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LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

There are questions that throb in the heart of every man and woman - ultimate questions - the questions of life. These settle and decide the issues of life. These are questions like:

- Who am I? (Identity)
- Where do I come from? (Origin)
- What can I do? (Potential)
- Why am I here? (Purpose)
- Where am I going? (Destiny)
- How do I know what I know? (Knowledge)
- What is of ultimate value? (Value)

1. IDENTITY

- Who am I?
 - Sense of self; self-image
- The word *human* comes from the two words, "*humus*," meaning "*dirt*" and "*man*," meaning "*spirit*." Thus as "*humans*" we are "*spirit in dirt*." Our bodies have been made in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26), and our spirits have been created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:27) So we are made and created in God's image and likeness. As such we have God-like characteristics, such as the ability for giving and receiving love, communication, reason, personality, fellowship, moral consciousness, conscience, and relationships.
- Ps 139: 14 says, "*I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.*" The word "*fearfully*" means that when God made you he made you so carefully he was scared He would make a mistake because you are His masterpiece! The word, "*wonderfully*" means that when you were made the angels were amazed, stunned and in awe - in wonder! You are full of wonder! Just as we speak of the wonders of the world, such as Victoria Falls, you are one of the wonders of God!
- Eph 2:10 says, "*For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*" The word "*workmanship*" is the word, "*poiema*" which is where we get the word poem and poetry from. It means poetry, work of art, or masterpiece. Something that has been carefully and intricately designed and constructed. It implies balance, order, symmetry and beauty. So we could say that we are God's masterpiece, work of art, or poetry in motion!
- When God made you He said it is good! You have been made a little lower than God (Elohim). Ps 8:4-5, "*What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; and put everything under his feet.*"
- You are an original of an original - not a copy of a copy! You're irreplaceable!
- You can't get your self-image from money, status, friends, work, good looks, spouse, kids, sport, talents, gifts or anything else - it must come from God alone.
- Our self-image determines our boundaries, parameters, degree of freedom, friends, purpose, destiny and life itself.

2. ORIGIN

- Where do I come from? What are my roots? What is my source?
 - Belonging, security, roots
- Today many people are trying to find their roots and where they come from. Some people think that they come from a primeval slime and are just “lucky mud.” But you are not just a scientific accident, or an evolutionary mutation! You come from God and were created by God. When God wanted fish he spoke to the sea, when God wanted stars he spoke to the heavens, when God wanted animals He spoke to the ground, but when He wanted you He spoke to Himself! He brought you out of Himself!
- Knowing that God Himself is the source of your life gives you a sense of belonging and security. You are a child of God and part of His family. You are rooted in God. You might not know who your ancestors are or physically where your family comes from, but you know that ultimately you come from God!

3. POTENTIAL

- What can I do? What are my abilities? Can I make a difference in the world?
 - Sense of competence, self-esteem
- One of the keys to a healthy self-image is knowing that you are a competent individual who can make a difference in life. Because we are made in the image and likeness of God we have God-like potential. The first thing that God gave Adam after He gave him image, was dominion over the planet. Dominion means authority, command, control, government, jurisdiction, mastery, power, or rule. Mankind was given the management contract for the planet. So we have the ability to rule and reign in life as kings under God (see Rom 5:17 AMP).
- In the Dominion (or Kingdom) Mandate that mankind was given (Gen 1:26-28), we received the blessing of God so that we could be:
 - Fruitful
 - Increase
 - Fill the earth
 - Subdue it
 - Take dominion / rule over the planet

This means that wherever you are in life you can be successful and achieve great things for God. No-one was made to be a failure. God made you for greatness!

- Of course we can do nothing by ourselves. Trying to succeed without God’s help is like a fish trying to swim out of water! We are only competent as God gives us the ability (2 Cor 3:4-5). But with God’s help we can accomplish great things, as the apostle Paul says, “*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*” (Phil 4:13), and as Jesus Himself says, “*Everything is possible for him who believes.*” (Mk 9:23)

4. PURPOSE

- For what purpose was I created? Am I alive for a reason? What is God’s will for my life? How do I know if I am doing God’s will for my life?
 - Meaning / significance
- God is a God of purpose - nothing that He does is by mistake or chance. Before God began creating He already had the end in mind. And nothing or no-one will stop His ultimate purpose from being accomplished (Is 14:24, 26-27; 46:10).
- You have a specific purpose to accomplish within God’s broader purpose. You have a job to do here. You have a mission to fulfill. You have a reason for being created.
- When you realise that you have a destiny to fulfill you will discover meaning in life. You will realise that you are significant and you have a place in life.

5. DESTINY

- Do I have a destiny to fulfill? What must I do before I die?
 - Fulfillment, achievement & accomplishment
- Destiny ~ destination = end-point, terminal point, point of completion, the end of a race or journey, the finish line.
- God has a carefully thought out master-plan to last detail - He is carefully orchestrating things to His preordained plan and purpose (Eph 1:10). All of history is working towards a final destination.
- God exalts and destroys nations and kingdoms
- God sovereignly changes times and seasons
- God knows exactly where and when you will live: *“From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the time set for them and the exact places where they should live.”* (Acts 17:26) - not here by chance, mistake or accident. God even numbers the hair on your head!
- There is a fight you have to fight, there is a race for you to run and a prize for you to win! There is a heavenly vision to fulfill (Acts 26:19) and an upward call of God in Christ to reach for! (Phil 3:14) There is a journey that must be undertaken and a destination that must be reached.
- As you begin to walk in your destiny you will feel fulfilled. A great sense of peace will flood you. You will experience a contentment that no money can buy and no person can give you. You will begin to truly experience life.
- In all God’s planning and organising and ruling of the world and universe, He hasn’t forgotten about people as individuals - in fact individuals are the key to His plan e.g. Abraham, Sarah, Joseph, Moses, David, Ruth, Mary, Jesus etc.

6. KNOWLEDGE

- How can I be sure of what I know? Is there truth? How can I know what I know is the truth? Is there a reliable source of truth?
 - Certainty, assurance, stability
- There are a few ways in which people arrive at certain conclusions about life. One of the main ways is using reason - human intelligence. While this can help, it is not a good way of finding out the ultimate answers. For instance, many of the things that we used to believe were true we have now discovered are not true, such as that the earth is not flat. Or that the sun does not revolve around the earth, but the earth revolves around the sun. At best human intelligence is limited at answering the ultimate issues of life, such as, Who am I? Where do I come from? What can I do? Why am I here? Where am I going? Philosophers have been trying to answer these questions for years and still don’t have the answers. In fact they say that human philosophy is like a blind man looking in a dark room for a black-cat! There is no chance of him finding it!
- And even though we are very inventive, innovative and sophisticated, we still struggle to live at peace with ourselves and others, and to be happy and content. Although mankind is very *clever*, we are not generally very *wise*. In fact our cleverness sometimes works against us e.g. we were very clever to invent nuclear bombs - but not very wise. Our reason is not enough to give us truth and wisdom for life.
- Some people try and base their lives on their feelings and emotions. *“Whatever feels good - do it,”* they say. But in the long-term this does not work. I may not feel like going to work, but that does not mean I should not go. I may not feel like exercising, but it is still good to do it. Drugs may feel good, but in the end they destroy you. Emotions and feelings are very unstable and fickle and give no certainty in life. They

give no stability or assurance. And they certainly do not give us the truth. So where will we find the truth to build our lives on?

- Truth is found in Jesus Christ and the Bible. They are the revelation of God to man. The Bible is the certain word of God to mankind. We can trust that what it says is true. It provides a foundation to build your life on. We can also rely on the Holy Spirit to give us certain knowledge through direct revelation, although this should always be tested against the Bible.
- Our human intellect and our feelings and emotions are not reliable sources of knowledge. Only God is, and He reveals truth to us through the Bible. Knowing this gives us certainty, stability and assurance in life.

7. VALUE

- What is valuable in life? What is important? What should I prioritise?
 - Value, worth, priorities
- Many people live with a very confused value system. They do not know what is important and what to prioritise. So what is of ultimate value in life? The answer is found in the greatest commandment in the Bible. It is to love God with all that we are and to love other people as ourselves (see Mk 12:28-31). This means that God and people are of ultimate value in life.
- God is of the greatest value and the highest priority in life. God must always be more important than anything else. If we believe this we will always obey what God says, rather than what we want to do.
- Secondly we must always give greater value to people than other things. First our families, then our friends and then other people. But all people are more important than money, doctrine, programmes, sport, entertainment, convenience etc. In fact people are so valuable to God that He sent Jesus to die in our place for our sins. Imagine that - we are so special and precious to God that He and Jesus both thought that we were worth dying for! That makes you and me the most valuable beings in the universe!



EXERCISE

1. How do you feel about being on the camp?

2. What fears are in my heart as I begin this weekend?

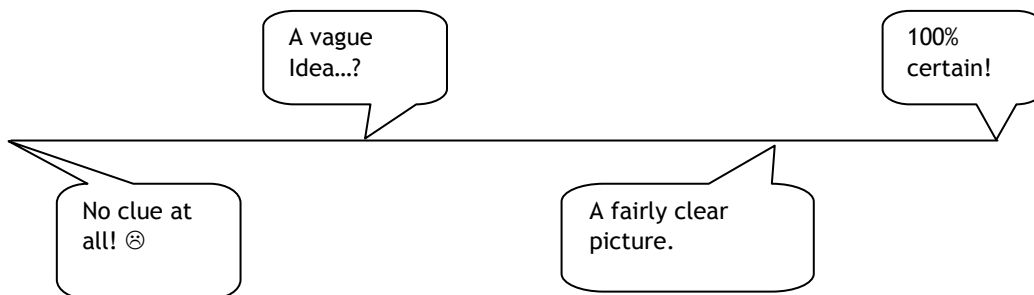
3. What are your faith goals - what are you believing God for?
 - a. Write down at least three things

4. Do you believe that you are fearfully and wonderfully made?

5. Do you believe that you can make a difference in the world?

6. Do you believe that God has a purpose for you?

7. Where are you in relation to knowing your destiny? Place yourself on the scale below:



8. How much do I value God & people? Are my priorities God-centred or me-centred?

DESTINY KEYS

- You have a destiny which was decided before the foundation of the world was laid:

“For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will... in him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.” (Eph 1:4-5, 11)

“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to being.” (Ps 139:13-16)

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” (Jer 1:5)

- You discover your destiny you don’t decide it. God has a master-plan:

“For we are God’s [own] handiwork (His workmanship), recreated in Christ Jesus, [born anew] that we may do those good works which God predestined (planned before hand) for us [taking paths which he prepared ahead of time], that we should walk in them [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us to live].” (Eph 2:10 AMPL)

You don’t choose to do whatever you want to do - you find out what God wired you to do.

