



God created each of us individually with a specific purpose in mind - to enjoy and love Him. He wants us to enjoy serving Him and serving those around us. Your "SHAPE" is a simple way of understanding a blend of five factors that make you wonderfully unique yet complimentary to others in your life. Prayerfully exploring your shape can greatly impact your life as you experience God growing you in life, love and ministry.

## Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual gifts are God-given abilities whose purpose is to build up the Body of Christ and minister to others. It's not uncommon to become distracted with the quantity or type of gifts but this is not the point of God's gifts to his children. What is important is for us to each understand our gifts as uniquely designed and specifically given by our Heavenly Father.

Below is a list of gifts that are specifically mentioned in Scripture. This list is not necessarily exhaustive but it does provide a great perspective on the variety and complementary nature of Spiritual gifts. God has given gifts that:

- **Communicate God's Word** ~ preaching, evangelism, missions, apostle
- **Educate God's people** ~ teaching, encouragement, wisdom, discernment, knowledge
- **Demonstrate God's love** ~ service, mercy, hospitality, pasturing/shepherding, giving
- **Celebrate God's presence** ~ music, arts and crafts, intercession, healing, miracles, praying with the Spirit
- **Support others** ~ leadership, administration, faith

Another tool for discovering your gifts is the spiritual gift survey on the iSERVE page. The survey, like this SHAPE document, is just another tool to help you discover and hone your understanding of how God has "wired you" for life and love. Prayer, spending time in God's Word and seeking wise counsel are important tools that cannot be neglected in this and every aspect of your journey. Gaining a full understanding of your SHAPE will build your faith as you seek His best in life.

Circle the gifts above you believe to be your spiritual gifts.

- Which two gifts do you believe to be our strongest?
- Is there a gift you believe God has given you that you have yet to explore?
- What gift(s) have others affirmed in you, even if you weren't trying to be "spiritual"?

## Heart

The easiest way to understand your heart is to ask the question, "What do I love to do?"

Your heart is the real you, the "you" you are when there are no hurts, no fears, no walls and no insecurities. Your heart holds your deepest passions for life and love, and is the most significant influencer of what you say and how you say it, and why you generally feel and act the way you do. Your heart also has a unique heartbeat that will race when you encounter activities, discuss topics or experience circumstances that resonate within your deepest passions.

By understanding your heart, you understand the internal guidance system God has hardwired into your very being and can utilize it as a tool to serve and minister to others. People who are effective and enthusiastic in life and ministry have most likely discovered their passion and have unleashed the joy serving. In other words, they have found their heart.

Do you know anyone who has found their heart? Write their name and why you believe they have found their heart below:

## Abilities

Abilities are the things you know how to do and do well. As simple as that sounds, there are many adults are still discovering what they are capable of actually doing!

Everyone has natural abilities. Some are so strong and obvious we start doing them without any thought whatsoever; others, however, need to be discovered and nurtured. Taking time to consider your past accomplishments and successes is a great way to gain better understanding of your abilities. Another is to simply look at the vocational skills you employ on a daily basis and prayerfully exploring how and why God may have given you those skills for his glory.

One of the most amazing expression of God's sovereignty is within the local church. God has brought every person to wb who collectively have every ability needed to accomplish every thing He wants us to accomplish today. This is also true of us individually because we are each a new creation (2 Cor 5.17) designed to walk in the blessings he prepared in advance (Eph 2.8-10). Our God is absolutely amazing!



## Personality

We've already said (and can all testify) that God has wired each of us uniquely. There is no other human with our exact likes and dislikes, biases and preferences, disposition and temperament. No one... that means of the over 100-billion people who are estimated to have ever been born, there has never been—nor will there ever be—anyone quite like you.

There are lots of ways personalities can be studied. To keep things simple, this approach will look at five primary dynamics that contribute to our uniqueness. Each dynamic is followed by a question to help you consider where best to place yourself on each continuum.

- **Extroverted vs. Introverted** - Do you feel energized (or re-energized) when you are with people or when you are alone?
 

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extroverted
introverted
◆
- **Thinker vs. Feeler** - How do you tend to make decisions, by using objective facts or leaning on your intuition?
 

◆

thinker
feeler
◆
- **Routine vs. Spontaneous** - How do you plan your day? What types of tasks do you prefer: planned and predictable, or varied and "as they come"?
 

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feeler
spontaneous
◆
- **Self-Controlled vs. Self-Expressive** - Are you more likely to hold your opinions and moods to yourself, or do you find yourself sharing your thoughts, feelings and opinions openly.
 

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self-controlled
self-expressive
◆
- **Competitive vs. Cooperative** - Is your natural tendency to lead or be led?
 

◆

competitive
cooperative
◆

Understanding your personality and behavioral tendencies can help you as you prayerfully consider the best ministry and role. The Body of Christ has many members, each member doing his/her unique role to make the Body function the way God desires.

## Experience

God carefully orchestrates the experiences of all his children. Whatever your current position regarding God's sovereignty and our free will, we must hold firmly to our belief in God's character as the Perfect Father and his compassion as a Redeeming Savior. If we are able to rest in these truths, then our experiences may serve to teach, train and correct us, and they may also serve purposes we don't yet understand (e.g. Joseph's dreams and subsequent hardships in Genesis 37). These life experiences build our faith and character, develop our trust in and love for God, and ultimately accomplish His purposes for his glory. If the chief end of man is the glorify God and enjoy him forever, then our experiences are the means to the former and the hope for the latter.

As you consider your life experiences, be careful not to fall into the trap of thinking the great lessons are learned through poor choices and failures. Though you can learn significant life lessons through these, the one life lesson you cannot learn through them is the very life lesson you can learn through a success: what works. God teaches and corrects through poor choices. God trains and affirms through wise choices. They all play a role on the journey of faith.

## S.H.A.P.E.

Many Christians become overwhelmed when they start asking big questions like, "What did God design me to be?" or "How does God want me to serve Him?" or even "Where does God want me to join Him in His work in this world?"

The best (and easiest) thing to do is look at where you are right now. What is God doing or trying to do in you? Your family? Your work? Your neighborhood? Your kids sports teams? Your church? God isn't trying, nor does He want to make this difficult; He just wants to enjoy it with you.

### Summary:

- What spiritual gifts God has given me?
- What do I really love to do?
- What talents and skills do I have—what can I do and do well?
- What experiences has God given me to teach and train me? What have I learned about my personality and temperament?