

INTUITION

Week #7 of the 8-Week Series, "The Game"

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So how many people have ever had to make an important decision, but you weren't really sure what to do? Anybody ever have one of those? Or anybody ever have to make an important choice in your life, but you were afraid to make the wrong choice?

I think everybody would agree that all people -- all of us: me and you! -- we all want to make the best decisions. We all want to make the right choices. We always want to take the good and the most positive actions. Because we know when we make wise decision, and make good choices, take good action that our lives will get better. So we're always seeking to make the very best decisions.

How many people ever made a bad decision, a poor choice, or took some wrong actions? [Congregation laughs] You know, sometimes we can feel like this elderly man who was driving on the highway when his cell phone rang, and his wife said to him very urgently, "*Herman! I just heard on the news there's a car going the wrong way on the highway! Please, please be careful!*"

And Herman replied, "*Honey, it's not just one car; it's hundreds of them!*" [Congregation laughs]

So we all want to make the right moves, but sometimes we make the wrong turn. Sometimes we all want to move closer to our happiness and the fulfillment of our goals and dreams, but sometimes we make choices that seem to take us further and further away. Sometimes when it comes to these choices and decisions, we aren't sure what to do. Sometimes we are uncertain, unsure; sometimes we even feel like we're clueless ... looking for answers and directions for many of the daily decisions.

"Should I buy this house or should I buy that house?"

"Should I say 'yes' to this new job opportunity, even though I'm really happy in the current job that I have?"

"Should I invest my money in this thing, or should I just kind of hold back and hold on to my money for now?"

"Should I have a heart-to-heart talk with my spouse about what's bothering me, or should I just work on it and deal with it myself?"

"Is it time for me to start dating, or do I still need to heal and get clear about what it is about what I really want?"

"Should I keep paying for my adult child's rent, or is it time to stop?" [Congregation laughs]

"Am I doing the thing in my life that I'm really meant to do? Am I using my time and talents in the most effective way, or is it time for me to make some changes in my life?"

There are a lot of decisions and choices that we need to make, and sometimes we wonder if we're making the right ones.

But I'll tell you: regardless of moments of confusion and uncertainty we have in our lives, there is always a level of wisdom and guidance and intelligence that is available to us. There is always a way for us to get a level of clarity and understanding of what is the highest and best thing for ourselves and our lives in any and all situations, from relationships to career to finances to health to how we're using our time, how to create more balance in our lives.

And while it is all available to us, we don't always use it. Sometimes we don't always believe in it or even remember that we have access to it.

You know, as human beings, we automatically turn -- if there's any problem or issue we need to figure out -- to our thinking. We analyze; we rationalize; hypothesize; we do all those things. And then the next thing we turn to is seeking knowledge outside of ourselves: asking experts; going to seminars; reading books; asking friends; Googling it. We tend to Google things to find out what a good answer is, or what's the best thing to do. Another one: sometimes we turn to experience.

But there's a higher level of wisdom and guidance and intelligence available to us!

Albert Einstein, considered one of the most intelligent people in history: here's what he said. He said, *"The intellect has little to do on the road to discovery. There comes a leap in consciousness -- call it intuition or what you will -- and the solution comes to you and you don't know how or why."*

And what Einstein, an intelligent man, is saying is that there is something beyond your intelligence. There is something beyond human thinking that will lead us to answers and solutions and the most positive outcome and result.

How many of you have read *Lessons in Truth*, or heard of *Lessons in Truth* by Emilie Cady? Here's one of her quotes that I love. She says, *"Stop trying to work everything out with your mind. That will get you nowhere. Live by intuition and inspiration and let your whole life be revelation."*

In her book she goes on to say it is almost pitiful how desperate man can be when we run around like chickens with our heads cut off, looking for happiness and peace and wisdom and guidance for our lives, when it's already within us."

Tonight we're in Week #7 of Rev. Rogers' series, "The Game of Life and How to Play It." And tonight we're going to look at the power of intuition.

