

# IDENTIFYING YOUR UNIQUE S.H.A.P.E.

We've prepared and adapted several questionnaires<sup>1</sup> to help you discover and think through the five factors that make up who you are.

The overall questionnaire is divided into the following sections:

- "UNWRAPPING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT" (S) will give you an overview of spiritual gifts and help you identify which ones you may have been given by God.
- "MONITORING YOUR HEARTBEAT" (H) will help you clarify what you really love to do.
- "APPLYING YOUR ABILITIES" (A) will help you appreciate the natural talents and vocational skills you have.
- "PLUGGING IN YOUR PERSONALITY" (P) will help you see how your God-given temperament can best be used in ministry.
- "EXAMINING YOUR EXPERIENCES" (E) will help you review your history to discover how God has prepared you for a unique ministry that only you can fulfil.

**AS YOU COMPLETE EACH SECTION, TRANSFER YOUR RESULTS TO THE FORM CALLED "MY MINISTRY (S.H.A.P.E.) PROFILE".**

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<sup>1</sup> We are indebted to the following sources for much of the material in this handout: The Saddleback website at [www.saddlebackfamily.com/ministry/images/discoverytool.pdf](http://www.saddlebackfamily.com/ministry/images/discoverytool.pdf); Glenn Giles, Elder & Teacher, Denver Church of Christ; and the DC Regional Church, Discovering My Ministry Class 301.

## UNWRAPPING MY SPIRITUAL GIFTS (S)

The Bible does not lock us into tight restrictions as to the number of spiritual gifts, or even their definitions.

The list you will be looking at can serve as a helpful guideline, giving you ideas about the kinds of gifts God gives...The key is to find the areas in which the Holy Spirit seems to empower your service to others.

There are several listings of spiritual gifts in the Bible. Here are five lists of Spiritual gifts<sup>2</sup> in the New Testament: Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:28; 1 Pet. 4:10-11; 1 Cor. 12:8-10; and Eph. 4:11. There are also several Spiritual gifts mentioned in the OT: Ex. 31-5; 35:31; Eccl. 3:13; 5:19.

Every Christian has one or more gift (see Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 1:7; Eph.4:7; 1 Pet 4:10; 1 Cor. 7:13-14; Eph. 3).

**Instructions:** As you read through this list, prayerfully consider if the biblical definition for each of the gifts describes you. Remember, you can have more than one gift, but everyone has at least one.

**Example:** Marie has the gift of service and expresses this gift in the Kingdom Kids Ministry. She helps secure the textbooks, prepares the handouts, and helps with registration. Marie is willing to serve in any way possible to take the load off the teacher so she can focus on using her speaking gift more effectively. The gift of service edifies the gifts of others, freeing them from temporal tasks to focus on their spiritual gifts. People with the gift of service often like to work behind the scenes.

**Please remember to record your responses on your S.H.A.P.E. profile.**

### SPIRITUAL GIFT SELF-EVALUATION:

Read through each gift listed below, pray for God's guidance, and mark it to the left of the letter with a 1, 2, or 3. The meanings of the numbers are as follows:

Number 1: "I am certain that I have this gift"

Number 2: "I might have this gift"

Number 3: "I don't think I have this gift"

\_\_\_\_\_ **Artistic Gifts:** Ex. 31:3; 35:31: Skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver, bronze, cutting stones, setting stones, work with wood, etc. He has been "filled with the Spirit of God" to do this. The ability to build, maintain, or beautify the place of worship for God's glory. The ability to express worship through a variety of art forms.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Contentment:** Eccl. 3:13; 5:19.  
"When God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and

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<sup>2</sup> See Douglas Jacoby, *The Spirit: The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Lives of Disciples*, Woburn, MA: DPI, 1998. Some of the material in this outline comes from this book.

be happy in his work—this is a gift of God”

