less?

These questions bug the minds of many people all across the earth as they try to discover themselves and come to a point of self realization. Many have grown frustrated with their lives and are full of negativities in their minds.

If you are striving hard to have a fulfilled life and you’ve answered those questions correctly, then you are one step closer to making the most of your time on earth. Whether or not you were able to answer my questions however, you’ll definitely find my summations that will follow from this point thought-provoking.

Everyone on earth has potentials! There are no empty men on earth, but there are many people with wrong perceptions of who they are and what they carry. Also, there are no “gift-less” people on earth, but there are many people who don’t even know how gifted they are. Nothing devalues a man than having a sense of emptiness and incapacity. It is the understanding of who you are that determines what you become. How you see yourself consistently determines what you become perpetually.

It is often said that **“in every man, there is a seed of greatness.”** When this seed is nurtured, it can catapult him from where he is to where God wants him to be. Every bird in the sky is gifted to fly. Every fish in the ocean is gifted to swim. Similarly, everyone on earth is gifted to do something special.

No purpose is ever accomplished without a discovered, developed and functional talent. You may have big dreams, but if you don't identify the talents that will make those dreams a reality and develop them, the dreams may end a mirage.

A talent is simply a '**Gift**' from God to a man. It is often referred to as "gifting"; that special endowment within you. It is unique to you and can turn you from a mediocre into an achiever. It is a rare ability and not by any means common. Finding it out becomes the turning point of your destiny.

I'm about to take you through a journey; you may never find this in any book. Not even the formal education you receive in your schools and institutions of learning would expose it to you. It's a journey of self discovery where you are going to learn what it takes to have a fulfilled life on earth.

By the time you're done reading this book, you'll be flying on the wings of self-belief, motivated by self discovery and leading to inevitable accomplishments.

However, I've got Good News for you! You have everything it takes to become a star on the earth. Now join me as we unfold much more.

SECTION A

MAXIMIZING YOUR TALENT

CHAPTER ONE

EVERYONE HAS TALENTS

“Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” (Ephesians 4:8)

In the verse above, the Apostle emphatically states that everyone has been given gifts or talents from God. Why? For the establishment of a God-predetermined agenda! God has plans, but He uses human vessels. Everyone matters to God. You are central to a divine plan. No farmer goes to his farm without his implements. Similarly, God couldn't have sent you down here on missions He hasn't equipped you for. Therefore, you cannot be without gifting, endowments and special abilities.

You did not determine where, when and why you were born. God determined all that before your parents even met each other (Jeremiah 1:5). You are born at an appointed time, in an appointed place, with specific gifts to solve well defined problems. Everyone's assignment differs.

When I was young, I used to wish I was an American or a European, living in London, New York, etc. Growing up however and discovering more about myself, I can say with every sense of audacity that I'm proud to be a Nigerian, born in Nigeria and Gifted to solve specific problems.

I've studied a bit about Nations. In every Nation, there is a natural resource. In Nigeria for example, there is Crude Oil, in Ghana, there is Gold. In England, there is Coal. In Germany, there is Uranium, etc. Each Nation draws from its natural resources to produce wealth for its citizenry. Nations differ in wealth depending on the level of utilization of their resources.

Similarly, every human being has a gift, a potential, a natural endowment and a special ability. The level of your success depends on the level of your utilization of that talent.

In every discipline and area of Endeavour, there are specialists. In sports, there are talented athletes. If you don't have the gift, don't try to be an athlete by all means. Look out for your own potential. Some people have the voice to sing, some have the personality to encourage, some; the hands to write, some; craft, some; drawing, some; talking, and so on.

Know also that it's possible to be endowed with two or three or even as many talents as possible. Some people can do several things perfectly, you almost wonder if they are from another planet. The Bible said "*God is able to make all grace **abound** to you...*" (2 Corinthians 9:8). That means you can have abundance of gifts.

