



DISCOVER YOUR S.H.A.P.E.

*Using your unique gifts, passions,
and experiences to glorify God*

SEPTEMBER 21 - OCTOBER 26

Foreword

At Frisco First, we believe God has uniquely designed every person to belong, become, and benefit others. You are not an accident. You are created on purpose and for a purpose.

This guide is designed to help you, as a LIFEGroup leader, walk with others through discovering how God shaped them—spiritually, emotionally, and practically— for meaningful impact. Our prayer is that through this experience, every person will:

- **BELONG:** Understand that they are welcomed into God's family with purpose and love.
- **BECOME:** Grow in the words and ways of Jesus through self-discovery and Scripture.
- **BENEFIT:** Use their unique gifts, passions, and experiences to serve others and glorify God.

You don't need to have all the answers to lead well. You simply need to create space for people to share honestly, reflect on what God is revealing, and encourage them to take next steps in using their SHAPE for His mission.

Thanks for leading. You're helping others live out the mission of inviting people into a relationship with Jesus Christ and investing in their spiritual growth to benefit others.

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DISCOVER YOUR S.H.A.P.E.

Welcome to this small group study designed to help you discover your S.H.A.P.E.! One of the most important questions you can ask in life is, *“What has God made me to do?”*

According to the Bible, you have been uniquely made to make a special contribution to the world! The purpose of this study is to help you understand your individual makeup—the one-of-a-kind blend of elements that point to God’s calling for your life.

By the time you reach the end of this study, you’ll understand yourself better than ever before. Best of all, you’ll be able to use the insights you gain to make a meaningful impact at church, in your family and workplace, and in the world.

May God bless your journey of discovery over the next six weeks!

The Frisco First Ministry Team

Understanding This Study

STUDY GUIDE FEATURES

Here is a brief explanation of the features in this study guide:

CHECKING IN

You will open each meeting with an opportunity for everyone to check in with one another about how you are doing with the weekly assignments. Accountability is a key to success in this study!

KEY VERSE

Each week you will find a key verse or Scripture passage for your group to read together. If someone in the group has a different translation, ask them to read it aloud so the group can get a bigger picture of the meaning of the passage.

VIDEO LESSON

There is a 15-minute video lesson at <https://saddleback.com/watch/discover-your-shape>. You can watch this beforehand as a leader or as part of the group. Lesson outlines are included for your teaching.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Each video segment is complemented by several questions for group discussion. Please don't feel pressured to discuss every single question. The material in this study is meant to be your servant, not your master. There is no reason to rush through the answers.

PRAYER DIRECTION

At the end of each session, you will find suggestions for your group prayer time. Praying together is one of the greatest privileges of small group life. Please don't take it for granted.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

This is where the rubber meets the road. We don't want to be just hearers of the Word. We also need to be doers of the Word (James 1:22). This section of the study explains the assignments we would like you to complete before your next meeting. These assignments are application exercises that will help you put into practice the truths you have discussed in the lesson.

DIVING DEEPER

The material in this small group study is designed to complement the book *S.H.A.P.E. Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life* by Erik Rees (Zondervan, 2006). While reading the book is not a required component of this study, this section will direct you to additional reading from the book for greater understanding of the topic.

Only You Can Be You

DISCOVERING WHAT YOU ARE DESIGNED TO DO

CHECKING IN

- If your group is new or you have new members, take a few minutes to let everyone introduce themselves and share how they came to be part of this group.
- What is the one thing you want God to do in your life as a result of this study?
- How would you define a life purpose, or a life contribution?

KEY VERSE

Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that. Don't be impressed with yourself. Don't compare yourself with others. Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life. GALATIANS 6:4-5 (THE MESSAGE)



VIDEO LESSON

Watch the Session 1 video <https://saddleback.com/watch/discover-your-shape> as a group or teach the following lesson.

Only You Can Be You

Your journey to discover your S.H.A.P.E. begins with an honest question: “*Who am I?*” You have a specific purpose in life . . . a special assignment from God for you to fulfill for Him on Earth.

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things He planned for us long ago. EPHESIANS 2:10 (NLT)

“*What will be the CONTRIBUTION of my life?*”

This is your specific contribution to the body of Christ, within your generation, that causes you to totally **DEPEND** on God and authentically **DISPLAY** His love toward others—all through the expression of your unique makeup. Most people define their purpose in life by:

1. TRENDS
2. What others TELL them
3. What others TELL myself
4. God's TRUTH

Who God **MADE YOU TO BE** determines what God **INTENDS FOR YOU TO DO**.

cont.>

SESSION 1



VIDEO LESSON

Only You Can Be You | CONTINUED

S.H.A.P.E. Overview

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank You for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in Your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. PSALM 139:13-16 (NLT)

Each of the five letters in the word S.H.A.P.E. represents a specific characteristic of your life:

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: "What has God gifted me to do?"