Intuition is more powerful than we realize but, as human beings, we will usually turn to thinking over intuition. Intuition sounds soft; it sounds kind of "woo-woo-ish." [Congregation laughs] It sounds ambiguous, unclear. Thinking is powerful. It seems very much more effective than intuition. But intuition is one of the most powerful, yet underutilized, spiritual resources that we have.

Now it can be called a million things. You can call it intuition; or divine wisdom; or inner guidance; or a gut feeling; a sixth sense; a flash of insight; instinct; inner knowing; spiritual clarity; an "A-Ha!" moment; or listening to the still, small voice of God; following your heart; or trusting your vibes. Whatever you want to call it, there is no question: we are connected to a Higher Power and Intelligence that is available to all of us.

How many people ever had your gut tell you something that did not seem smart or logical, but it ended up turning out to be a smart move? We have that! We are absolutely connected to that in our lives! Because it is the same Intelligence that created us in Its image and likeness. It is that same connection to that Intelligence that created the sun and the moon and the stars and the oceans, and everything in the way that this Universe operates. That Intelligence that did that is the same Intelligence that is in us!

And the question is: How much are you using it?

I want you to think about your own life. How important of a role does intuition play in your day-to-day life, and your day-to-day decisions? Is it 10%; 20%; 50%; 90%? Whatever percentage it is, how many people would say you could use a little more? You could rely a little more on tapping into your intuition?

And so what we're going to do tonight is look at three things that we can do to tap into our intuition in a greater way to use that intelligence and guidance that's available to all of us to lead more fulfilling lives.

And so the first thing is **YOU NEED TO TRUST IT.**

We've all heard, *"The kingdom of God is within you."* Luke 17:21: *"The kingdom of God is within you."* But do you really trust that that's true?

Proverbs 3, Verse 5-6 says, *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not to your own understanding, but in all ways acknowledge Him and He will make your straight your paths."* Do you believe that the wisdom of God is within you? Really? Do you believe it's available for everything in your life, from your finances to your health to your relationships? Do you believe that that is in you, and it's fully accessible to you? Do you trust that? Do you really, really trust it?

You know, one of my favorite Scriptures is in Matthew, where it talks about: Look at the lilies at the field, how beautifully they grow. And the grass, and how lush that is. And the birds of the air: they don't work; they don't spin, but God takes care of them.

But human beings: we tend to worry, and tend to be anxious, which is a pretty good sign that we're not really trusting. The birds are trusting! When is the last time you saw a bird smoking a cigarette, pacing back and forth, worrying? [Congregation laughs] They don't worry! That's why you've never seen it! [Laughs]

See, there is a wisdom in them that absolutely knows that they will be provided for! Without worrying, they know all the food they need: they don't have to store away a lot, because it will be provided. Their daily bread: it'll always be there when they need it.

My first minister in North Carolina, Jack Graff: he defined prosperity as knowing that your needs will be met at the moment of the need. That you don't need everything saved away and socked away and prepared to be provided for. It's just knowing that it's there! That's true prosperity: is to trust and know that all that you need is there, or will be there, when you need it.

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You know, I was looking at the migration patterns of animals; it's amazing how they're born in one place, but they instinctively know -- for breeding or mating -- they need to go to a different place ... sometimes as far as 7,000 miles. Whales travel 7,000 miles! Butterflies travel 3,000 miles. How did they know? How do they know?!? There is no animal orientation class! [Congregation laughs] There is not a "How to be a Whale 101." There is not a, *"Okay; when I slap my tail against the water, that means we're going left; and when I slap it three times ..."* No! And as silly as I'm being, there's wisdom here, because they know it's in them.

And the question: Do you know that it's in you?

An acorn has everything it needs in it already to become an oak tree. The seed of a watermelon has everything in it to grow into watermelons, or any other kind of seed. It's in it! And how much more is it in us? The only difference is human beings can doubt and fear and worry and get disconnected from the connection to that Source. But it's in us!