- You are responsible for fulfilling your destiny. Ultimately you choose it or reject it:

“This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.” (Deut 30:19)

You must choose between the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

- God has a good destiny planned for you:

“For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.” (Jer 29:11)

“The thief [Satan] comes only to steal and kill and to destroy; I [Jesus] have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (Jn 10:10)

- God wants you to know what His destiny for you is:

“Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.” (Eph 5:17)

Jesus knew what His destiny was (see Lk 4:18, 43; 1 Jn 3:8; Acts 10:38; Jn 10:10). John the Baptist knew his too (see Lk 1:17; 3: 2-6). Paul also knew what his was:

“For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Tim 4:6-7; see Acts 26:16-19).

Paul knew when it was time for him to die because he knew when he had fulfilled God's destiny for his life.

- You must move from God's *general* will to His *specific* will, from His *unknown* will to His *known* will. Your specific destiny will be a part of God's general destiny.
- God's will is His word - God's general purpose and destiny for all people: saved, healed & delivered; dominion, ruling and reigning; prosperous; victorious; long-life; married; children; eternal life, close personal relationship with God > God-kind of life. Once you know what God generally wants for all people it is easier to discern what He specifically wants for you.
- You find your destiny when you find your people. Unlike contemporary society's fixation on self which says "I will find myself as I do what I want when I want, how I want", the Kingdom of God works in families. In the Old Testament the tribes of the nation of Israel would fight for land and inherit it as a tribe. There were no lone rangers fighting one enemy for a small piece of land. There was a corporate inheritance for the tribe, within which individuals would inherit their land. The same applies spiritually to us today. You will find your unique destiny as you find your spiritual family. As well all pull in one direction and fight alongside each other so your individual gifts, talents, and destinies will be released!
- You find your destiny more by serving than by seeking. As you serve another man's vision so God will refine your character, strengthen your spirit, sharpen your gifts, bring clarity and bring you to a place where you will be faithful and trustworthy to carry your own vision.
- Offer your *body* as a living sacrifice and renew your *mind*:

"Therefore I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will." (Rom 12:1-2)

God will begin to unveil your destiny to you as you dedicate your life to Him without reservation, change your thinking to be like His and begin serving Him.

Your destiny is in the mind of the Maker and the Spirit reveals the mind of the Maker. Walk in the Spirit (Gal 5:17) because He reveals the heart and mind of God.

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those that love him' - but God has revealed it by his Spirit." (1 Cor 2:9-10).



EXERCISE

Fill in this table as accurately and honestly as you can. Rate yourself on each point, 10 being the most true, 0 being the furthest from the truth. Add a comment as well on your answer

	Statement	1-10	Comment
1.	I believe I have a destiny.		
2.	I am willing to discover my destiny & give up my rights to decide on what it is.		
3.	I am willing to take responsibility for my destiny, to choose it and not reject it.		
4.	I believe God wants me to know what His destiny is.		
5.	I am walking in God's general will.		
6.	I am willing to offer my body as a living sacrifice & renew my mind.		

DISCOVERING YOUR MINISTRY SHAPE

1. EVERY BELIEVER IS A MINISTER

- You might not be called to the five-fold ministry, but you are called to be a minister. In God's army there are no volunteers - He has drafted all of us into service. Even Jesus Himself came to serve. *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* (Mk 10v45). How much more us?
- Every Christian is:
 - Created for ministry (Eph 2:10)
 - Saved for ministry (2 Tim 1:9)
 - Called into ministry (1 Pet 2:9-10)
 - Gifted for ministry (1 Pet 4:10)
 - Authorised for ministry (Matt 28:18-20)
 - Commanded to minister (Matt 20:26-28)
 - To be prepared for ministry (Eph 4:12)
 - Needed for ministry (1 Cor 12:27)
 - Accountable for ministry (1 Cor 3:12-15)
 - And will be rewarded for ministry (Col 3:23-24)
- Ministry does not necessarily mean 'working for the church' but can refer to any work done to extend the Kingdom of God. There is no work that is more spiritual than another. God places some people to work within a church context, some within a business context, or school context or NGO context etc. What matters is that we each fulfill the part God is calling us to within His Kingdom.

2. EVERY MINISTRY IS IMPORTANT

- There are no insignificant or unimportant people or ministries in the body of Christ. Everyone and every ministry is important.

1 Cor 12:18-23 (TLB)

But that isn't the way God has made us. He has made many parts for our bodies and has put each part just where he wants it. What a strange thing a body would be if it had only one part! So he has made many parts, but still there is only one body. The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." And some of the parts that seem weakest and least important are really the most necessary. Yes, we are especially glad to have some parts that seem rather odd!

3. WE ARE DEPENDENT ON EACH OTHER

- We have a culture that has overemphasized independence and individualism.
- We are all inter-dependent on each other in the body of Christ - none of us alone carries all of God's gifts and ministries! We need each other. That means relationship, cooperation and synergy are vital.
- Church life is like a big jigsaw - we each have a piece of the whole and when we all come together and share our lives, the whole picture is seen.

4. MINISTRY IS THE EXPRESSION OF MY SHAPE

- What God made you to *be* determines what He intends for you to *do*. Your ministry is determined by your makeup.
- Every one of us has a unique shape, and if the role you play in life does not match your shape you will feel like a square peg in a round hole. Your function flows from the way God formed you.
- SHAPE stands for:
 - Spiritual gifts
 - Heart
 - Abilities
 - Personality
 - Experiences

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Heart
Abilities
Personality
Experiences

God gives every believer spiritual gifts to be used in ministry. You can't earn your spiritual gifts or deserve them - that's why they are called gifts! They are an expression of God's grace to you. *"Christ has generously divided out his gifts to us"* (Eph 4:7 CEV). Neither do you get to choose which gifts you'd like to have; God determines that. Paul explained, *"It is the one and only Holy Spirit who distributes these gifts. He alone decides which gifts each person should have."* (1 Cor 12:11 NLT).

Because God loves variety and he wants us to be special, no single gift is given to everyone. Also, no individual receives *all* the gifts. If you had them all, you'd have no need of anyone else, and that would defeat one of God's purposes - to teach us to love and depend on each other.

Your spiritual gifts were not given for your own benefit but for the benefit of *others*, just as other people were given gifts for your benefit. The Bible says, *"A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church."* (1 Cor 12:7 NLT) God planned it this way so we would need each other. When we use our gifts together, we all benefit. If others don't use their gifts, you get cheated, and if you don't use your gifts, they get cheated. That is why we're commanded to discover and develop our spiritual gifts. Have you taken the time to discover your spiritual gifts? An unopened gift is useless.

Whenever we forget these basic truths about gifts, it always causes trouble in the church. Two common problems are *"gift-envy"* and *"gift-projection"*. The first occurs when we compare our gifts with others, feel dissatisfied with what God gave us, and become resentful or jealous of how God uses others. The second problem occurs when we expect everyone else to have our gifts, do what we are called to do, and feel as passionately about it as we do. The Bible says, *"There are different kinds of service in the church, but it is the same Lord we are serving."* (1 Cor 12:5 NLT)

SPIRITUAL/MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS

Motivational Gifts are given by God-the-Father to each individual Christian as His unique workmanship. These are the basic motivations or inherent tendencies at work in all our lives.

Rom 12:3-8

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Prophecy	Discern motives and attitudes. Declare truth.
Serving	Fulfillment in deeds of service.
Teaching	Emphasis on teaching facts and truth.

Encouraging (Exhorting)	Encouragement to personal progress.
Giving (Contributing)	Financial support for the gospel.
Leading (Ruling)	Provide leadership, focus and direction.
Mercy	Empathy and compassion for those in need.

Romans 12 is the core scripture concerning motivational gifts, however other gifts are mentioned in scripture that we will list here with motivational gifts as they refer to the natural inclinations within a person.

1 Cor 12:28

*And in the Church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with **gifts of administration**, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.*

Administration	Effectively organize people, tasks or events.
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Exodus 31:3

..and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts...

Craftsmanship	To craft, design, build and create.
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Mark 4:3

He taught them many things by parables...

Creative Communication	Communicate God's truth through a variety of art forms.
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1 Pet 4v9-10

Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

Hospitality	Care for people by providing friendship, food, and shelter.
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Col 4:12-13

Epaphras...is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.

Intercession	Consistently pray on behalf of and for others, seeing specific results.
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Psalm 78:72

And David shepherded them with integrity of heart, with skillful hands he led them.

Shepherding	Nurture, care for, and guide people toward ongoing spiritual maturity.
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EQUIPPING MINISTRY GIFTS (OR ASCENSION GIFTS)

The Equipping Ministry Gifts are the gifts of God-the-Son which He gave to the church in His resurrection. These gifts are people - the five-fold ministries. Christ gave these gifts that they may equip each member of His body for practical service and ministry. These leaders are also essential in assuring that all the gifts and ministries are correctly applied in the body of the Church.

Eph 4:11-13

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Apostle	Government and fathering of new works.
Prophet	Forthtelling and foretelling the things of God.
Evangelist	Reaching the lost with the good news.
Pastor	Caring for the needs of God's flock.
Teacher	Expanding, revealing and teaching God's word.

GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

Gifts of the Holy Spirit are God-the-Holy-Spirit's gifts which He distributes to believers as He wills for the work of ministering to people in need.

1 Cor 12:8-11

To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

REVELATION GIFTS	A word of wisdom	Supernatural revelation concerning the divine purposes in the mind and will of God
	A word of knowledge	Supernatural revelation of certain facts in the mind of God
	Discerning of spirit	Discernment and insight into the spiritual realm
POWER GIFTS	Faith	God's faith to receive the miraculous
	Working of miracles	The power of God to work miracles
	Gifts of healings	To heal the sick and destroy the works of the devil in our bodies
VOCAL or INSPIRATIONAL GIFTS	Prophecy	Forthtelling the purposes of God to edify, exhort and comfort
	Diverse kinds of tongues	Forthtelling the word of God in an unknown language
	Interpretation of tongues	Interpreting the meaning of a tongue



EXERCISE

Directions:

- a. Respond to each statement according to the following scale.
 - 3 = Consistently, definitely true
 - 2 = Most of the time, usually true
 - 1 = Some of the time, once in a while
 - 0 = Not at all, never
- b. Write your response to the statement in the table, in the appropriately numbered block.
- c. **Answer according to who you are, not who you would like to be or think you ought to be!** How true are these statements of you? What has been your experience? To what degree do these statements reflect your usual tendencies?
- d. Your highest scores are your primary spiritual gifts.

