

SHAPE: Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, Experiences

Week 3 · Psalm 139 · Source week: 3/4

A two-week SHAPE source section presented publicly as Week 3, helping men see how God may use their gifts, heart, personality, and story.

Recap and Psalm 139

Millennium Men: Weeks 3 &4/SHAPE

Recap of Last Week:

Last week we learned that God has created us for good works. (Ephesians 2:10) We are designed to DO, to function, and not to just live our lives aimlessly. God made each one of us with unique gifts designed to perform the tasks that He knew would need to be done, before we were even born. Psalm 139 says that He knit us together in our mother's womb. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. Nothing about you is a mistake. You are destined to make a difference!

Psalm 139

For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.

1 You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. 2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. 4 Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely. 5 You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? 8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. 9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, 10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," 12 even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. 15 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. 16 Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. 17 How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! 18 Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand-- when I awake, I am still with you.

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Heart

Your heart is what you're passionate about. Your heart may be your biggest need or a place of learning that was particularly impactful for you. Many times, your heart is tender around the biggest pain in your life. A great example of someone's heart effecting the path of their life is the movie, "**Lorenzo's Oil**", which was a true-life drama about parents, **Augusto and Michaela Odone** whose five-year-old son, Lorenzo was diagnosed with a rare and incurable disease. Their struggle fueled their passion, and they ultimately found a cure and rewrote medical history. Many times, before healing someone, the Bible would say that Jesus was filled with compassion for the person he was healing.

Our heart, our compassion, will help direct and define our mission in life. Take a moment to reflect now.

What was or is your biggest hurt in life and how do you think God can use it?

Take a few minutes with your notebook or notes app and answer this honestly. You do not have to make it polished. Just write what comes to mind and let God work with the truth on the page.

You may be going through that pain right now. If you are, it's difficult to see through the pain that you could find your ministry within that, but it's often true. A Godly compassion will rise up within you and you'll want to help those you see in need. Your HEART is where your deepest compassion resides. God is likely moving you to help or aid in a ministry that is connected to your HEART.

Ask God today to fill you with a Godly Compassion for a group of people. You'll be amazed how God will break your heart for a people and how God will use you to help them. It could be that you have a compassion for orphans, though you had two great parents. God may break your heart for a group of people somewhere across the globe, if He does, be open to the mission before you. God may be moving you into full time missionary service. If you're like me, you may have a friend group from college that are great guys, but don't know Christ. God may be calling you to sit down, one by one, with each one of your old friends and share with Jesus has done for you.

Pray this prayer right now, "God use me. Break my heart for a people. Give me compassion for the lost. In Jesus's precious name, Amen."

Abilities

Your abilities are definitely going to be used by God! We often think of the outward abilities, as they seem to be on display, but they're clearly not the only gifts that God gives. Are you a concert pianist? God can use you! Are you a physician? There is a need for Godly physicians! Are you a police officer? God can use your vocation and giftings, right now. Start your day with this tiny prayer, "God use me today. Put people in my path that could use whatever I have to give." That's a great prayer and a great way to start each day. God desires to use every resource you have at your disposal. Your abilities are sometimes the easiest to see that you can give. We are all part of the body of Christ. Many have abilities that are seen and many of us have abilities that aren't celebrated on a stage or seen by many. 1 Corinthians 12:12 says, 12 There is one body, but it has many parts. But all its many parts make up one body. It is the same with Christ. (NIV)

What are some of your abilities that God can use to build His Kingdom?

Pause here and write your answer in your notebook, on paper, or in the notes app on your phone or computer. Name the abilities that come to mind, even if they seem ordinary at first.

Personality

Are you an extrovert or an introvert? There are several different personality profiles and different tests use to measure them. It's helpful to take a personality profile test and then, if possible, ask a trusted friend for their honest opinion as to its accuracy. Not all tests are foolproof, and you may not agree with every assessment. Personality profile tests are blunt instruments. But finding out the basics of your personality can absolutely

help you find your purpose. God designed you. Danny DeVito is a great actor, but he was probably never going to be an NBA Center. Just as physical characteristics can help determine our vocation or outward gifts, our personality will help us understand more about how God might want to use us.

The Enneagram Personality Test

The [Enneagram](#) is a system of personality which describes people in terms of nine types, each with their own motivations, fears, and internal dynamics.

The Enneagram is an emotionally focused system of understanding people -- honing in on one's core emotional motivations and fears. Each of the nine personality types has its own driving force, which is centered around a particular emotion.