Hear these fabulous words in the Book of Hebrews. It says, *"I will put my laws in their minds and write it upon their hearts."* That's in Hebrews 8. In Hebrews 10 it says, *"I will put my laws in their hearts and write it on their minds."* So it's saying: it's written and placed in both our hearts and our minds.

The question is: Do you trust it? And are you willing to take time to connect with it and tap into it and access it, and bring it forth?

"I trust that God has a plan and purpose for my life."

Let's say that together: [with congregation] *"I trust that God has a plan and purpose for my life."*

"I trust that God is guiding my life."

Together: [with congregation] *"I trust that God is guiding my life."*

You know, Florence Scovel Shinn says, *"Draw nearer to God, and God will draw near to you."* And what she's saying there is that, while God is always present, we need to initiate it by trusting that God is there. Trusting and knowing that the power of God is available and accessible to us at all times.

So again, if we want to live a life of greater intuition -- tapping into that wisdom -- the first thing is that you've got to trust: trusting that is there and fully available and accessible to you.

The second thing we need to do is to **LEARN HOW TO CLEAR AND QUIET OUR MIND.** How many people ever had your mind was so busy and it was racing? How many people ever overthink anything? [Congregation laughs] Anybody here ever worry about anything? Anybody ever found you couldn't get your mind to stop? Anybody ever meditate, and your mind wanders like crazy?

And so here's the thing: We have a lot of mental noise. Thinking is one of the great, great gifts that we've been given. But I have a class entitled "How to Use the Power of Your Mind." And you know the best way to use the power of your mind? Is learn how to quiet it on a regular basis.

Einstein would quiet his mind on a regular basis. He knew the way you get the most out of it is to quiet it down so that the wisdom can come through. So that the creativity could come through. So the answers could come through.

Why do you think meditation is becoming more and more popular all over? People are understanding that the way to get the most out of your mind is to quiet it. There's so much in there, but we need to quiet it to allow the inspiration and wisdom to come through.

In any form -- and I'll tell you a few forms we could practice quieting our mind. But in any form, when we quiet our mind, guess what? We open it to the Infinite. We open it to the greater levels of knowing and understanding. And we make our minds more receptive for it to come through. Because it's hard to come through a busy mind! It's hard to come through mental noise. It's hard to come through overthinking. But when we quiet it down, that's when we go to deeper levels of intelligence, deeper levels of insight. That's what Einstein was talking about. The intellect can only take you so far! But the deeper spiritual wisdom in us; once we quiet the mind, those deeper levels can come in and through us.

And so we just need to practice quieting our mind in different ways. One of the universal, easy ones is: follow your breath. Everybody, let's just breathe in and follow your breath as it comes in.

Breathe in; feel the air as it comes in. Now breathe out through your nose; feel the air as it comes through. Again, breathe in. Again, breathe out. One more time: breathing in. One more time: breathing out. The simplest thing of following your breath begins to calm your mind, and quiet your mind.

Sometimes that little relaxation one of just breathing in and noticing your shoulders and relaxing your shoulders. Noticing your arms, relaxing your arms. There are so many forms. Because what you do is: You end up focusing your mind on something else. Your breath is the most powerful, but sometimes on your body. Come back to your breath. Or just meditating that God is love or God is peace.

But the most important thing about it -- you've probably heard all that! -- is how consistently you are doing it. That's the most important thing.

Everybody's heard I do some silly things, like every time I microwave something for two minutes, I'm meditating. That's one of my cues to meditate. If I'm watching a TV show, I will pause on the commercial and meditate through the commercial, and then turn it back on. This sounds silly! When I'm in a doctor's office, I will close my eyes and I will meditate while I'm waiting. And you know why I do it? As a reminder that I need to consistently quiet my mind.

