

M 2 · WEEKS THREE & FOUR

# SHAPE

---

*Going over your Spiritual Gifts and Personality — discovering the unique design God built into you, so you can find the work He prepared for you to do.*

---

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How did God shape me — and for what?

## WEEKS 3 &amp; 4

## 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 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 139:1–16 · NIV

<sup>1</sup>You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. <sup>2</sup>You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. <sup>3</sup>You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

<sup>4</sup>Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely.

<sup>13</sup>For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup>I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. <sup>16</sup>Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

When we analyze how we're made, we can start determining what good works God has prepared for us. If design truly reveals destiny, then diving into our SHAPE will help us understand our purpose. This acrostic gives us five places to look:

**S — Spiritual Gifts** — what God equips you with to build His Kingdom (covered last week).

**H — Heart** — what you are most passionate about.

**A — Abilities** — the natural talents God gave you.

**P — Personality** — the way God wired you to engage the world.

**E — Experiences** — all you have lived through, good and bad.

## WEEKS 3 &amp; 4

## 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 is the film *Lorenzo's Oil*, the true-life drama of 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 says 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.

**REFLECT**

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

---

---

---

---

---

You may be going through that pain right now. If you are, it's difficult to see that you could find your ministry within it — 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, and God is likely moving you toward a people connected to it. It could be a compassion for orphans, though you had two great parents. He may break your heart for a people somewhere across the globe. Be open to the mission before you.

**PRAY THIS NOW**

*God, use me. Break my heart for a people. Give me compassion for the lost. In Jesus's precious name, Amen.*

**WEEKS 3 & 4****Abilities**

Your abilities are going to be used by God. We often think of the outward abilities, since they seem to be on display, but they're clearly not the only gifts 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. 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. **1 Corinthians 12:12** says there is one body, but it has many parts, and all its many parts make up one body — it is the same with Christ.

## REFLECT

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

---

---

---

---

---

## A PRAYER TO START EACH DAY

*God, use me today. Put people in my path that could use whatever I have to give.*

## WEEKS 3 &amp; 4

## Personality

Are you an extrovert or an introvert? There are several personality profiles and different tests used to measure them. It's fun to take one with a close friend and then ask their honest opinion of 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 help determine our outward gifts, our personality helps us understand how God might want to use us.

## THE ENNEAGRAM

The Enneagram is a system of personality that describes people in terms of nine types, each with their own motivations, fears, and internal dynamics. It is an emotionally focused system — honing in on a person's core emotional motivations and fears. The nine types are divided among three centers:

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

**Head types** — depend on intellectual intelligence to make sense of things and navigate the world.

**Body types** — depend on instinctual intelligence to follow their "gut" and respond to threats and opportunities.

## WEEKS 3 &amp; 4

## Experiences

Much like your heart, your experiences will help define your direction. Life is so much better with a guide.

If you've been to a city several times, you know the best routes to avoid traffic, the best places to eat, 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 on the other side, reach out a helping hand to your fellow veterans. God will use everything you've been through for His glory. If you hold onto a past pain and can't seem to get over it, try helping someone going through the exact same thing — your burden will be lightened, and you'll find joy in sharing.

**GENESIS 50:20 · NKJV**

*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.*

That was Joseph's response to the brothers who sold him into slavery, and it is exactly how we should respond. If you'll allow your past pain to be used by God, part of your purpose will be found through it. You'll develop a godly compassion for those walking through what you've already walked through, and you'll desire to lead 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.

## WEEKS 3 &amp; 4

## Other factors that shaped you

---

### ENVIRONMENT

We could insert the "nature vs. nurture" argument here, but the bottom line is that 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, siblings, grandparents, cousins, and even your next-door neighbor were all put there by God. Were you raised in the big city or a small town? On a farm or in the suburbs? **Psalm 37:23** says the steps of a man are established by the Lord, and He delights in his way. Your past environment will not determine your purpose, but it will play a crucial role in it.

### MOM

One of the best assessments is what other people say about you. What does your mom — or someone who loves you unconditionally — say about you? Are your friends constantly saying, "You should open a restaurant, you're the best chef I know," or "You should write a book"? Sometimes those things are confirmations of what God has placed in our hearts. 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 crossing guard. Your little gift can change the world if you give it to God.