								TOTAL
A	1	14	27	40	53	66	79	
B	2	15	28	41	54	67	80	
C	3	16	29	42	55	68	81	
D	4	17	30	43	56	69	82	
E	5	18	31	44	57	70	83	
F	6	19	32	45	58	71	84	
G	7	20	33	46	59	72	85	
H	8	21	34	47	60	73	86	
I	9	22	35	48	61	74	87	
J	10	23	36	49	62	75	88	
K	11	24	37	50	63	76	89	
L	12	25	38	51	64	77	90	
M	13	26	39	52	65	78	91	

1. People often say I have good spiritual discernment.
2. I find great fulfillment in studying the Bible to answer issues and questions.
3. I find that people often approach me for help or advice on their emotional or personal problems.
4. I enjoy motivating others to various tasks and works of service.
5. I enjoy doing things that must be done, no matter how small or trivial the task.
6. I would rather give money to help than perform some menial task.
7. I enjoy visiting or helping those who are sick, disabled or in hospital.
8. I like to organize people, tasks, and events.
9. I enjoy working creatively with wood, cloth, paints, metal, glass, or other materials.
10. I enjoy challenging people's perspectives of God by using various forms of art.
11. I view my home as a place to minister to people in need.
12. I take prayer requests from others and consistently pray for them.
13. I enjoy spending time nurturing and caring for others.
14. I often sense the direction in which the Body of Christ should go.
15. People have often remarked that I have an ability to explain difficult Bible questions, giving them biblical reasons for what I believe.

16. I find great joy in encouraging people with problems because afterwards they invariably find peace and an ability to trust the Lord.
17. I find that I enjoy setting goals, objectives and budgets for projects for myself and others to complete.
18. I normally feel little inconvenience when asked to do a particular task that is practical in nature (i.e. I enjoy doing a task that is practical).
19. When I hear of someone in need, I immediately think of sending money.
20. I find it easy to be compassionate, and desire to bring some comfort or joy to those who are suffering.
21. I am careful, thorough, and skilled at managing details.
22. I am skilled in working with different kinds of tools.
23. I enjoy developing and using my artistic skills (art, drama, music, photography etc)
24. I enjoy meeting new people and helping them feel welcomed.
25. I enjoy praying for long periods of time and receive leadings as to what God wants me to pray for.
26. I have compassion for wandering believers and want to protect them.
27. I will always speak up for truth and principle, even when it means not being popular.
28. People seem to appreciate the way I explain things from the Bible.
29. I prefer to hear others share their personal problems rather than being able to share my own.
30. I find that I prefer to show someone how to do a task than do it myself.
31. I usually like to be actively involved in practical tasks which need to be done, rather than simply planning or discussing them.
32. I find myself looking for opportunities to give money without needing to hear appeals.
33. I find it easy to speak to those who have pain or are suffering. I think of ways to try and help them.
34. I can clarify goals and develop strategies or plans to accomplish them.
35. I enjoy making things for use in ministry.
36. I help people understand themselves, their relationships, and God better through artistic expression.
37. I genuinely believe the Lord directs strangers to me who need to get connected to others.
38. I am conscious of ministering to others as I pray.
39. I like to provide guidance for the whole person - relationally, emotionally, spiritually etc.
40. I am often able to distinguish between right and wrong in complex spiritual matters that others may not be able to see.
41. I usually like spending time on a biblical thought, analyzing and organizing it in a systematic way.
42. When in a group, I tend to recognize and approach those who are sitting or standing alone.
43. I often find myself taking the initiative in organizing a group of people to achieve a goal by planning and organizing what must be done.
44. I get satisfaction out of practical service without wanting a "job description".
45. I see the giving of money as a tremendously spiritual ministry and one that God has given to me.
46. Hospital, prison and home visitation to those who are suffering physically is a ministry I would enjoy.
47. I can identify and effectively use the resources needed to accomplish tasks.
48. I can visualize how something should be constructed before I build it.
49. I like finding new and fresh ways of communicating God's truth.
50. I like to create a place where people do not feel that they are alone.
51. I pray with confidence because I know that God works in response to prayer.
52. I can faithfully provide long-term support and concern for others.
53. I feel a need to speak messages from the Bible or God so that people will know what God expects of them.
54. I enjoy researching and then sharing or teaching a particular subject.

55. I enjoy being with people who are discouraged, because I am often able to encourage them.
56. I am very organized and self-disciplined personally in my habits, and in making goals and plans. I almost always see these tasks through to completion.
57. I have an ability to notice practical things that must be done, and like to get the job done myself.
58. I usually feel excited about someone asking me to help financially in a worthwhile project.
59. Visiting and helping people who suffer physically or circumstantially brings me joy rather than depresses me.
60. I like to help organizations or groups become more efficient.
61. I honour God with my handcrafted gifts.
62. I apply various artistic expressions to communicate God's truth.
63. I enjoy entertaining people and opening my home to others.
64. When I hear about needy situations, I feel burdened to pray.
65. I enjoy giving guidance and practical support to a small group of people.
66. When situations are not right, I feel a need to speak out in order to correct them.
67. I enjoy studying difficult questions about God's Word, and I am able to find answers more easily and more quickly than others.
68. I enjoy meeting new people and introducing them to others in the group.
69. I find it easy to delegate significant responsibilities to other people.
70. I am very dependable in getting things done, and don't need much praise, thanks and motivation to do so.
71. I enjoy giving money to those in financial need.
72. I am eager to spend time, money and resources in order to help those who are suffering physically.
73. I enjoy learning about how organizations function.
74. I am good at and enjoy working with my hands.
75. I am creative and imaginative.
76. I do whatever I can to make people feel that they belong.
77. I am honoured when someone asks me to pray for them.
78. I can gently restore wandering believers to faith and fellowship.
79. I enjoy and find fulfillment in presenting God's truth in an inspired and enthusiastic way.
80. When a question arises from a difficult Bible passage, I am motivated to research the answer.
81. I find people will tell me personal things they will not tell others, and often say I am easy to speak to.
82. I am comfortable making important decisions, even under pressure.
83. I get a sense of fulfillment in physical labour, or in working with my hands to help others.
84. I enjoy giving money to the church well above my tithe.
85. I feel for those who are hurting and lonely and I like to spend time with them and cheer them up.
86. I can visualize a coming event, anticipate potential problems, and develop backup plans.
87. I am able to design and construct things that help an organisation.
88. I regularly need to get alone to reflect and develop my imagination.
89. I can make people feel at ease even in unfamiliar surroundings.
90. I often see specific results in direct response to my prayers.
91. I enjoy patiently but firmly nurturing others in their development as believers.

A	_____
B	_____
C	_____
D	_____
E	_____
F	_____
G	_____
H	_____
I	_____
J	_____
K	_____
L	_____
M	_____

From your highest scores, your three primary gifts are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Turn to your SHAPE PROFILE at the end of your manual and fill in your three highest gifts in the Spiritual Gifts section.

HEART

S piritual Gifts
H EART
A bilities
P ersonaity
E xperiences

“The heart is the symbol we employ to capture the deepest essence of personhood. It symbolizes what lies at the core of our being; it defines irreducibly who we really are. We can know and be known only through revealing the revelation of what is in our heart.” Brennan Manning

- Proverbs 4:23 Keep vigilant watch over your heart; that's where life starts. (MSG)
- Proverbs 16:23 A wise man's heart guides his mouth, and his lips promote instruction
- Proverbs 20:5 The purposes of a man's heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.
- Eph 6:6 Not with eye service, as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart...

The Bible uses the term *heart* to describe the bundle of desires, hopes, interests, ambitions, dreams and affections you have. Your heart represents the source of all your motivations - what you love to do and what you care about most. Even today we still use the word in this way when we say, “*I love you with all my heart.*” The bible says, “*As a face is reflected in water, so the heart reflects the person*” (Proverbs 27:19). Your heart reveals the *real* you - what you truly are, not what others *think* you are or what circumstances force you to be. Your heart determines why you *say* the things you do, why you *feel* the way you do, and why you *act* the way you do. Physically, each of us has a unique heartbeat. Just as we each have unique thumbprints, eye prints, and voiceprints, our hearts beat in slightly different patterns. It's amazing that out of all the billions of people who have ever lived, no one has had a heartbeat exactly like yours.

In the same way, God has given each of us a unique *emotional* ‘heartbeat’ that races when we think about the subjects, activities, or circumstances that interest us. We instinctively care about some things and not about others. These are clues to where you should be serving.

Another word for heart is *passion*. There are certain subjects you feel passionate about and others you couldn't care less about. Some experiences turn you on and capture your attention while others turn you off or bore you to tears. These reveal the nature of your heart.

When you were growing up, you may have discovered that you were intensely interested in some subjects that no one else in your family cared about. Where did those interests come from? They came from God. God had a purpose in giving you these inborn interests. Your emotional heartbeat is the second key to understanding your shape for service. Don't ignore your interests. Consider how they might be used for God's glory. There is a reason that you love to do these things.

Repeatedly the Bible says to “*serve the Lord with all your heart.*” (Deuteronomy 10:10, 1 Samuel 12:20, Romans 12:9, Ephesians 6:6) God wants you to serve him passionately, not dutifully. People rarely excel at tasks they don't enjoy doing or feel passionate about. God wants you to use your natural interests to serve him and others. Listening for inner promptings can point to the ministry God intends for you to have.

How do you know when you are serving God from your heart? The first telltale sign is *enthusiasm*. When you are doing what you *love* to do, no one has to motivate you or challenge you or check up on you. You do it for the sheer enjoyment. You don't need

rewards or applause or payment, because you love serving in this way. The opposite is also true: When you don't have a heart for what you're doing, you are easily discouraged.

The second characteristic of serving God from your heart is *effectiveness*. Whenever you do what God wired you to *love* to do, you get good at it. Passion drives perfection. If you don't care about a task, it is unlikely that you will excel at it. In contrast, the highest achievers in any field are those who do it because of passion, not duty or profit.

