

40 Weeks of Purpose

Week 31

Understanding your Shape

3) **Abilities**

- Unlike Gifts, that were given to you by God, your Abilities are the natural talents that you were born with
 - These are not necessarily “spiritual” things, and even unbelievers have these kinds of talents
 - God wants you to put them to use serving others
- All of our talents come from God, but I want to make sure that you understand the difference between a Gift and an Ability
- Abilities are very common and everyone has them...
 - Studies show that an average human has 500-700 skills and abilities
- Gifts are unique, very spiritual, and you don't get that many
- Every Ability you have can be used to serve God
- Some examples are things like artistic ability, architectural, administrative, baking, boat building, candy making, debating, designing, embalming, embroidering, engraving, farming, fishing, gardening, leading, managing, masonry, music, needlework, painting, planting, inventing, carpentry, sailing, selling, tailoring, teaching, writing, etc.
- One thing that God gives some people, is the ability to make money:
- Deuteronomy 8:18 (NIV)
 - 18) But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.
- These people can often support the Abilities of others who are able to serve people

- 1st Peter 4:10 (ESV)

10) As each has received abilities, use them to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace

4) Personality

- There is no one else like you...
- It's obvious God loves variety
 - God made Introverts and Extroverts
 - God made people who like Routine, and people who love Variety
 - God made some people Thinkers and other people Feelers
 - God made some people who work best on Individual assignments, and some people who work best on a Team
- There are simply different personalities and different temperaments for people
- There is no "Right" or "Wrong" temperament for serving God
- God wants all types of personalities to balance out the Ecclesia and give it flavor
- Your Personality will affect HOW and WHERE you use your Gifts and Abilities
 - Two people might both have a passion for Evangelism, but one is Introverted and one is Extroverted... Their service will come out in different ways: One might do Open Air Preaching, while the other sets up a Website
- It's easier to work WITH your Personality, than AGAINST it
 - Just don't convince yourself that you aren't the right TYPE of person for God

5) Experiences

- God allowed many Experiences to happen to you in your past
 - These Experiences have shaped you into the Servant that you are
- Understanding how these Experiences have changed you is important to knowing how best to serve
- You should spend some time examining the SIX basic kinds of Experiences:

- 1) Family Experiences – What did you learn growing up?
- 2) Educational Experiences – What did you like in School?
- 3) Vocational Experiences – What jobs have you enjoyed most?
- 4) Spiritual Experiences – What have been your most meaningful times with God?
- 5) Service Experiences – How have you served God in the past?
- 6) Painful Experiences – What problems, hurts, thorns, and trials have you learned from?

- God uses the last category the most to prepare you for Service
- In fact, your greatest area of Service will probably 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 has fought that demon and won?
 - Who better to comfort a wife whose husband has left her than a woman who has gone through that same agony herself
- It's sometimes helpful to remember when painful experiences occur that God intentionally allows you to go through painful experiences to better equip you for serving others
- 2nd Corinthians 1:4 (NLT)
 - 4) He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When others are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.
- For God to use your painful experiences, you have to be willing to share them...
 - You have to stop covering them up and admit your faults, failures and fears

POINT TO MEDITATE ABOUT THIS WEEK:

I was designed by God to serve Him.

VERSE TO MEMORIZE THIS WEEK:

• 1st Peter 4:10 (ESV)

10) As each has received abilities, use them to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace

QUESTION TO CONSIDER THIS WEEK:

What has God given me that I can give to others?