### DAD

We'll have a whole lesson on the relationship we have with our fathers. For now, here are a few statistics that show the role a father plays in a child's life:

---

|            |                                                                                                   |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>7×</b>  | more likely to become pregnant as a teen, to be abused or neglected, or to abuse drugs or alcohol |
| <b>4×</b>  | more likely to live in poverty, or to have behavioral problems                                    |
| <b>2×</b>  | more likely to be obese, or to commit a crime                                                     |
| <b>80%</b> | of incarcerated inmates in the U.S. come from fatherless homes                                    |

---

SOURCE · FATHERHOOD.ORG

**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 — which is why it's so important to guard our hearts. We admire characteristics in people where we are lacking, and that's healthy and part of your design. But when the people we admire have character flaws, we subconsciously tell ourselves it must be okay to have them too. That's why the One we should admire and pattern our life after is Christ alone.

**DREAMS**

God may have already planted a vision in your heart for your life. You may have always known you'd go to college, even if no one in your family ever has. You may have always known you'd be a pilot, a physician, or that one day you'd help raise foster children. **Acts 2:17** says that in the last days God will pour out His Spirit on all people — your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 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.

**REFLECT**

God's vision for my life is...

---

---

---

---

---

**WEEKS 3 & 4**

## 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 hand right now? I'm not talking about things; I'm asking what people God has placed in your path.

God wants you to be a good steward of those around you. 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, but to encourage you to

begin being a good steward of the relationships God has already placed around you. His Kingdom is people — not buildings or castles or crowns. Start intentionally having coffee with your lost neighbor, putting your phone down at dinner, or grasping your wife's hand and praying over her before you both fall asleep. When you seek His Kingdom first (**Matthew 6:33**), all the things you need will be added unto you. I call it the Great Adventure, and I hope you'll go on this journey with me.

## WEEKS 3 &amp; 4

## Emotional intelligence

---

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

- Assess a person's emotions before engaging.
- Respond instead of reacting to conflict.
- Practice self-awareness of your emotions.
- Empathize with others.
- Count your blessings.
- Read the emotional feel of a room.
- Use active listening skills.
- Learn to take criticism well.
- Be approachable and be sociable.

## WEEKS 3 &amp; 4

## Summary

---

You are an amazing creation, and your SHAPE will determine how God is going to use you. 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. **Zechariah 4:10** says, "Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin." 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.



## Homework

### ◆ HOMEWORK · PART ONE

#### Take a Personality Profile Test

Take both profiles below, then ask a close friend whether they agree with the results. You may need to take each one a few times to get an accurate picture. Bring your results to the next gathering.

truity.com — Enneagram & DISC

### ◆ HOMEWORK · PART TWO

#### Write 100 things you like about yourself

This one is harder than it sounds — and that's the point. Fill in all one hundred. It is an act of receiving how "fearfully and wonderfully" God made you.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

11. \_\_\_\_\_

13. \_\_\_\_\_

15. \_\_\_\_\_

17. \_\_\_\_\_

19. \_\_\_\_\_

21. \_\_\_\_\_

23. \_\_\_\_\_

25. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

12. \_\_\_\_\_

14. \_\_\_\_\_

16. \_\_\_\_\_

18. \_\_\_\_\_

20. \_\_\_\_\_

22. \_\_\_\_\_

24. \_\_\_\_\_

26. \_\_\_\_\_

27.

29.

31.

33.

35.

37.

39.

41.

43.

45.

47.

49.

51.

53.

55.

57.

59.

61.

63.

65.

67.

69.

71.

73.

75.

77.

28.

30.

32.

34.

36.

38.

40.

42.

44.

46.

48.

50.

52.

54.

56.

58.

60.

62.

64.

66.

68.

70.

72.

74.

76.

78.

- 79. \_\_\_\_\_
- 81. \_\_\_\_\_
- 83. \_\_\_\_\_
- 85. \_\_\_\_\_
- 87. \_\_\_\_\_
- 89. \_\_\_\_\_
- 91. \_\_\_\_\_
- 93. \_\_\_\_\_
- 95. \_\_\_\_\_
- 97. \_\_\_\_\_
- 99. \_\_\_\_\_

- 80. \_\_\_\_\_
- 82. \_\_\_\_\_
- 84. \_\_\_\_\_
- 86. \_\_\_\_\_
- 88. \_\_\_\_\_
- 90. \_\_\_\_\_
- 92. \_\_\_\_\_
- 94. \_\_\_\_\_
- 96. \_\_\_\_\_
- 98. \_\_\_\_\_
- 100. \_\_\_\_\_