HEART: "What passions do I have?"

ABILITIES: "What do I naturally do better than others?"

PERSONALITY: "How has God wired me to navigate life?"

EXPERIENCES: "Where have I been?" and "What have I learned?"

It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation. ROMANS 15:20 (NIV)

For you have heard of my past . . . I persecuted the church with fanatical zeal and . . . did my best to destroy it. I was ahead of most of my contemporaries in the Jewish religion and had a [boundless] enthusiasm.

GALATIANS 1:13-14 (PHILLIPS)

Only you can be you. If you don't live out your unique S.H.A.P.E., the body of Christ suffers.

Signs of Being In S.H.A.P.E.

1. FOCUS in your mind
2. FULFILLMENT in your heart
3. FRUITFULNESS in your life

Signs of Being Out of S.H.A.P.E.

1. FRUSTRATION in your mind
2. FATIGUE in your heart
3. FEAR in your life

The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

JOHN 10:10 (NLT)

cont.>

SESSION 1



VIDEO LESSON

Only You Can Be You | CONTINUED

Closing Thought

Jesus' desire for every one of His followers is that they live a vibrant and fulfilling life here and now! He wants you to live the abundant life—but you must do it through Him. It's the key to discovering your kingdom purpose. God created you and knows the unique masterpiece you are.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Look back in your outline at the signs of being In S.H.A.P.E. and the symptoms of being Out of S.H.A.P.E. How do you see yourself right now? What hope, if any, are you feeling that this study will improve your S.H.A.P.E.?
2. What is your reaction to being told you are God's masterpiece? How does this concept stand to impact your future with God?
3. How does it make you feel to know you have a specific assignment from God to accomplish on Earth, and that it is for His glory?
4. In what way do you think your group could ultimately benefit from your personal understanding of your S.H.A.P.E.?



PRAYER DIRECTION

Thank God for bringing you to this place where you are discovering who you are, who God has made you to be, and who you need to be in order to fulfill His specific design for you. Ask Him to open your eyes and the eyes of your fellow group members to reveal the unique contribution He created each of you for.



PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

As you begin your S.H.A.P.E. discovery journey, take time to identify the one thing you want God to do in you and through you over the next six weeks. What is that one thing you believe God wants you to fulfill for Him? Write it down and share it next week.

The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work that the Lord Jesus gave me...

ACTS 20:24 (NCV)



DIVING DEEPER

For maximum understanding of the material in this lesson, read Chapter 1, "Masterpiece," from the book *S.H.A.P.E. Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life*.

Unwrapping My Spiritual Gifts

GOD'S GIFTS ARE THE KEY TO KINGDOM PURPOSES

CHECKING IN

- Tell the group the one thing you've identified as your goal for this study.
- Share a thought about what you learned in the first session.
- Talk about a gift you received that you considered perfect. What made it perfect in your eyes?

KEY VERSE

God has given gifts to each of you from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Manage them well so that God's generosity can flow through you. 1 PETER 4:10 (NLT)

VIDEO LESSON

Watch the Session 2 video <https://saddleback.com/watch/discover-your-shape> as a group or teach the following lesson.

Unwrapping My Spiritual Gifts

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about Me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. ACTS 1:8 (NLT)

Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1 (NIV)

God's gifts are the key to the kingdom purpose He has set aside just for us. In order to serve effectively, we need to understand the nature of spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are *not* the following:

1. Your spiritual gifts are *NOT* your personality traits; however, your personality can provide a natural vehicle for expressing your gifts.
2. Your spiritual gifts are *NOT* your natural talents.
3. Your spiritual gifts are *NOT* the same as the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5).

What Are Spiritual Gifts?

A spiritual gift is a God-given SPECIAL ABILITY given to EVERY BELIEVER at conversion, by the Holy Spirit to SHARE His love and STRENGTHEN the body of Christ.