You might not think it's very powerful to do it for two minutes while you're heating up some food or watching a show, or anything. But any time with a quiet mind is time well spent. And could you imagine if you did that consistently every day, in those little unique times when you have a little bit of quiet, how much -- over time -- more quiet your mind will be? And you're training it! Because how many people have ever thought you wanted to meditate, but at the end of the day it was like, "*Oh, I was too busy; I forgot to meditate!*" This one guarantees that you won't, because it instills a framework of consistency to continue to remember.

I cannot emphasize enough how the importance of quieting your mind in whatever form you do it and that works for you, how important that is.

Another one is: sometimes just reciting something you know well. Like the Lord's Prayer. Like the Prayer of Protection. One of my favorites -- because it reminds me to quiet my mind -- is the beginning of the 23rd Psalm: "*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul.*" Isn't that a powerful reminder of how important it is to quiet our mind and ourselves?

The last one I'm going to give you is: Anybody ever read Julia Cameron's book, *The Artist's Way*? You ever heard of "morning pages"? Here's what Julia Cameron says. She says, "*By listening to the creator within, we are led to our right paths.*" And one of the things she calls it is "*decluttering.*" Like, you're supposed to write three pages of stuff first thing in the morning. And all it helps you declutter. My brother, Brian, has been writing morning pages every day for 11 years. He impressed the heck out of me! The reason I remember it is because he was flying to come see me 10 years ago -- and he comes twice a year -- and he has not missed a day in 11 years. Even if he writes, "*I have no idea what to write,*" he writes ... [Congregation laughs]

And here's the interesting thing: What it does is declutters your mind, and peace and wisdom and creativity comes. He finishes his stuff, and he's writing poetry. I mean, but he has a little thing for that. But imagine how it would be if you started your day just relaxing and quieting and cleansing and decluttering your mind -- how much clearer your thinking would be? How much more creative and possibility-related your thoughts would be and your mind would be!

It doesn't matter what way you do it; I guarantee you quieting your mind consistently will be one of the greatest ways to tap in to the creative intelligence of the divine within you. And the more we quiet our mind -- the more we clear our mind -- the more we open our mind to the creator inside, and wisdom.

The last one is **YOU'VE GOT TO ASK AND LISTEN.**

In the Book of James, here's what he says. He said, "*If anyone lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.*"

It kind of reminds me of this guy who was circling the block looking for a parking spot. And finally, after his third time, he just said, "*Aw, come on God! God, would you just find me a parking spot? And if you find me a parking spot, I will go to church every Sunday and tithe 10% of my income.*" [Congregation laughs]

Immediately a spot opens up, and the guy says, "*Never mind, God; I found one.*" [Congregation laughs] So anyway ...

Ask God, who gives generously, and God will give! So Florence Scovel Shinn says that we need to trust that. Ask and you will receive! One of your greatest powers to draw forth the wisdom that is in us is to ask. Ask for what you need.

Here's the way she writes. So she was working with some people. Somebody wanted prosperity and a large sum of money in their life. This is the affirmation she wrote in an asking form: "*Infinite Spirit, open*

the way for my immediate supply. Let all that is mind by divine right now reach me in avalanches of abundance." I thought that was one of the most creative things I ever heard! So the woman asks this.

And then the next thing is: ask, and then listen. So she listens, and the guidance she gets is give \$100 to so-and-so. And I think she gets some more guidance, which was give some other money. So she followed the guidance. And like, within a week, a large sum of money comes.

And so what Scovel Shinn is saying is: guide the wisdom by asking and being clear and intentional about what you're asking for. But then being willing to listen. Not worry, just follow what the inner guidance gives you.

Another woman was looking for a job and she wrote, *"Infinite Spirit, open the way for this woman's right and perfect position."* So this woman asks the question, and opened herself to listen. Her guidance was go to a bakery that's over two blocks away. And the woman says, *"I don't need anything or want anything at that bakery!"* But she follows the guidance; she goes to the bakery. She goes in; affirms there's nothing there she wants. She leaves; she bumps into someone who coincidentally needed someone, and she got offered a job. In fact, she got offered three jobs that week.

Ask and listen.