We have all heard people say, "I took a job I hate in order to make a lot of money, so someday I can quite and do what I love to do." That's a big mistake. Don't waste your life in a job that doesn't express your heart. Remember, the greatest things in life are not *things*. Meaning is far more important than money. The richest man in the world once said, "A simple life in the fear of God is better than a rich life with a ton of headaches." (Proverbs 15:16 MSG)

Don't settle for just achieving 'the good life,' because the good life is not good enough. Ultimately it doesn't satisfy. You can have a lot to live *on* and still have nothing to live *for*. Aim instead for the "*better life*" - serving God in a way that expresses your heart. Figure out what you love to do - what God gave you a heart to do - and then do it for his glory.

God works through different men in different ways, but it is the same God who achieves his purposes through them all. 1 Corinthians 12:6 (ph)



EXERCISE

1. If I could snap my fingers and know I couldn't fail, what would I do?

2. At the end of my life, I'd love to be able to look back and know that I've done something about:

3. The deepest desire of my heart is...

4. Things that frustrate me intensely, and make me want to improve on them are...

5. What subjects keep me chatting till late at night?

6. What could I give myself 100% to for my whole life, without being paid for it?

7. The thoughts, dreams, visions and desires that are impossible for me to ignore are...

8. If I won the lotto, I would ...

9. If my name was mentioned to a group of my friends, they would say I am passionate about...

10. What flows naturally out of me is...

11. What mature Christians see in me is...

12. People want to gather around and help me accomplish...



EXERCISE

You are now going to draw a picture that will express the God-given desires in your heart. Remove all limitations and dare to dream! Use the following page to complete it.

A Picture of My Life



EXERCISE

Based on my picture and answers to this section's question, I sense I have a passion for:

Now fill in your passion on your SHAPE PROFILE at the end of your manual.

ABILITIES

Spiritual Gifts
Heart
ABILITIES
Personality
Experiences

APPLYING YOUR ABILITIES

Your abilities are the natural talents you were born with. Some people have a natural ability with words: They came out of the womb talking? Other people have natural athletic abilities, excelling in physical coordination. Still others are good at mathematics or music or mechanics.

When God wanted to create the Tabernacle and all the utensils for worship, he provided artists and craftsmen who were shaped with the 'skill, ability, and knowledge in all kinds of crafts to make artistic designs... and to engage in all kinds of craftsmanship.' Exodus 31:3-5 Today God still bestows these abilities and thousands of others, so people can serve him.

All of our abilities come from God. Even abilities used to sin are god-given; they are just being misused or abused. The Bible says, "God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well." (Romans 12:6a NLT). Since your natural abilities are from God, they are just as important and as 'spiritual' as your spiritual gifts. The only difference is that you were given them at birth.

One of the most common excuses people give for not serving is "I just don't have any abilities to offer." This is ludicrous. You have dozens, probably hundreds, of untapped, unrecognized, and unused abilities that are lying dormant inside you. Many studies have revealed that the average person possesses from 500 - 700 different skills and abilities - far more than you realise.

For instance, your brain can store 100 trillion facts. Your mind can handle 15,000 decisions a second, as is the case when your digestive system is working. Your nose can smell up to 10,000 different odours. Your touch can detect an item 1/25,000th of an inch thick, and your tongue can taste one part of quinine in 2 million parts of water. You are a bundle of incredible abilities, an amazing creation of God. Part of the church's responsibility is to identify and release your abilities for serving God.

Every ability can be used for God's glory. Paul said, "Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31 NLT). The Bible is filled with examples of different abilities that God uses for his glory. Here are just a few of those mentioned in Scripture: artistic ability, architectural ability, administering, baking, boat making, candy making, debating, designing, embalming, embroidering, engraving, farming, fishing, gardening, leading, managing, masonry, making music, making weapons, needle work, painting, planting, philosophizing, inventing, carpentry, sailing, selling, being a soldier, tailoring, teaching, writing literature and poetry.

The Bible says, "*There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability to all for their particular service.*" (1 Corinthians 12:6) God has a place in his church where your specialties can shine and you can make a difference. It's up to you to find that place.

God gives some people the ability to make a lot of money. God told the Israelites, "Remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth." Deut 8:18. People with this ability are good at building a business, making deals or sales, and reaping a profit. If you have this business ability, you should be using it for God's glory. How? First realise your ability came from God and give him the credit. Second, use your business to serve a need of others and to share your faith with unbelievers. Third, return at

PERSONALITY

Spiritual Gifts
Heart
Abilities
PERSONALITY
Experiences

We don't realize how truly unique each of us is. DNA molecules can unite in an infinite number of ways. The number is 10 to the 2,400,000,000th power. That number is the likelihood that you'd ever find somebody just like you. If you were to write out that number with each zero being one inch wide, you'd need a strip of paper 37,000 miles long! To put this into perspective, some scientists have guessed that all the particles in the universe are probably less than 10 with 76 zeros behind it, far less than the possibilities of your DNA. Your uniqueness is a scientific fact of life. When God made you, he broke the mold. There has never been, and never will be, anybody exactly like you.

It is obvious that God loves variety - just look around! He created each of us with a unique combination of personality traits. God made *introverts* and *extroverts*. He made people who love *routine* and people who love *variety*. He made some people '*thinkers*' and others '*feelers*.' Some people work best when given an individual assignment while others work better with a team. The Bible says, "*God works through different people in different ways, but it is the same God who achieves his purpose through them all*" (1 Corinthians 12:6)

The Bible gives us plenty of proof that God uses all types of personalities. Peter was a *sanguine*. Paul was a *choleric*. Jeremiah was a *melancholy*. When you look at the personality differences in the twelve disciples, it's easy to see why they sometimes had interpersonal conflict.

There is no 'right' or 'wrong' temperament for ministry. We need all kinds of personalities to balance the church and give it flavour. The world would be a very boring place if we were all plain vanilla. Fortunately, people come in more than thirty-one flavours.

Your personality will affect *how* and *where* you use your spiritual gifts and abilities. For instance, two people may have the same gift of evangelism, but if one is introverted and the other is extroverted, that gift will be expressed in different ways.

Woodworkers know that it's easier to work with the grain rather than against it. In the same way, when you are forced to minister in a manner that is 'out of character' for your temperament, it creates tension and discomfort, requires extra effort and energy, and produces less than the best results. This is why mimicking someone else's ministry never works. You don't have their personality. Besides, God made you to be you! You can *learn* from the examples of others, but you must filter what you learn through your own *shape*. Today there are many books and tools that can help you understand your personality so you can determine how to use it for God.

Like stained glass, our different personalities reflect God's light in many colours and patterns. This blesses the family of God with depth and variety. It also blesses us personally. It *feels good* to do what God made you to do. When you minister in a manner consistent with the personality God gave you, you experience fulfillment, satisfaction, and fruitfulness.



EXERCISE

Definition: **Your personal style is the preferred way by which you naturally go about your daily tasks (the way you work).**

Again “Style” is very different from “Passion/Heart” and “Gifts/Abilities”. “Style” determines whether you are energised (or enthusiastic) through service because you were able to complete the task or because you interacted with people. More simply put, are you:

- Task Orientated or
- People Orientated

“Style” also determines the way you organise yourself in accomplishing a task. Are you:

- Structured or
- Unstructured

Understanding your “Style” can take the frustration out of activities, giving you and others peace of mind.

“Style” is God-given. There is no right or wrong “Style”. “Style” answers the “HOW” question.

HOW YOU ARE ENERGIZED

Task orientated \longleftrightarrow People Orientated

This scale describes how we *receive* and *focus* our emotional energy.

If you are task orientated:

The primary content of your ministry should be accomplishing tasks that serve people. Your primary focus should be on task accomplishment.

If you are people orientated:

The primary content of your ministry should be more involved with direct people interaction. Your primary focus should be on relational issues.

Both “People oriented” and “task oriented” people value developing relationships and meeting goals but each has a primary and secondary means of achieving them.

HOW ARE YOU ORGANISED?

Unstructured \longleftrightarrow Structured

This scale describes how you prefer to organise yourself.

If you are Unstructured:

Your ministry position should be generally described.
Your relationships with others should be spontaneous.

If you are Structured:

Your ministry position should be clearly defined.
Your relationships with others should be consistent.

Both “unstructured” and “structured” people value being organised, but each has a different approach to organisation.

DISCOVER YOUR STYLE

1. For each item, circle the number you think best describes what you would prefer to do or be in most situations.
2. Do not answer according to what you feel is expected by a spouse, family member, employer etc.
3. Select the behaviour or perspective that would come naturally to you if you knew there were no restrictions or consequences for your personal expression.

How are you Organised?

1. While on Holidays I prefer to	Be spontaneous	1 2 3 4 5	Follow as set plan
2. I prefer to set guidelines that are	General	1 2 3 4 5	Specific
3. I prefer to	Leave my options open	1 2 3 4 5	Settle things now
4. I prefer projects that have	Variety	1 2 3 4 5	Routine
5. I like to	Play it by ear	1 2 3 4 5	Stick to a plan
6. I find routine	Boring	1 2 3 4 5	Restful
7. I accomplish tasks best	By working it out as I go	1 2 3 4 5	By following a plan