'**Benjamin Franklin**' was an author, printer, inventor, scientist and politician. '**Leonardo Da Vinci**' was not only the best artist of his time; he also came up with ideas for the helicopter tank, solar power, calculator and the theory of plate tectonics. '**Paul Robeson**' did not only have a beautiful

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bass-baritone voice, he was also a great athlete, writer, multi-lingual orator, scholar and lawyer. **'Isaac Newton'** was a mathematician, physicist, theologian, astronomer, alchemist and philosopher. **'Albert Schweitzer'** was a musician, peace activist, physician, philosopher and theologian. **'Aristotle's'** writings covered poetry, metaphysics, logic, physics, music, theatre, politics, biology, ethics and zoology. **'Thomas Jefferson'**, former president of the United States was an inventor, architect, politician, writer and wine maker. **'Isaac Asimov'**, having written 500 books and 9000 letters and post cards, said, **"Never think that you're not good enough yourself. People will take you at your own reckoning."**

I can go on and on. The summary of what I'm saying is that you have a talent and there is a possibility that you have multiple talents that are yet to be discovered. But it's absolutely impossible for anyone to exist without a talent because everyone has a purpose and there's a resource deposited in you for the fulfillment of your purpose; and that resource is called 'Talent.'

CHAPTER TWO

YOUR TALENT IS A POINTER TO YOUR ASSIGNMENT

“For I would, that all men were even as myself. But everyman hath his special gift of God; one after this manner and another after that” (1 Corinthians 7:7)

You have an assignment. You are not an accidental creature. You are not on earth because your dad met your mum. You were born because an agenda was created and God ordained you to spearhead the accomplishment of that agenda.

The talent you have is a resource that God has deposited in you to equip you for the agenda. Cherish your talents, nurture them and deploy them. **Lt. Dr Myles Munroe** said in one of his books and I paraphrase; **“the cemetery is the richest place on earth.”** Why? In my opinion, it’s because many people died without discovering, developing and deploying their talents.

Apostle Paul in the text above said everyone has his own gift *“one after this manner and another after that.”* That means we all have different talents. My talent differs from yours; because we have different assignments. There’s no point trying to copy someone else because your reason for existence differs from everyone else.

That's why when students talk, you hear one person say *"I hate Maths"*; and then another one says *"I love it but I hate Biology."* A third person comes in and says *"you've got to be kidding, because Geography is my favourite."* Everyone has a different ability because everyone has a different destiny; simple!

God Works With Varieties

Imagine if everybody on earth were musicians; no doctors, no lawyers, no pastors, no teachers, nothing else; just musicians. There would be chaos. When people have a headache, they would die, because no doctor. If everybody was a sportsman, there would be no spectator. If everybody was a preacher, there would be no members. **God created several gifts because there are several needs.** There are varieties of gifting. Your own talent is an answer to someone else's need!

I Need Yours and You Need Mine

Recently I watched a documentary of how the "Burj al Arab" (world tallest hotel) was built in Dubai. Hundreds of millions of dollars went into the project. But there was a variety of skills on display and a lot of professionals in different areas of construction had to come together to make the project work.

First, an architect was needed to design the iconic structure, and then engineers in land reclamation were called upon to create an artificial island because the edifice was built a few meters into the ocean. When the

building commenced, brick layers were needed, then electricians, then plumbers, interior decorators, painters, carpenters, and so on.

Everyone had a different assignment based on their several abilities. However, they all worked together to make the building stand. Without the brick layer, there would be no structure for the electrician to work on; and without the architect, there would be no idea for the brick layer to implement. It's simple!

We all have different abilities, but we need each other. When a teacher is sick, he or she needs a doctor. When a doctor has a child, he needs the teacher to educate the child. **Talents are given to service other people's needs to the glory of God.**

Copy No One!

Many people fail because they try to copy others. I said earlier that you need not copy anyone because you have a unique assignment. It was tagged on your life before you were born. No one else has it. Therefore you don't have to try to be someone else. It's ok to admire endowments you see in others; but focus on developing yours.