Another one she had was: somebody wanted greater health and vitality in their life. Asked. It was, *"Infinite Spirit, open a way for greater health and vitality for this person."* And then the guidance she got was move out of your apartment into a new place. And she ended up doing that and, for whatever reason, she felt healthier and more vital and more energetic in her new place.

This stuff works! But the question is: Are you willing to work it? I mean, it is a powerful thing.

I remember many years ago when I was kind of really lost, a friend of mine introduced me to this karate instructor who was a very spiritual guy, named Louis. And so Louis would teach me a lot of different things. But one of them he'd always say was, *"Richard, if you learn how to use the power of your subconscious mind, and keep a legal pad by your bed. And every night before you go to sleep, if there's something you want to know, write it down on that legal pad."* And he would say, *"Write your question down and forget about it."* And he said, *"By the next morning, or couple days, the answer will come to you."* And it was absolutely amazing!

This is available to us! What question would you write down on a legal pad next to your bed tonight? What would be a question you would want to find the answer to? What is the wisdom you want to tap into? It's there! We just need to know how to program and consistently follow the principles that bring it forth!

There's a wonderful Cameroonian phrase that says, *"He who asks the question cannot avoid the answer."* So what's the question you want to ask? What are the things that you want to know? What are the things that you want to call forth? What are the things that you want to create?

Oprah Winfrey says, *"Learn to let your instinct -- your gut instinct -- tell you when the food, relationship, the job isn't good for you. And, conversely, when what you're doing is just right."*

I have a friend and we do a little thing called "Check-In." So we do a scale of 1 to 10. We'll close our eyes and meditate. And we'll be saying, *"Okay; is this particular situation good for ..."* whichever one it is. And we'll both check in and say, *"On a scale of 1 to 10, I think it is a 4. Scale of 1 to 10, I think it's a 6."* And what we do with this thing is: we tap into our intuition regularly.

When Oprah says, *"learn how to trust your instinct,"* it means you have to practice. You know, sometimes we're thinking, *"Oh; how will I know the difference?"* You'll know if you practice! Because, over time, you're going to figure out.

I get a gut feeling. Some people feel it in their chest. Some people get an image in their mind. You're going to get it in the way that works for you. But you need to tune into it and keep practicing it on a regular basis, and things will come. Like saying, *"Is this food the best thing for me to eat right now? Check in."* [Scrunches his face in deep thought; congregation laughs]

"Is this investment the right thing for me to do? Put my money in right now? Check in." [Scrunches his face in deep thought] You don't have to make the ridiculous face I'm making, but what I'm saying ... [Congregation laughs]

Practicing in these simple ways. Because if they're saying -- whether it's food or relationship or a decision or your finances or your health -- are you really willing to ask and listen? Are you willing to check in with what your gut is saying? Because it will become mastery if we end up doing it. We will be so in tune and connected that we will not worry about, *"Is this the right decision? Or did I make the wrong choice?"* We'll know we're making the highest and best decision for ourselves and for our lives.

Every one of us will have times we're not sure what to do. Is this the best thing for me? Is that the best thing for me? But I'll tell you, the greatest way to make the best decision to move your life forward is to trust that the wisdom of the Divine is in you and available to you! Clear your mind; quiet your mind in whatever way to open a path. And then ask and listen, and amazing things will truly happen.

We're all playing the game of life! The question is: How much are you willing to use the power of your intuition?

Everybody, let's close our eyes and pray for a moment.

So just take a deep breath, and just know that there is an intelligence and power in you; that same Intelligence and Power that made every cell of your being; behind every breath and every beat of your heart. That Intelligence is in you now, wanting to guide you if you're willing to trust. If you're willing to quiet your mind. If you're willing to ask. And if you're willing to listen. Let that still, small voice speak, and let it guide you to the highest level of joy and fulfillment and happiness, and to fulfill the great work that God has called you here to do. For the gift and power of intuition, we truly give thanks. And so it is. Amen.