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Prophecy/Preaching:** Rom 12:6. Although as used in the NT this may be mostly speaking for God giving new revelation, the scriptures seem to also indicate that this term included both foretelling and forth telling. Foretelling is more the miraculous (new revelation) while forth telling is having the ability to preach and apply (make relevant) the already revealed message of God for today. Forth telling or preaching would be what is available to us today. The ability to publicly communicate God’s Word in an inspired way that convinces unbelievers and both challenges and comforts believers. The ability to persuasively declare God’s will.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Serving:** Rom. 12:7. This is the special ability God gives to some to (1) see the needs of others and use the talent they have to (2) meet those needs by taking the initiative to provide practical assistance quickly, cheerfully, and without a need for recognition.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Teaching:** Rom. 12:7. This is the special ability to communicate information that is pertinent to the needs of individuals as well as the whole body that will help in their spiritual growth, understanding, and their ministry for Christ. The ability to educate God’s people by clearly explaining and applying the Bible in a way that causes them to learn. The ability to equip and train other believers for ministry.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Encouraging:** Rom. 12:8. **(This is sometimes called “Exhortation”)**  
The ability to motivate God’s people to apply and act on biblical principles, especially when they are discouraged or wavering in their faith. The ability to bring out the best in others and challenge them to develop their potential. This is the special ability to speak words and do things that will encourage others in the body in a way that helps them feel wanted, important, needed and helped.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Giving/Contributing:** Rom. 12:8. This is the ability to contribute their material resources to God’s work liberally and with cheerfulness. The ability to manage money so it may be given to support the ministry of others. It presupposes that they have the ability or life situation to make money, gain possessions, or have them in their life situation.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Leadership:** Rom. 12:8. The ability to clarify and communicate the purpose and direction (“vision”) of a ministry in a way that attracts others to get involved. The ability to motivate others, by example, to work together in accomplishing a ministry goal.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Showing Mercy:** Rom. 12:8. The talent to (1) feel genuine empathy and compassion for those who suffer physical, emotional, mental, and/or spiritual problems and (2) to be able to love those people in a way that relieves them or helps them carry the burdens they have. The ability to manifest practical, compassionate, cheerful love toward suffering members of the Body of Christ.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Celibacy:** I Cor. 7:7. One who has the ability to joyfully remain single and not suffer undue sexual temptations so that they can devote more time to God’s work
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Wisdom:** I Cor. 12:8. The ability to unite knowledge with action both in their own lives and in the advice they give others such that the knowledge is applied in the best way to the needs that arise in the congregation and in individuals in the congregation. The ability to understand God’s perspective on life situations and share those insights in a simple, understandable way. The ability to explain what to do and how to do it.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Knowledge:** I Cor. 12:8. The special ability to discover, analyse, gather, and clarify, and organise information and ideas that are needed for the well-being of the body
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Faith:** I Cor. 12:9. The ability to see (envision) potential (1) in what the church might do as a body for Christ and (2) in people in what they can do for Christ. It involves belief in God and belief in people’s (as well as one’s own) potential. This is a person with the ability to have extraordinary confidence in both God and people. The ability to trust God for what cannot be seen and to act on God’s promise, regardless of what the circumstances indicate. The willingness to risk failure in pursuit of a God-given vision, expecting God to handle the obstacles.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Healing:** I Cor. 12: 9. Probably specifically means ability to heal apart from the use of natural methods (i.e., supernatural healing). However, it could be the ability to pray, in faith, specifically for people who need physical, emotional, or spiritual healing and see God answer. The ability to sense when God is prompting you to pray this kind of prayer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Miraculous Powers:** I Cor. 12:10. Probably specifically means the ability to do miracles. However, it could mean the ability to pray, in faith, specifically for God’s supernatural intervention into an impossible situation and see God answer. The ability to sense when God is prompting you to pray this kind of prayer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Distinguishing spirits:** I. Cor. 12:10. The ability to know if certain behaviour or a spiritual stance is of God, of human, or of Satan. It is intuitive spiritual discernment
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Languages/tongues.** I Cor. 12:10. This is a “sign gift” of having the ability to speak other languages without having studied them. This is not available today. However, there are those who have the talent today to learn other languages easily and use them to the glory of God
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Interpretation or translation of languages/tongues:** I Cor. 12:10. Also a “sign gift” of having the ability of interpreting or translating languages one has no familiarity with. This is no longer available, but some have the linguistic talent to learn how to translate different languages to help spread his Word.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Apostleship:** I Cor. 12:28. There were only 12 apostles. We have their words in the NT, but we have no Apostles today in the sense of the 12 who were part of the foundation of the church. In the sense of the meaning “those sent out with a commission”, we have modern day missionaries who have the talent to minister for Christ in a culture not their own. The ability to start new churches and oversee their development.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Administration:** I Cor. 12:28. **(This is sometimes called “Organisation”)**  
The ability to recognise the gifts of others and recruit them to a ministry. The ability to organise and manage people, resources, and time for effective ministry. The ability to organise, devise, and carry through plans for the accomplishment of God’s will for his church. These persons can coordinate the other gifts of the body for the maximum effect to bring glory to God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Evangelist:** Eph. 4:11. This is the special ability to preach, teach, share, and communicate the gospel to unbelievers in such a way that they become disciples of Christ.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Shepherd/pastor:** Eph. 4:11 (here a pastor-teacher). The ability to shepherd (take spiritual care) of the members of the body to help them grow, keep them from the wolves, help them remain faithful, and help them become mature in Christ. The ability to care for the spiritual needs of a group of believers and equip them for ministry. The ability to nurture a small group in spiritual growth and assume responsibility for their welfare.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Hospitality:** I Pet 4:9. The ability to make others, especially strangers, feel warmly welcomed, accepted, and comfortable in the church family. The ability to coordinate factors that promote fellowship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Helps:** I Cor. 12:28. The ability to see the needs of others, see how they could be helped, and then using one’s own talents to help these other members enhance their effectiveness in using their talents for the body.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Music:** Psalm 150. The ability to celebrate God’s presence through music, either vocal or instrumental.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Song Writing:** The ability to compose songs that bring God glory.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Singing:** The ability to sing well; solo, with other part singers or in a choir.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Worship leadership:** The ability to lead, inspire and direct others through song...The ability to coordinate, organise and lead worship service.