How are you organised? Scale 0 = Total

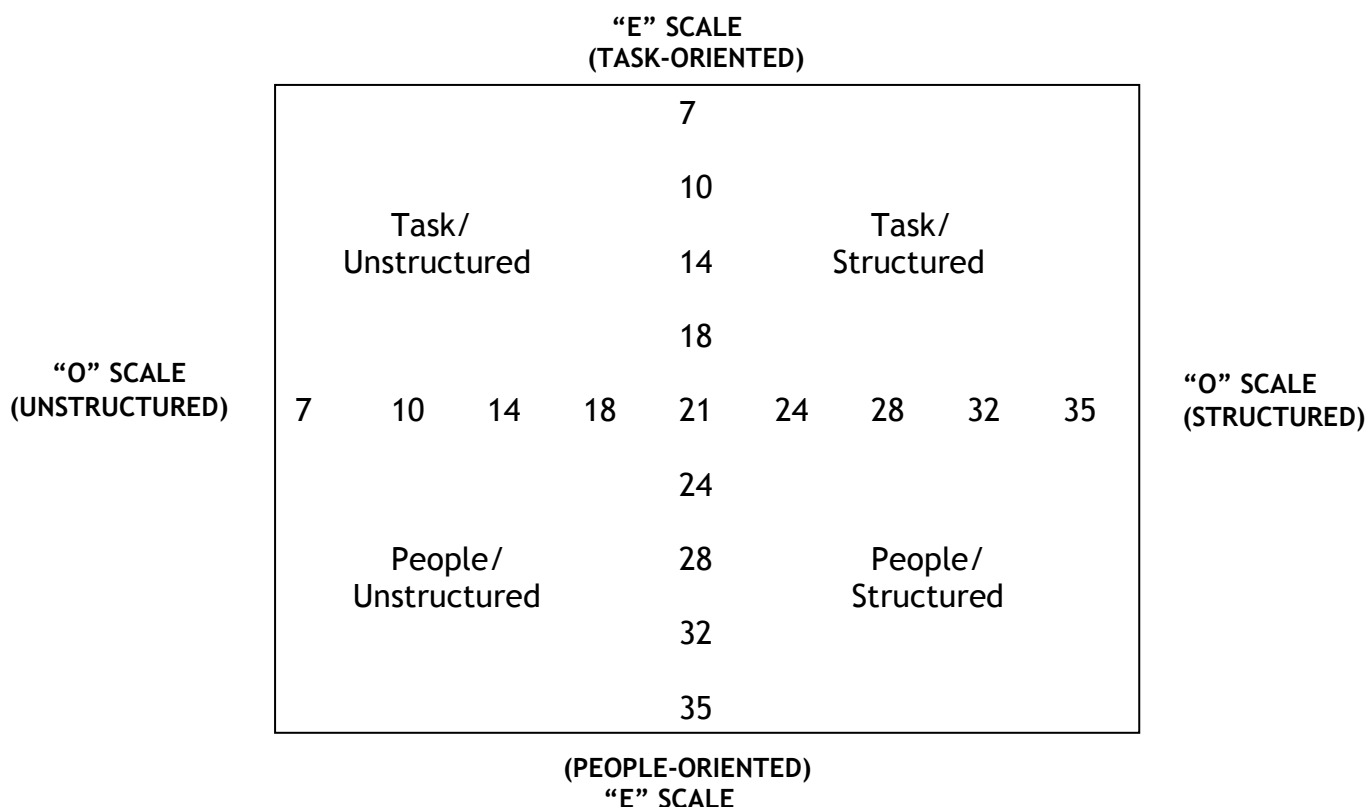
How are you energised?

1. I'm more comfortable	Doing things for people	1 2 3 4 5	Being with people
2. When doing a task I tend to	Focus on the goal	1 2 3 4 5	Focus on relationships
3. I get more excited about	Advancing the cause	1 2 3 4 5	Creating community
4. I feel I have accomplished something when I've	Completed a job	1 2 3 4 5	Built a relationship
5. It is more important to start a meeting	On time	1 2 3 4 5	When everyone gets there
6. I'm more concerned with	Meeting a deadline	1 2 3 4 5	Maintaining the team
7. I place higher value on	Action	1 2 3 4 5	Communication.

How are you energised? Scale 0 = Total

TABULATE YOUR PROFILE

1. On the grid, put an X on the "O" scale that corresponds to your "O" total.
2. On the grid, put an X on the "E" scale that corresponds to your "E" total.
3. Draw a vertical line through the X marked on the "O" scale.
4. Draw a horizontal line through the X marked on the "E" scale.
5. Your personal style is indicated where the lines meet.



THE FOUR PERSONAL STYLE QUADRANTS

Within the four styles there will be varying degrees of intensity of the qualities in people!

Consider the kind of ministry position that needs you to fulfill a wide variety of responsibilities!

Task/Structured

- Getting the job done
- Prefers to follow an agenda
- Focused on results
- Appreciates clear direction

Task/Unstructured
General guidelines
Helps wherever needed
Versatile
Likes tangible results

Consider the kind of ministry position that allows you to know clearly what the goals are and how the task is to be accomplished.

People/Unstructured

- Spontaneous situations
- Relates well to others
- Very conversational
- Tends to be flexible

Consider the kind of ministry position that gives you the freedom to respond to people spontaneously.

People/Structured

- Defined relationships
- Projects warmth
- Familiar surroundings
- Enjoys familiar relationships

Consider the kind of ministry position that will enable you to interact with people in more stable or defined settings.

Personal style does explain our behaviour, but it doesn't excuse it.



EXERCISE

God's Gifted People: Discovering Your Personality as a Gift

Gary L. Harbaugh

Psalm 139:13 You created my innermost being, you knit me together in my mother's womb.

Jeremiah 1:5 Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MTBI) has become one of the most commonly used psychological instruments in the United States. It indicates the direction of an individual preference for either Extraversion or Introversion, Sensing or Intuition, either Thinking or Feeling, and either Judgment or Perception.

Don't think of this exercise as a 'test.' There are not 'right' or 'wrong' patterns, and no 'bad' patterns. Since all these personality types come from God, each one is good, useful, and even necessary in order that God's purposes be fulfilled.

As you answer the questions, don't think about the way you have to act to please others at work, school, or elsewhere, and don't answer according to the way you sometimes *wish* you were or the way someone else would *like* you to be. Answer the questions according to what is true for you *when you are relaxed and there is no pressure to be anybody but yourself*. Think back over your life and the ways you have really preferred to be all along when you have had the chance to be 'just you.' You will be asked to decide which of two statements describes you better. Since both choices reflect different gifts from God, the question is, in which way has God gifted *you*?



EXERCISE

- a. In the tables below, decide for each pair of statements which is a more accurate description of yourself. Then write the corresponding letter of that column into the last column on the left.
- b. Once you have completed the five statements in a table, write down the letter of the pattern that describes you better overall! (e.g. in the first table if you wrote "E" for three statements, and "I" for two, you are "E" overall.
- c. After all four tables have been completed, circle the four letters that describe your personality.

WHICH PATTERN DESCRIBES YOU BETTER, E OR I?

E	I	
Likes action and variety	Likes quiet and time to consider things	
Likes to do mental work by talking to	Likes to do mental work privately	

people	before talking	
Acts quickly, sometimes without much reflection	May be slow to try something without understanding it	
Likes to see how other people do a job, and to see results	Likes to understand the idea of a job and to work alone or with just a few people	
Wants to know what other people expect of him/her	Wants to set his or her own standards	

Pattern: _____

E stands for Extraversion, which means outward turning
I stands for Introversion, which means inward turning.

An E's interest turns mostly outward to the world of action, people and things. An I's interest turns more often to the inner world of ideas and private things. Everyone turns outward to act and inward to reflect. You must do both, but you are more comfortable doing one or the other, just as right-handers are more comfortable with the right hand.

WHICH PATTERN DESCRIBES YOU BETTER, S OR N?

S	N	
Pays most attention to experience as it is	Pays most attention to the meanings of facts and how they fit together	
Likes to use eyes and ears and other senses to find out what's happening	Likes to use imagination to come up with new ways to do things, new possibilities	
Dislikes new problems unless there are standard ways to solve them	Likes solving new problems, and dislikes doing the same thing	
Enjoys using skills already learned more than learning new ones	Likes using new skills more than practicing old ones	
Is patient with details but impatient when the details get complicated	Is impatient with details but doesn't mind complicated situations	

Pattern: _____

S stands for Sensing.
N stands for Intuition.

An S pays most attention to the facts that comes from personal experience. An S can more easily see the details, while an N can more easily see the 'big picture.' An N pays most attention to meanings behind the facts. S and N are two kinds of perception, that is two ways of finding out or giving attention to experiences. Everyone uses both their Sensing and Intuition to find out things. You use both, but you rely on one more than the other.

WHICH PATTERN DESCRIBES YOU BETTER, T OR F?

T	F	
Likes to decide things logically	Likes to decide things with personal feelings and human values, even if they are not logical	
Wants to be treated with justice and fair play	Likes praise, and likes to please people, even in unimportant things	
May neglect and hurt other people's feelings without knowing it	Is aware of other people's feelings	
Gives more attention to ideas or things than human relationships	Can predict how others will feel	

Doesn't need harmony	Gets upset by arguments and conflicts, values harmony	
----------------------	---	--

Pattern: _____

T stands for Thinking judgment.
F stands for Feeling judgment.

A T makes decisions by examining data, staying objective and cool. An F makes decisions by paying attention to personal values. You make T and F judgments every day, but you trust one kind of judgment more than the other.

WHICH PATTERN DESCRIBES YOU BETTER, J OR P?

J	P	
Likes to have a plan, to have things settled and decided ahead	Likes to stay flexible and avoid fixed plans	
Tries to make things come out the way they 'ought to be'	Deals easily with unplanned and unexpected happenings	
Likes to finish one project before starting another	Likes to start many projects but may have trouble finishing them all	
Usually has mind made up	Usually is looking for new information	
May decide things too quickly	May decide things too slowly	
Wants to be right	Wants to miss nothing	
Lives by standards and schedules that are not easily changed	Lives by making changes to deal with problems as they come up	

J stands for judgment.
P stands for perception.

J people show to others their thinking or feeling judgment more easily than they show their sensing and intuitive perception. The opposite is true for P people; they show their sensing or intuition rather than judgment in dealing with the world outside themselves.

TYPE COMES FROM PATTERNS

Now you can put together the four letters of the patterns that seem to describe you best. Draw a circle here around the same letters you circled in the margins above.

E or I S or N T or F J or P

The four letters together make up a whole pattern called a 'type.' It may be your type. There are 16 different 'people types' as shown by the 16 combinations of the letters. Find the combination of four letters that may be yours.

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ

If you have correctly identified your true personality gift from God, then the description under your four letters in the following Type Table should apply.