Some Enneagram types experience strong emotions, while other types aim to avoid emotions in one form or another. However, whether running from emotions or diving into them, each type describes some aspect of emotional experience.

The nine types of the Enneagram are divided among Heart Types, Head Types, and Body Types.

Heart types depend on their emotional intelligence to understand their own reactions and connect with others.

Head types depend on their intellectual intelligence to make sense of things and navigate the world around them.

Body types depend on their instinctual intelligence to follow their "gut" and respond to threats and opportunities. (Truity.com)

Experiences

Much like your heart, your experiences are going to help define your direction. Life is so much better with a guide! If you've been to a city several times, chances are you know the best routes around town to avoid traffic jams, you know the best places to eat and the best places to stay! Your experience can be valuable to someone else if you're willing to share it. If you've successfully raised teenage girls, share your experience! If you're a veteran who battled PTSD and found hope and peace on the other side, reach out a helping hand to your fellow veterans! God will use everything that you've been through for His glory. **All of your experiences can be used by Him.** It's up to you whether you want to keep your experience bottled up or to use it. If you hold onto a past pain and can't seem to get over it, try helping someone that's going through the exact same thing. I believe your burdened will be lightened and you'll find joy in sharing. That's not easy for us men to do sometimes, but the reward is worth it. Remember Joseph, whose brothers sold him into slavery. His response to his past pain is exactly how we should respond. "But as for you, you meant evil against me;

but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive." Genesis 50:20 (NKJV) If you'll allow your past pain to be used by God, part of your purpose will be found through the pain of your past. You'll develop a godly compassion for those that are walking through what you've already walked through, and you'll desire to help lead and guide them through the pain, and to Jesus. When people go through hard times, they need a counselor. Jesus is The Counselor. When men go through turbulent times, they need peace. Jesus is the Prince of Peace. When we lead others to the still waters of Jesus, His love, His grace, His kindness and His healing, we will understand that what we went through wasn't in vain. **Our past pain, will be useful.**

Other Factors

Other Factors: Environment

We could insert the "Nature vs Nurture" argument here, but the bottom line is both play a role in who you are. God wasn't surprised when your parents got pregnant with you. He never scratched His head and said, "Oh man, that wasn't supposed to happen." Your parents, your siblings, your grandparents, your cousins and even your next-door neighbor were all put there by God. Everyone in your environment and even where you grew up was part of God's design for you. Were you raised in the big city or a small town? Were you raised on a farm or in the suburbs? Did you join a gang when you were young or play Little League baseball and your dad was the coach? None of these things were mistakes or surprises for God. Psalm 37:23 says, "The steps of a man are established by the LORD, And He delights in his way." (NASB) God's purpose on your life will not be determined by your past environment, but your past environment will play a crucial role in your purpose.

Other Factors: Mom

One of the best assessments is what other people say about you. The term, "Mother's know best" is appropriate here. What does your mom or someone that unconditionally loves you, say about you? Are your friends constantly saying, "You should open a restaurant! You are the best chef I know." Or are they saying, "You could be a professional fisherman! or "You should write a book!". Sometimes, those things are confirmations of what God has placed in our hearts. The best thing to do is to ask God! Talk to Him about what you should be doing. Many times, men think of this as your vocation but that's not always the case. You might be the best mentor of young people, but your title is bus driver. You might have the gift of encouragement, but your job is to be a crossing guard and to smile and pray for people as they drive by. Your little gift can change the world if you give it to God. But if you try to hold onto it for your own glory, it will only serve as a snare.

Other Factors: Dad

Later in the journey, we return to the relationship we have with our fathers. Here are a few statistics that will help you understand the role of a father in your life and your children's lives:

What happens to the Fatherless? (fatherhood.org)

7 times more likely to become pregnant as a teen

7 times more likely to be abused or neglected

7 times more likely to abuse drugs or alcohol

4 times more likely to live in poverty

4 times more likely to have behavioral problems

2 times more likely to be obese

2 times more likely to commit a crime

80% of incarcerated inmates in the US come from fatherless homes.

Other Factors: Those we Admire:

There's a great line in the old Paul Newman movie, "Hud", "A nation will come to resemble those whom it admires." We tend to adopt the traits and customs of those we admire. That's why it's really important to guard our hearts. Many times, you can tell whom someone admires by the way they dress. Once we're past about five years old, our mothers no longer pick out our clothes for us, so many times, we subconsciously choose clothes and styles that resemble people with whom we most identify.