## MONITORING MY HEARTBEAT (H)

The Bible uses the term "heart" to represent the centre of your motivation, desires, and inclinations.

The Bible says, "As a face is reflected in water, so the heart reflects the person." 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.

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 as to where you should be serving.

Another word for heart is *passion*. Passions are desires or purposes that bring us joy. 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.

Please consider the three ways in which your heart or passion is directed:

- a passion for a **role** (what you like to do);
- a passion for specific **people** (whom you like to help); and
- a passion for a **cause** (what you would like to see changed).

**Please remember to record your responses on your S.H.A.P.E. profile.**

**Instructions:** Circle or check the items that best describe you. If none of the words on the list fit you, feel free to add your own on the "other" line at the bottom of the page.

*Circle the following Roles you enjoy fulfilling*

1. My Passion for a Role: I love to...

**DESIGN AND DEVELOP** -- I love to make something out of nothing. I enjoy getting something started from scratch.

**PIONEER** -- I love to test out and try new concepts. I am not afraid to risk failure.

**ORGANISE** -- I love to bring order out of chaos. I enjoy organizing something that is already started.

**OPERATE / MAINTAIN** -- I love to efficiently maintain some things that is already organised.

**SERVE OR HELP** -- I love to assist others in their responsibility. I enjoy helping others succeed.

**ACQUIRE AND POSSESS** -- I love to shop, collect, or obtain things. I enjoy getting the highest quality for the best price.

**EXCEL** -- I love to be the best and make my team the best. I enjoy setting and attaining the highest standard.

**INFLUENCE** -- I love to convert people to my way of thinking. I enjoy shaping the attitudes and behaviours of others.

**PERFORM** -- I love to be on stage and receive the attention of others. I enjoy being in the limelight.

**IMPROVE** -- I love to make things better. I enjoy taking something that someone else has designed or started and improve it.

**REPAIR** -- I love to fix what is broken or change what is out of date.

**LEAD AND BE IN CHARGE** -- I love to lead the way, oversee and supervise. I enjoy determining how things will be done.

**PERSEVERE** -- I love to see things to completion. I enjoy persisting at something until it is finished.

**FOLLOW THE RULES** -- I love to operate by policies and procedures. I enjoy meeting the expectations of an organization or boss.

**PREVAIL** -- I love to fight for what is right and oppose what is wrong. I enjoy overcoming injustice.

You should be able to support your choice with examples from your achievements.