CHARACTERISTICS FREQUENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH EACH TYPE

Sensing Types with Thinking (ST)

Sensing Types With Feeling (SF)

ISTJ Serious, quiet, earn success by concentration and thoroughness. Practical,	ISFJ Quiet, friendly, responsible, and conscientious. Work devotedly to meet their
--	---

orderly, matter-of-fact, logical, realistic and dependable. See to it that everything is well-organised. Take responsibility. Make up their own minds as to what should be accomplished and work towards it steadily, regardless of protests or distractions. Live their outer life more with thinking, inner more with sensing.	obligations. Lend stability to any project or group. Thorough, painstaking, accurate. Their interests are usually not technical. Can be patient with necessary details. Loyal, considerate, perceptive, concerned with how other people feel. Live their outer life more with feeling, inner more with sensing.
ISTP Cool onlookers, quiet, reserved, observing and analyzing life with detached curiosity and unexpected flashes of original humour. Usually interested in cause and effect, how and why mechanical things work, and in organizing facts using logical principles. Live their outer life more with sensing, inner more with thinking.	ISFP Retiring, quietly friendly, sensitive, modest about their abilities. Shun disagreements, do not force their opinions or values on others. Usually do not care to lead but are often loyal followers. Often relaxed about getting things done, because they enjoy the present moment and do not want to spoil it by undue haste or exertion. Live their outer life more with sensing, inner more with feeling.
ESTP Good at on-the-spot problem solving. Do not worry, enjoy whatever comes along. Tend to like mechanical things and sports, with friends on the side. Adaptable, tolerant, generally conservative in values. Dislike long explanations. Are best with real things that can be worked, handled, taken apart, or put together. Live their outer life with more sensing, inner more with thinking.	ESFP Outgoing, easygoing, accepting, friendly, enjoy everything and make things more fun for others by their enjoyment. Like sports and making things happen. Know what's going on and join in eagerly. Find remembering facts easier than mastering theories. Are best in situations that need sound common sense and practical ability with people as well as with things. Live their outer life more with sensing, inner more with feeling.
ESTJ Practical, realistic, matter-of-fact, with a natural head for business or mechanics. Not interested in subjects they see no use for, but can apply themselves when necessary. Like to organize and run activities. May make good administrators, especially if they remember to consider other people's feelings and points of view. Live their outer life with more thinking, inner more with sensing.	ESFJ Warmhearted- talkative, popular, conscientious, born cooperators, active committee members. Need harmony and may be good at creating. Always doing something nice for someone. Work best with encouragement and praise. Main interest is in things that directly and visibly affect people's lives. Live their outer life more with feeling, inner more with sensing.

Intuitives With Feeling (NF)

INFJ Succeed by perseverance, originality and desire to do whatever is needed or wanted. Put their best efforts into their work. Quietly forceful, conscientious, concerned for others. Respected for their firm principles. Likely to be honoured and followed for their clear convictions as to how best to serve the common good. Live their outer life more with feeling, inner more with intuition.	INTJ Usually have original minds and great drive for their own ideas and purposes. In fields that appeal to them, they have a fine power to organize a job and carry it through with or without help. Skeptical, critical, independent, determined, sometimes stubborn. Must learn to yield less important points in order to win the most important. Live their outer life more with thinking, inner more with intuition.
INFP Full of enthusiasm and loyalties, but seldom talk of these until they know you well. Care	INTP Quiet and reserved. Especially enjoy theoretical or scientific pursuits. Like

Intuitives With Thinking (NT)

<p>about learning, ideas, language, and independent projects. Tend to undertake too much, then somehow get it done. Friendly, but often too absorbed in what they are doing to be sociable. Little concerned with possessions or physical surroundings. Live their outer life more with intuition, inner more with feeling.</p>	<p>solving problems with logical analysis. Usually interested mainly in ideas with little liking for parties or small talk. Tend to have sharply defined interests. Need careers where some strong interest can be used and useful. Live their outer life more with intuition, inner more with thinking.</p>
<p>ENFP Warmly enthusiastic, high-spirited, ingenious, imaginative. Able to do almost anything that interests them. Quick with a solution for any difficulty and ready to help anyone with a problem. Often rely on their ability to improvise instead do preparing in advance. Can usually find compelling reasons for whatever they want. Live their outer life more with intuition, inner more with feeling.</p>	<p>ENTP Quick, ingenious, good at many things. Stimulating company, alert and outspoken, may argue for fun on either side of a question. Resourceful in solving new and challenging problems, but may neglect routine assignments. Apt to turn to one new interest after another. Skillful in finding logical reasons for whatever they want. Live their outer life more with intuition, inner more with thinking.</p>
<p>ENFJ Responsive and responsible. Generally feel real concern for what others think or want, and try to handle things with due regard for the other persons' feelings. Can present a proposal or lead a group discussion with ease and tact. Sociable, popular, sympathetic. Responsive to praise and criticism. Live their outer life more with feeling, inner more with intuition.</p>	<p>ENTJ Hearty, frank, decisive, leaders in activities. Usually good at anything that requires reasoning and intelligent talk, such as public speaking. Are well-informed and enjoy adding to their fund of knowledge. May sometimes appear more positive and confident than their experience in an area warrants. Live their outer life more with thinking, inner more with intuition.</p>

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

My personal style is _____.

On the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator I am _____.

Now fill this in on the SHAPE PROFILE at the end of your manual.

EXPERIENCES

Spiritual Gifts
Heart
Abilities
Personality
EXPERIENCES

You have been shaped by your experiences in life, most of which were beyond your control. God allowed them for his purpose of molding you (Romans 8:28-29). In determining your shape for serving God, you should examine at least six kinds of experiences from your past:

- *Family* experiences: What did you learn growing up in your family?
- *Educational* experiences: What were your favourite subjects in school?
- *Vocational* experiences: What jobs have you been most effective in and enjoyed most?
- *Spiritual* experiences: What have been your most meaningful times with God?
- *Ministry* experiences: How have you served God in the past?
- *Painful* experiences: What problems, hurts, thorns, and trials have you learned from?

It is this last category, *painful* experiences, that God uses the most to prepare you for ministry. *God never wastes a hurt!* In fact, your greatest ministry will most likely come out of your greatest hurt. Who could better minister to the parents of a Down syndrome child than another couple who have a child afflicted in the same way? Who could better help an alcoholic recover than someone who fought that demon and found freedom? Who could better comfort a wife whose husband has left her for an affair than a woman who went through that agony herself?

God intentionally allows you to go through painful experiences to equip you for ministry to others. The Bible says, *“He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When others are troubles, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us”* (2 Corinthians 1:4).

If you really desire to be used by God, you *must* understand a powerful truth: The very experiences that you have resented or regretted the most in life - the ones you've wanted to hide and forget - are the experiences God wants to use to help others. They *are* your ministry!

For God to use your painful experiences, you must be willing to share them. You have to stop covering them up, and you must honestly admit your faults, failures and fears. Doing this will probably be your most effective ministry. People are always more encouraged when we share how God's grace helped us in weakness than when we brag about our strengths.

Paul understood this truth, so he was honest about his bouts with depression. He admitted, *“I think you ought to know, dear brothers, about the hard time we went through in Asia. We were really crushed and overwhelmed, and feared we would never live through it. We felt we were doomed to die and saw how powerless we were to help ourselves; but that was good, for then we put everything into the hands of God, who alone could save us, for he can even raise the dead. And he did help us and saved us from a terrible death; yes, and we expect him to do it again and again”*(2 Corinthians 1:8-10).

If Paul had kept his experience of doubt and depression a secret, millions of people would never have benefited from it. Only shared experiences can help others. Aldous Huxley said, *“Experience is not what happens to you. It is what you do with what happens to you.”* What will you do with what you've been through? Don't waste your pain;; use it to help others.



EXERCISE

Question 1

During your life you have had countless experiences, some positive and some negative. Take a moment to think over your life reflecting on the most meaningful or fulfilling experiences.

In the left hand column of the table below, list six (6) memorable and fulfilling experiences. They may be experiences from family life, church life, education, sporting achievements, work, holidays, friendships, volunteer work... anything that made you feel personally fulfilled and wanted to relive or repeat again. Then fill in the reason for that fulfilling experience on the right hand column.

Positive and Fulfilling Experiences	Reason for Experience Fulfilment
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

Now, look over your experiences in the previous table and search for any themes or common motivations. Look particularly in the “Reasons” column. Try to find one or two key words that describe this common theme/s.

1. _____

2. _____

Question 2

When we are involved in things that allow expression of our ‘passion’ we are energized and find great personal satisfaction, despite the workload. The converse is also true. If we involved in things that don’t feed our passion, the work can seem demanding and personally draining.

In the left column of the final table, write a list of jobs, voluntary positions or titles that you have had over your life. Then, in the right hand column give your honest opinion (positive or negative) about working in that particular task.

Positions and/or achievements	Positive (x)	Negative (x)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

Out of the above table look at the positions and/or achievements that were most personally satisfying to you. Try to identify common passions amongst these positions.

1. _____
2. _____

Look for an overall theme emerging from these exercises and fill in two reasons for your most meaningful experiences.

1. _____
2. _____

Now fill in your Experience section of the SHAPE PROFILE at the end of your manual.

SHAPE CONCLUSION

As we've looked at these five ways God has shaped you for service, I hope you will have a deeper appreciation for God's sovereignty and a clearer idea of how he has prepared you for the purpose of serving him. Using your shape is the secret of both fruitfulness and fulfillment in ministry. You will be most effective when you use your *spiritual gifts* and *abilities* in the area of your *heart's desire*, and in a way that best expresses your *personality* and *experiences*. The better the fit, the more successful you will be.

A RIGHT FIT

God shaped you for a purpose, and he expects you to make the most of what you have been given. He doesn't want you to worry about or covet abilities you don't have. Instead he wants you to focus on talents he has given you to use.

When you attempt to serve God in ways you are not shaped to serve, it feels like forcing a square peg into a round hole. It's frustrating and produces limited results. It also wastes your time, your talent, and your energy. The best use of your life is to serve God out of your shape. To do this you must discover your shape, learn to accept and enjoy it, and then develop it to its fullest potential.

Since God knows what's best for you, you should gratefully accept the way he has fashioned you. The Bible says, "*what right have you, a human being, to cross-examine God? The pot has no right to say to the potter: 'Why did you make me this shape?' surely a potter can do what he likes with the clay!*" (Rom 9:20-21).

Your shape was sovereignly determined by God for *his* purpose, so you shouldn't resent or reject it. Instead of trying to reshape yourself to be like someone else, you should celebrate the shape God has given only to you. "*Christ has given each of us special abilities - whatever he wants us to have out of his rich storehouse of gifts.*" (Eph 4:7 LB)

Part of accepting your shape is recognizing your limitations. Nobody is good at everything, and no one is called to be everything. We all have defined roles. Paul understood that his calling was not to accomplish everything or please everyone but to focus only on the particular ministry that God had shaped him for. He said, "*Our goal is to stay within the boundaries of God's plan for us.*" (2 Cor 10:13 NLT)

The word *boundary* refers to the fact that God assigns each of us a field or sphere of service. Your shape determines your specialty. When we try to overextend our ministry reach beyond what God shaped us for, we experience stress. Just as each runner in a race is given an individual lane to run in, we must individually "*run with patience the particular race that God has set before us*" (Hebrews 12:1). Don't be envious of the runner in the lane next to you, just focus on finishing *your* race.

God wants you to enjoy using the shape he has given you.

THE ANIMALS' SCHOOL

Once upon a time, right after creation, all the animals formed a school. They established a well-rounded curriculum of swimming, running, climbing and flying. All the animals were required to take all the courses.