In the mid 2000's, a number of popular Nigerian actors were banned for a year because they were charging outrageous sums of money to do movies. That year, more than half of them decided to go into music -just to show that they weren't moved by the ban. However, majority of them flopped. They were fantastic actors but woeful singers. Some of them sang

so terribly I felt for them. I heard one of them sing and I actually thought she was coughing. They were trying to copy other talents they never had.

CHAPTER THREE

EVERY GOOD GIFT COMES FROM GOD

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

(James 1:17)

“Whatever is good and perfect comes to us from God above who created all heaven’s lights; unlike them, He never changes or casts shifting shadows.”

(James 1:17, NLT)

There are good gifts and there are bad gifts. But every good gift comes from God. In fact, everything God deposited in man was good. However, through satanic influences, some people acquire bad gifts from the devil.

Jesus explains this better in John 8:44. *“Ye are of your father **the devil**, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was **a murderer** from the beginning and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh **a lie**, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar and the father of it”*

Jesus says the devil is father to certain individuals who will replicate his characteristics –a murderer and a liar. Also, the devil is called *the thief* and *the destroyer* in John 10:10.

There are people who are gifted liars; but God couldn’t have gifted anyone to lie. It must have come from the devil. It’s a bad gift. There are people who are talented thieves; they just pick up anything they see. They got that from *their father* –the devil. There are many murderers, destroyers

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adulterers and so on. God never gives such gifts to anyone. They're all from the devil, no doubt.

Those under the influence of Satan are gifted with bad talents, but those under God's influence exhibit good gifts. It's simple! In 1 John 3:9-10, John the Beloved said "*whosoever is born of God does not commit sin...In this, the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God...*"The Apostle clearly states that there are *Children of God* and there are *children of the devil*. Everyone exhibits the gifting of whom he belongs.

With Whom is No Variableness!

God is never partial. He gave gifts to *all men* (Ephesians 4:8); and there is no *variableness* with his gifts (James 1:17). He doesn't give powerful gifting to some and less important ones to others. Your talent is just as important as anyone else's own. God has no respect for persons (2 Chronicles 19:7b). He's given *good gifts* to everyone.

Your success depends on how you are able to utilize yours. Romans 9:12 says "*...the same lord over all is rich unto all...*" Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 12:4: "*Now there are diversities (different types) of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are different administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all*" (Emphasis mine).

Also, "*There is One body and One Spirit, even as ye are called in One hope of your calling: One Lord, One faith, One baptism, One God and One Father of all,*

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*who is above all and through all and in you all. But **unto every one** of us is given grace according to **the measure of the gift** of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:4-7).*

There is a measure of the gift of Christ in everyone; and it is a pointer to each one’s destiny. We’re in the same Body of Christ but we’re given diversities of gifts to function in different areas. These gifts come from God –the Father of lights; *with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning.*

CHAPTER FOUR

YOU ARE EXPECTED TO MAKE PROFIT WITH YOUR TALENT

*“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man **to profit withal**”
(1 Corinthians 12:7)*

Talents are for profit making. They're not mere decorations. In Matthew chapter 25, Jesus told a parable of the master who gave out different amounts of talents to three of his servants prior to his journey. On his return, he rewarded the first two servants who made profits with theirs and punished the third for not making any profit.

Remember that talents are given by God to us so we can accomplish certain God-predetermined tasks or assignments (John 15:2). Failure to maximize our talents means we are not making any profits with what he's given us. You are expected to produce results with what you've been given.

You are gifted to affect both yourself and humanity positively.

A few years back, a Russian billionaire bought two pieces of artwork from an American painter for 200 million dollars. My jaws dropped when the news broke out. I began to wonder whether there was a piece of diamond hiding somewhere in the painting; but there was none. It was just an outstanding artwork that cost so much. The truth is; there are many other talented painters who are not deploying their gifting; hence, there's no profit whatsoever for them.

Recently, a popular soccer player in England said *“what we in this profession earn is crazy compared to what obtains in normal life.”* He was talking about

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