**EXAMPLE:**

I feel the basic motivation God put in my heart is to "ACQUIRE/POSSESS": My history demonstrates this:

- \* I purchased my first car at age 16.
- \* I've a collection of over 2000 rare stamps.
- \* I've built up a large cash reserve
- \* I've acquired options on three properties.

**DID YOU FIND THE BASIC MOTIVATIONAL DIRECTION OF YOUR HEART IN THIS LIST?**

**Please remember to record your responses on your S.H.A.P.E. Profile.**

*Circle the following **People** on whom you feel you can make the greatest impact.*

**2. My Passion for People: I love to work with...**

Infants/Babies	Men
Toddlers	Students
Preschool Children	Families
Primary School Children	Couples
Teenagers	Professionals
Singles	Older Adults 60+
Single Parents	Young Marrieds
Women	Other _____

*Circle the following **Causes** you feel led to champion!*

**3. My Passion for a Cause: I get excited about...**

Parenting	Evangelism
Families/Marriage	World Evangelisation
At-Risk Children	Fellowship
Abuse/Violence	Mobilizing People for Ministry
Financial Management	Worship
Divorce Recovery	Policy and/or Politics
Disabilities and/or Support	Race
Deafness	Business and the Economy
Blindness	Relief Efforts
Law and/or Justice System	Ethics
Sanctity of Life	Health and/or Fitness
Homelessness	Science and/or Technology
Drug and Alcohol Recovery	Environment
Compulsive Behaviour Recovery	International and Global Affairs
Illness and/or Injury	Local or National Issues
Sexuality and/or Gender Issues	Community/ Neighbourhood Issues
Education	Other _____

**Please remember to record your responses on your S.H.A.P.E. Profile.**



## APPLYING MY ABILITIES (A)

*"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit."* 1 Cor. 12:6

*"I (God)... have given him skill, ability, and knowledge in all kinds of crafts..."* Exodus 31:3

One of the most common excuses people give for not getting involved in ministry is, "I just don't have any abilities to offer." Nothing could be further from the truth. The key is *matching* your abilities with the right ministry!

### **FIVE MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ABILITIES**

**1. MYTH: People aren't born with skills. All skills must be learned by experience.**

This simply is not true. There are a number of skills which seem to be inborn and develop very early in infancy. When people say, "He just seems to have a natural talent for it", it's probably true.

**2. MYTH: Those skills which must be learned are earned primarily in the classroom.** Actually some of your most basic skills were learned at home, "in the street", or somewhere outside the classroom.

**3. MYTH: If you have certain abilities, you will be very aware that you have them.**

Again, that is not true. You're probably using a number of talents or skills that you are not even aware of. You need some process of skill identification.

**4. MYTH: Skills that I use at work are only usable in that environment. I couldn't use them in ministry.** Hopefully, by the end of this programme, you'll see the fallacy of that idea. Be creative.

**5. MYTH: Most people only have a few abilities.** The truth is that many national studies have proven that the average person possesses hundreds of different skills.

## **HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR MOTIVATED ABILITIES**

Think about your accomplishments to date. Circle the abilities that best describe you below. If none of the words listed fits you, feel free to add your own on the “other” line.