The duck excelled at swimming. In fact, he was better than the instructor! But he only made passing grades in climbing and was very poor in running. He was so slow; he had to stay after school to practice running. This caused his webbed feet to become so badly worn he became only average in swimming.

The rabbit was top of her class at running. But after a while she developed a twitch in her leg from all the time she spent in the water trying to improve her swimming.

The squirrel was a peak performer climbing, but was constantly frustrated in flying class. He body became so worn from all the hard landings he did not too well in climbing, and ended up being pretty poor in running.

The eagle was a continual problem student. She was severely disciplined for being a non-conformist. In climbing class she would beat everyone else to the top of the tree, but insisted on using her own way to get there.

Each of the animals had a particular design. When they did what they were designed to do, they excelled. When they tried to operate outside their area of expertise, they were not nearly as effective.

Can ducks run? Sure they can! Is that what they do best? No! Given the limited time each of us has, doesn't it make sense to serve where we are best equipped? Ducks can run and run hard. But they are slow and get tired quickly. People can be like that. Like a duck out of water, we can serve outside our area of giftedness. We can do it, but it is not what we do best. When you know your ministry SHAPE you are then enabled to do your best with enthusiasm and effectiveness!

LINKING SPIRITUAL GIFTS TO PASSION

Scenario 1: Same Passion, Different Gift

	Karen	Vuyo	Justin
Same Passion	Children with difficult life situations	Children with difficult life situations	Children with difficult life situations
Different Spiritual Gift	Administration	Giving	Teaching
Possibilities	Organising events To serve children Coordinating Classes & training Identifying people And resources to meet needs	Funding a program and materials Adopting a child or family Support training For volunteers	Teaching parents and guardians Leading a class

Scenario 2: Different Passion, Same Gift

	Karen	Vuyo	Justin
Same Passion	Elderly	Homeless	Discipleship
Different Spiritual Gift	Teaching	Teaching	Teaching
Possibilities	Leading Bible Study in retirement home Teaching Sunday school classes for or on aging	Leading devotionals in homeless shelters Holding seminars on how to deal with poverty in a community	Small group leader Mentor Writing training programs

BENEFITS OF KNOWING YOUR DESTINY

There are many benefits from knowing your destiny. Here are some of them:

- **MEANING AND FULFILLMENT** - It gives you a reason for being alive. Note how David only died after He had fulfilled his destiny:

“For when David had served God’s purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers and his body decayed.” (Acts 13:36)
- **SELF-ESTEEM** - you will feel good about yourself when you are fulfilling your destiny. When we don’t believe in ourselves, we don’t function at our highest level. But when I know who I am, when I know I have a destiny from the Lord, my self-esteem rises, and my lifestyle reflects it. As you get a sense of destiny, you will begin to feel valued, you will have a sense of self-worth, self-esteem and confidence.
- **PEACE AND CONTENTMENT.** When you are walking in your destiny you will find yourself at peace, not continually feeling restless, unsure and uncertain of who you are and what are you doing. There is a deep satisfaction that comes when you know you are in the middle of what God made you to be.
- **VISION AND DIRECTION**
Prov 29:18 “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” If we have no sense of destiny, it is nearly impossible to think positively and have a vision for anything good. We begin to think we are just accidents going somewhere to happen.
- **DRIVE / MOTIVATION / PASSION**
With the knowledge, skills and opportunities we have in our modern society, you’d think we’d be the most excited people in the history of the world. But when you look at the faces on the freeway every morning or into the heart of the average person, you don’t find excitement. You find depression, boredom, and frustration. A lack of purpose and destiny is to blame. When we get a sense of a higher calling in life - a purpose established by God before the foundation of the world - a destiny that He has set for us - then we get excited, enthused and motivated every morning!
- **SELF-DISCIPLINE**
Most people lack discipline in their lives because they have no goals, no sense of destiny. When you have a goal, you have the motivation. An immediate purpose and long-term destiny will make you disciplined. It’s all a question of ‘why’. If I have a destiny and purpose, I have reasons to live right, to stay holy, to pray, to study the Word, to study. I have a reason to discipline myself.

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize. Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.
1 Cor 9v25-27

Discipline is a powerful force for good in our lives. It doesn’t always come easily, and it almost never comes without a sense of purpose and destiny.
- **FAITH AND COURAGE** - if you know you have a destiny to fulfill you will have no fear even of death. You will have the faith and courage to endure any tribulation if you realize you are on course with your destiny. The runner can go through the pain and hardships of training if he focuses on the prize of winning the race.

Many people have no reason to develop their faith. They live mundane lives and are not planning to do anything but get by - spiritually, physically, emotionally and financially. But when you have a sense of destiny for yourself, your family, your business, or your ministry, you begin to have a desire and drive to develop your faith.

“When you have a vision, faith will rise almost automatically”. David (Paul) Yonggi Cho (Pastor in Seoul, Korea)

- **RESOURCES** - when you are doing God’s will God’s provision is made available. Because most Christians are trying to “make a living” instead of living out their destiny, they never tap into the resources of heaven. When you are convinced of God’s destiny for your life, you will have no trouble believing that God will provide the finances to get you there.
- **AN ABILITY TO HANDLE PROBLEMS** - when you are in God’s will you also receive grace to overcome all obstacles (see 2 Cor 11:23-28). He will grant us the wisdom, the character, the patience, the solutions that we need as He wants us to succeed in the plans He has for us.
- **RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS** - No one can fulfill their destiny alone, and so God will also bring you into right relationships and friendships when you are in His will. Relationships are God’s way of bringing the gifts and talents we lack into our lives, ministries and jobs. On the flip side, when relationships are broken it can throw us off our destiny course!
- **YOU WILL MAXIMISE YOUR POTENTIAL** and impact and become all that God designed you to become.

ENEMIES OF DESTINY

- **BAD SELF-IMAGE** - only when you know who you are can you do what you are supposed to do. Beware of comparison: *“We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.”* (2 Cor 10:12). This will always lead to either pride or jealousy.
- **IGNORANCE** - Hos 4:6: *“My people perish for lack of knowledge.”* If we are ignorant of what we are called to do, we will miss it! And within our calling we need to aim to be the best we possibly can be in that field. Aim to world-class in the area God has called you to be! Education is not as expensive as ignorance.
- **LAZINESS**. Nothing great will ever happen unless we work hard! There is a false idea in the church that God will do everything. God has called us to co-labour with Him.
- *If a man does not work passionately, even furiously, at being the best in the world at what he does, he fails his talent, his destiny and his God.* - George Lois
- **YOUR PAST** - *“Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do; forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus.”* (Phil 3:13-14) *“Don’t be a prisoner of your past be a pioneer of your future”* (David Malopo)
- **WRONG RELATIONSHIPS** - boyfriends / girlfriends, friends, bad family relationships etc. When we find the right people we will flourish in our destiny, however when we are in the wrong relationships, there is no quicker way to be sidetracked from the call of God! *“Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.”* (1 Cor 15:33)
- **UNFORGIVENESS AND BITTERNESS**. *“See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.”* (Heb 12:15). Bitterness causes our hearts to become hardened and cuts us off from the grace of God. As our unforgiveness grows we will find ourselves moving further out of the will of God. Bitterness can never be contained in our hearts, but rather it spills over into every area of our lives, poisoning our relationships, our ministry and ourselves.
- **GUILT, SHAME AND CONDEMNATION**. As long as we are shrouded and bent over with guilt and shame we can not rise up into the fullness of our potential. Our emotional state directly affects our confidence, inner strength and ability to pursue our destiny. *“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.”* (Rom 8:1)
- **SIN**. Sin has many expressions e.g. disobedience, bad choices, rebellion, compromise, worldliness. *“See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction.*
➤ *For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.”* (Deut 30:15-16)
- **DEMONIC INFLUENCES** - generational curses, occult practices (seances, divination, animal sacrifices, nature worship), ancestralism, astrology, fortune-tellers, witch doctors / sangomas, occult games (eg ouija boards, D&D, tarot cards).
- **PRIDE** - e.g. self-righteousness, selfish ambition, arrogance, independence. *“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”* (James 4:6)
- **FEAR** - *“For God did not give us a spirit of fear (timidity), but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.”* (2 Tim 1:7; see also 1 Jn 4:18). Don’t be too afraid to try! Break your barriers and remove your limitations!

GOD'S PROCESS OF PREPARATION

GOD'S CALL

- Gifts and callings of God are based on His sovereignty - not on human worthiness, persistence in asking, fasting and prayer, or anything else. Calling is about the goodness of God and grace of God, not about us. God does not call the qualified, but qualifies the called
- Everything begins with a dream, vision, or call. This may come to you through personal conviction, revelation knowledge, a vision, dream, or prophecy. But this is not just any vision - it must be God's vision. As people we have many plans and purposes, but we must give these up and accept God's purpose for our lives.

GOD'S PROCESS OF PREPARATION

- Once you have received God's *call*, God will now go about *preparing* you, before He *commissions* you to what He called you to. The Bible says many are called but few are chosen (commissioned) (Matt 20:16, 22:14). In Revelation we learn that the called, chosen (commissioned) and faithful are the overcomers (Rev 17:14).
- Rom 11:22 speaks of the goodness and severity of God. God's *goodness* is revealed in *choosing* you, and His *severity* in *training* you.
- God must make the *man* before he can release the *ministry*. The higher the calling the greater the preparation - the higher the tower the deeper the foundations e.g. Jesus was trained for 30 years for three and a half years of ministry. Here are some examples of how God *called*, *prepared* and then *commissioned* His servants.
- **David - called to be king over Israel** - *called* by a prophetic word and laying on of hands by prophet Samuel when he was 13. *Preparation*: faithful to shepherd sheep, minister to his brothers, his music ministry to Saul, and as an army captain serving Saul. He then had to hide in caves and deserts as Saul tried to kill him, and yet he never retaliated when he was attacked. *Commissioned* as king of Judah 17 years after he was called and then made king over all Israel 24 after he was called. Had 40 years of successful ministry.
- **Elisha - called to be prophet to Israel** - *called* by Elijah directly. *Preparation*: left successful farming behind and became a servant to Elijah for 12 years. He never prophesied or performed any miracles during this time. *Commissioned* after faithfully serving Elijah for 12 years. Had 50 years of successful ministry
- **Joseph - called to be ruler and saviour** - *called* at age 17 by two prophetic dreams. *Preparation*: sold by his brothers into slavery, made a household slave, wrongfully accused of rape and thrown in prison. *Commissioned* after 13 years to be governor of all Egypt. 21 years after initial calling his whole family bowed down to him in prophetic fulfillment of his dreams. He enjoyed 80 years of successful ministry.
- **Abraham - called to be father of many nations** - *called* at age 50. *Preparation*: had to leave his comfort zone and culture behind, although he only moved all the way to Canaan at age 75. He had to wait 50 years for his dream to come true. At age 85 he produced Ishmael. *Commissioned* at age 100 when Isaac born. At age 125 when Isaac was 25, he passed the ultimate test when he was prepared to sacrifice Isaac.
- **Jesus Christ - called to be Redeemer, head of the church, King of the universe** - *Called* from birth. *Preparation*: 30 years of obscurity and humble service. 3 and a half years of being rejected, misunderstood, betrayed and finally tortured and crucified. *Commissioned* to earthly ministry at age 30 when the Father spoke from heaven, although still had to go through 40 day fast when he was anointed with power. *Commissioned* to eternal ministry after 33 and a half years.