Who are your favorite actors or sports figures? Your favorite people from history? Chance are, they have had an effect on the lens through which you view the world. Many times, we admire characteristics in people where we are lacking. That's healthy and part of your design. However, when the people we admire also have character flaws then we subconsciously say to ourselves, "That person is successful here, so it must be ok to have the character flaw..." How many times have we heard our children say that their hero does this or does that and it must be ok? That's why the One we should admire and pattern our life after is Christ alone. It's healthy to admire traits we may not be as strong in as another, but we must be cautious enough to keep that admiration from becoming an idol.

Other Factors: Dreams

God may have already planted a vision in your heart for your life. I've heard story after story about people who have had this wild dream inside of them, perhaps for as long as they can remember. You may have always known that you would go to college, even if no one in your family has ever been. You may have

always known that you'd be a pilot, or a physician or that one day, you'd help raise foster children... Luke writes this in Acts, "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Acts 2:17(NIV). God has more than likely already given you a vision for your life. He plants things in your spirit that you should pay attention to. Do you have a vision that God has whispered in your ear?

God's vision for my life is...

Write a first answer, even if it is only a sentence. You can return to it as God gives more clarity.

Calling and Emotional Intelligence

What is my calling?

Many people ask me, "what is my calling"? to which I ask them to open their hand and look within it? What's in your hands right now? I'm not talking about things, I'm asking you what people God has placed in your path. God wants you to be a good steward of those around you. Are you being a good steward of the relationships God has currently placed in your pathway? Are you honoring your parents and your elders? Are you serving in your church, even if it's not the perfect church. Are you praying over your wife, are you fasting for your children? I don't say these things to indict you, I say them to encourage you to begin being a good steward of the relationships that God has placed around you. God wants His Kingdom built and His Kingdom is people, not church buildings or castles or crowns or things! Start pouring your life into the relationships that God has already given you and you'll see an incredible difference in how you approach the day. Start intentionally having coffee with your lost neighbor or putting your phone down at dinner and spending quality time with your family or reaching over and grasping the hand of your wife and praying over her before you both fall asleep at night... These are what God wants us to do NOW. And when we do, He will see that you care about His Kingdom, that you are seeking it first (Matthew 6:33) and all the things you need will be added unto you. There is an incredible peace that flows through you when you know that your life is purposeful. I call it the Great Adventure. I hope you'll go on this journey with me.

Emotional Intelligence

One of the best books I've ever read is a secular book by Travis Bradberry called "Emotional Intelligence 2.0". I highly recommend this book. The beauty of Emotional Intelligence is that no matter where you start, you can improve your EQ score.

Tips on Emotional Intelligence:

Take an assessment of a person's emotions before engaging

What is the emotional feel of a room?

Respond instead of reacting to conflict.

Utilize active listening skills

Practice self-awareness of your emotions

Learn to take criticism well

Empathize with others

Be approachable

Be sociable

Count your blessings

Summary and Personal Practice

Summary

You are an amazing creation! Your SHAPE will determine how God is going to use you. Take the spiritual gifts test and the personality profile test and then, if possible, ask a trusted friend if they agree with the assessments. If you are reading on your own, write down where the results feel accurate, where they feel incomplete, and what you want to pray through. You may have to take each test a few times in order to get an accurate depiction of who you are. Remember that design reveals destiny!

The key to living the Great Adventure and becoming "more than a conqueror" is to give your gifts to God. We can despise our beginnings or we can learn from them. Zachariah 4:10 says, Do not despise these small beginnings, for the LORD rejoices to see the work begin. (NLT). Give your today to God. Give your SHAPE, and all that you are to Him and you'll find delight in being used for your specific purpose.

Your Task for the Week

This week I want you to take the SHAPE work seriously and write as you go. Keep your notebook, paper, or notes app close by. Start today with what comes to mind, then keep adding to it during the week as God brings more clarity.

Personality Profile Test

Enneagram Test: www.truity.com

Go to Personality Tests Tab. Choose Enneagram. Start test.

DISC Personal Profile Test: www.truity.com

Go to Personality Test Tab. Choose DISC. Start test.

Write 50 things that you like about yourself:

Open a notepad on your phone or take out a piece of paper and carry it with you this week. Write down 50 things that you like about yourself. It may seem like a challenging exercise at first, but it is an important one. Start with as many as you can today, then keep the list with you. As you think about it during the week, more will come to mind. Before next week, finish the full list of 50.