*Circle the following **Abilities** that apply to your life!*

**Entertaining ability:** to perform, act, dance, speak, magic

**Recruiting ability:** to enlist and motive people to get involved

**Interview ability:** to discover what others are really like

**Researching ability:** to read, gather information, collect data

**Artistic ability:** to conceptualize, picture, draw, paint, photograph, or make renderings

**Graphics ability:** to lay out, design, create visual displays or banners

**Evaluating ability:** to analyse data and draw conclusions

**Planning ability:** to strategise, design and organise programs and events

**Managing ability:** to supervise people to accomplish a task or event and coordinate the details involved

**Counselling ability:** to listen, encourage and guide with sensitivity

**Athletic ability:** to coach or participate in a sport

**Teaching ability:** to explain, train, demonstrate, tutor

**Writing ability:** to write articles, letters, books

**Linguistic ability:** to speak and write in one or more of the following languages

**Editing ability:** to proofread or rewrite

**Promoting ability:** to advertise or promote events and activities

**Repairing ability:** to fix, restore, maintain

**Feeding ability:** to create meals for large or small groups

**Recall ability:** to remember or recall names and faces

**Mechanical operating ability:** to operate equipment, tools or machinery

**Resourceful ability:** to search out and find inexpensive materials or resources needed

**Counting ability:** to work with numbers, data or money

**Classifying ability:** to systematise and file books, data, records and materials so they can be retrieved easily

**Public Relations ability:** to handle complaints and unhappy customers with care and courtesy

**Welcoming ability:** to convey warmth, develop rapport, making others feel comfortable

**Composing ability:** to write music or lyrics

**Landscaping ability:** to do gardening and work with plants

**Decorating ability:** to beautify a setting for a special event

**Other 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please remember to record your responses on your S.H.A.P.E. Profile**

## PLUGGING-IN YOUR PERSONALITY (P)

In the box below, write your name:

Now write your name with your opposite hand:

### WHAT HAPPENED?

When you tried to do something that was not *natural* to you... (1) You felt uncomfortable, (2) It took extra time and effort, and (3) You didn't go a great job at it.

The same things are true when we try to serve in areas that are not suited to our personality. God has wired your temperament in a unique way. This factor is very important in matching you to the right ministry. It's obvious that God loves variety -- just look around! And there is no "right" or "wrong" temperament.

Although many fine (and extremely detailed!) personality assessments are available, for the purpose of your **MINISTRY PROFILE**, we want you to consider just four aspects:

**Instructions:** Circle one or the other

#### “I tend to...”

##### Be Extroverted

I prefer interacting with many people and gain energy from being part of a variety of activities.

OR

##### Be Introverted

I prefer interacting with only a few people and gain energy from quiet reflective time. I am a good listener.

##### Be Self-expressive

I am more open and verbal about my thoughts and opinions. I enjoy sharing these with other people.

OR

##### Be Self-controlled

I tend to keep my thoughts and opinions to myself.

##### Prefer Routine

I am more comfortable being involved in activities where I clearly know what is expected of me. I like closure and completion before starting something new.

OR

##### Prefer Variety

I am more fulfilled by tasks that change and maybe even have some surprises. Finishing one task before starting another is not crucial.

##### Be Cooperative

As I work with others, I easily see their point of view. I like being part of a team effort.

OR

##### Be Competitive

I like a sense of challenge. It increases my effort and helps me overcome the obstacles.

**Please remember to record your responses on your S.H.A.P.E. Profile.**

## **EXAMINING MY EXPERIENCES (E)**

*"And we know that in ALL things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Rom. 8:28*

*"Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel" Phil. 1:12*

One of the most overlooked factors in determining the ministry God has for you is your past experience, particularly your hurts and problems you've overcome with God's help. Since our greatest life messages come out of our weaknesses, not our strengths, we should pay close attention to what we've learned in the "school of hard knocks".

### **GOD NEVER WASTES A HURT!**

**HE WANTS YOU TO BE OPEN TO MINISTERING TO PEOPLE WHO ARE GOING THROUGH WHAT YOU'VE ALREADY BEEN THROUGH!**

*"(God)... who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God." 2 Corinthians 1:3-4*

**ON YOUR MINISTRY PROFILE RECORD THESE EXPERIENCES:**

- **Ministry** experiences: How have you served God in the past?
- **Work** experiences: What jobs have you been most effective in and enjoyed most?
- **Educational** experiences: What were your favourite subjects in school/college/university? What are your educational achievements?
- **Spiritual** experiences: What have been your most meaningful times with God?
- **Painful** experiences: From what problems, hurts, thorns, and trials have you learned the most?

**Please remember to record your responses on your S.H.A.P.E. Profile.  
Bring your profile with you to the Friday classes in Part 3 of the programme.**

## MY MINISTRY (S.H.A.P.E.) PROFILE

MY SPIRITUAL GIFTS (S):	MONITORING MY HEARTBEAT (H)		
	Roles	People	Causes
MY MOTIVATED ABILITIES (A)	MY PERSONALITY (P)	MY EXPERIENCES (E)	
		<b>Ministry</b>	
		<b>Work</b>	
		<b>Educational</b>	
		<b>Spiritual</b>	
		<b>Painful</b>	
APPLICATIONS FOR MINISTRY			
INREACH		OUTREACH	