- **Paul - called to be an apostle and reveal the mystery of the church** - *Calling*: called directly when Jesus appeared to him. Later Ananias prophesied his calling to apostleship to him. *Preparation*: 17 years of obscurity, 3 in the desert of Arabia, 14 making tents. *Commissioned*: became a prophet / teacher in Antioch church. *Commissioned* to be an apostle some time later. Had over 30 years of successful ministry.
- God has a preparation process through which He takes us to make us ready to fulfill our destiny. Without proper preparation we would be destroyed by our destiny e.g. as Saul and Samson were.
- God's preparation and dealings include such things as trials, trouble, temptation and testing. The pit, slavery, prison, obscurity, deserts, rejection, persecution and wildernesses can all be in the will of God!
- We can expect to be scandalised, lied about, framed, persecuted, hurt, misunderstood, misrepresented, punished and rejected - often from our brothers, leaders and family.

THINGS GOD IS TRYING TO TEACH YOU THROUGH THE PREPARATION PROCESS:

- The realisation that you can't fulfill your destiny in your own strength (Zech 4:6).
- Humility, brokenness and the fear of God (Is 66:2b).
- The character of Christ (Gal 5:22)
- Right attitudes in suffering and difficulty (Phil 2:5)
- Must be faithful to serve someone else's dream before God will allow you to fulfill your own (Lk 16:12)
- Faithful with little ruler over much (Lk 19:17)
- You must overcome all temptation (Gen 39:9-10; Gen 49:3-4)
 - That nothing is more important than your love relationship with the Lord (John 17:3)

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

In this section we're going to help you move from having bits of information you've collected about yourself to creating a holistic picture of your life. Here are the elements involved:

1. A PICTURE of your future
2. Your SHAPE PROFILE
3. Your LIFE VISION in a sentence
4. Your PRIORITIES
5. Some PRACTICAL STEPS

A PICTURE OF YOUR FUTURE

By now you would have had the time to draw a *picture* of your future incorporating the different elements you feel are pivotal to your destiny in God, which you compiled from the three questions: What does God say I should do with my life? What would I like to do with my life? and What do people say I should do with my life? Refer to your picture briefly to refresh your memory.

YOUR SHAPE PROFILE

You would also have had time to complete your 'Shape Profile' at the back of your manual. This is just another way to conceptualise the picture of your future. Remember, your SHAPE is made up of your Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality and Experiences. Have you completed the profile?

LIFE VISION IN A SENTENCE

Now, it's time for you to put into a *sentence* the vision you have for your life. Let's start with some key words and phrases. What words/concepts/ideas/things *cannot* be excluded from your life? For example, these are the areas of life that you feel *strongly* about: 'the environment,' 'law,' 'social justice,' 'helping the poor,' 'the media world.' What are those areas? Write them down here:

Combine these ideas with the way in which you would like to impact those areas, for example, through 'writing books,' 'public speaking,' 'compassionate ministry,' 'counseling,' 'teaching children.' Write down these ways in the space below:

Now compile your LIFE VISION in a sentence. This shouldn't take up too much space. The more succinct the better!

PRIORITIES

Another helpful way in which you can keep yourself focused on moving towards your vision, is by establishing your priorities? What are your priorities? What things are most important to you? Which people are most important to you? Which areas of life would you like to spend most of your time and energy on? These are your priorities. Priorities include aspects of your life such as your friendships, your family, self-development and learning, your relationship with God, your ministry within a local church and so on. What are your priorities?

List your top five now in order of importance (most important to least important):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

STEPPING FORWARD

Everybody needs practical help in moving from an idea or a dream to reality.

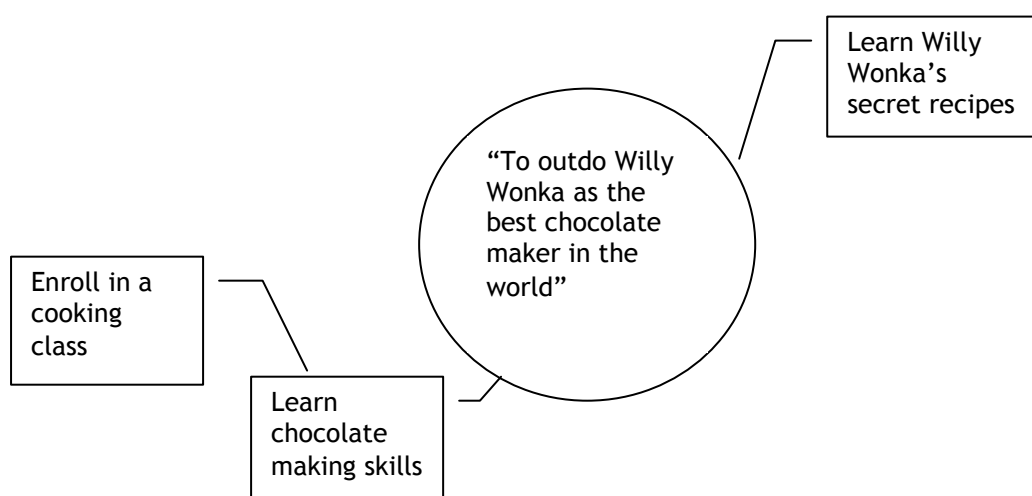
“Vision without implementation is merely daydreaming”
Steve McKnight

What steps are you going to take to make your life vision a reality? The journey between the place you find yourself in today, and the place you wish to reach at the end of your life is filled with steps of progress, things you can do to reach the places God has got for you.

Here is an exercise to help you find out what goals [practical, doable things] you need to achieve in order to get on the road to fulfilling your destiny.

1. Write your life vision sentence in the middle of the next blank page provided
2. Now ask yourself the following question over and over again, “What do I need to do to achieve this?” Write down the answer, and ask the question again.

For example:



If the central circle is my *vision*, then the spokes going outward become my *goals*. Do this now for yourself on the following blank page:

PRACTICAL TIPS

Here are some more practical tips to take you toward achieving your vision:

1. Read books
2. Study
3. Find a mentor, someone who is older, wiser and more experienced than you, and learn everything you can from them.
4. Go to conferences
5. Attend seminars
6. Research on the net and elsewhere
7. Find like-minded people in your field of interest
8. Travel
9. Meet the experts in your field
10. Talk to your friends about your passions
11. Ask for your family's advice
12. Get lessons and learn new skills
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____

What are the steps YOU need to take from here? What are at least *five* things you can start doing NOW to help you achieve your life vision?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

CARPE DIEM!!!

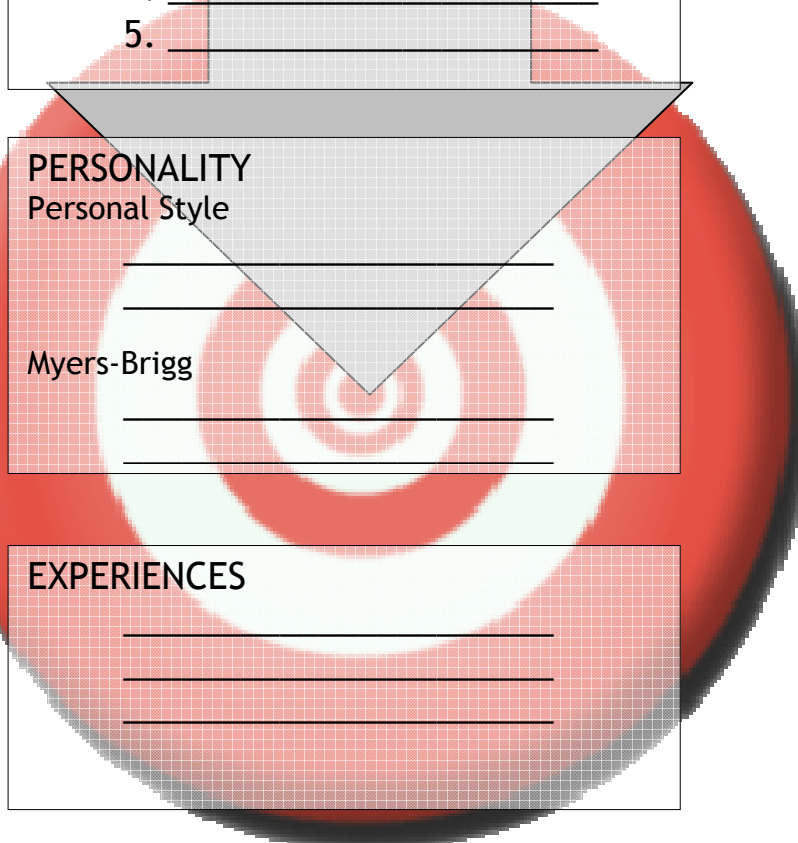
- Zeal must be based on purpose (Gal 4:18). Young people have lots of energy, but not always the right direction. Remember, speed is only a good thing if you are going the right way!
- Don't try and do everything. You need to focus on your purpose like a laser. The power of a laser is in its focus.
- You can make a difference! *"He stood between the living and the dead, and the plague stopped."* (Num 16:48)
- Heb 12:1-2 *"Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith."*
- You need to reach for and press into the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:14)
- *"Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this."* (Est 4:14)

You have unlimited potential and a preordained destiny so reach for the stars! Go for gold! Seize the day!

References:

Fulfilling Your God Given Destiny, Casey Treat
The Purpose Driven Life, Rick Warren
Network Course, Willow Creek Community Church
Doing Church as a Team, Wayne Cordeiro

SHAPE PROFILE



SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

HEART

ABILITIES

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

PERSONALITY
Personal Style

Myers-Brigg

EXPERIENCES