God has given each of you a gift from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. 1 PETER 4:10 (NLT)

cont.>

SESSION 2



VIDEO LESSON

Unwrapping My Spiritual Gifts | CONTINUED

Lists Spiritual Gifts in the New Testament

1 CORINTHIANS 12

The Word of Wisdom
The Word of Knowledge
Faith
Gifts of Healing
The Power to Work Miracles
Prophecy
Discerning of Spirits
Speaking in Tongues
Interpretation of Tongues

EPHESIANS 4:11

Apostleship
Prophetic Gifts
Evangelism
Pastoring
Teaching

ROMANS 12

Preaching
Serving
Encouraging
Generous Giving
Leadership
Mercy

Why Does God Give Spiritual Gifts?

A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. 1 CORINTHIANS 12:7 (NLT)

Spiritual gifts are not for you or about you. They are for the specific purpose of BLESSING the body of Christ—the Church.

Every Believer Receives A Spiritual Gift

Each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that. 1 CORINTHIANS 7:7B (NIV)

God has given you a spiritual gift! If you're a believer, the Bible says you have the Spirit living in you. And if you have the Spirit living in you, then you have spiritual gifts to use for God's glory and the benefit of others. The key to discovering your gifts is two-fold:

1. Determine what gifts you think you may have.
2. Serve in various roles to see which ones bring the greatest fulfillment for you and the greatest results for God.

Allow Scripture to guide you to those gifts that are uniquely yours. Ask God to reveal how He wants you to use your gifts to accomplish His work in the world.

Many people discover their gifts as they minister to others. The more you serve, the more clearly you will see your gifts.

cont.>

SESSION 2



VIDEO LESSON

Unwrapping My Spiritual Gifts | CONTINUED

The ultimate goal is to use your gifts to love and bless others.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. 1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3 (NIV)

Three common traps that keep us from living a life of love:

1. COMPARISON

God's Word says that all parts of the body are needed.

The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." In fact, some of the parts that seem weakest and least important are really the most necessary.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:21-22 (NLT)

2. PROJECTION

Encourage everyone to be who God created them to be.

3. REJECTION

Gift rejection is often rooted in things like fear, shame, or hurt.

Don't wait to begin using your spiritual gifts until you understand all of the details. Your group is a great place to start!

Closing Thought

The key is to serve in areas that best match your giftedness. Start as soon as possible. When you do this you'll experience greater fulfillment and see greater fruitfulness for God. You were made by God to serve others. We are better together.

cont.>

SESSION 2



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. While all spiritual gifts are given variously by God to be used for building up the body of Christ and for reaching the world with His message of hope, why do you think Paul tells us, in 1 Corinthians 13, that love is greater than these gifts?
2. Why is it important for us to learn to recognize our spiritual gifts? How is a spiritual gift different from a personality trait, a talent, or a characteristic? If you're not sure, this is a great opportunity to clarify your understanding with your group.
3. When serving, are you doing it to benefit others or yourself? Think of what you can do to avoid the traps of comparison, projection, and rejection. Which do you see yourself most easily falling into?
4. Do you already know your spiritual gifts? If so, share them with the group and how you've been using them in ministry.
5. Discuss how God might want to use your spiritual gifts to benefit the other members of your group. Is there a way you can serve one another?



PRAYER DIRECTION

Thank God for giving you spiritual gifts to unwrap over the course of this study. Ask Him to reveal to each group member his or her unique area of giftedness through service to the body of Christ. Pray for one another to avoid and be kept from the traps of comparison, projection, and rejection.



PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

In order to help you discover your Spiritual Gifts, we have partnered with Ministry Vitals to provide an online spiritual gifts assessment. We suggest taking this assessment at the end of the 6 weeks. However, it would be wise to journal your thoughts on gifts.



DIVING DEEPER

For maximum understanding of the material in this lesson, read Chapter 2, "*Spiritual Gifts*," from the book *S.H.A.P.E. Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life*.

Hearing My Heartbeat

DISCOVERING THE GOD-GIVEN DESIRES OF YOUR HEART

CHECKING IN

- What, if any, area of service did you discover or commit to this past week? Share the news with your group as an encouragement or as a prayer request.
- From your study of the New Testament list of spiritual gifts in last week's *Putting It into Practice* section (page 11), share one new thing you learned about spiritual gifts.
- Talk about something exciting that happened in your life this past week. What made it exciting for you?

KEY VERSE

As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart. PROVERBS 27:19 (NIV)

VIDEO LESSON

Watch the Session 3 video <https://saddleback.com/watch/discover-your-shape> as a group or teach through the following outline.

Hearing My Heartbeat

If you knew you had what it takes to impact someone's life in a way that brings glory to God, what would you want to do?

Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. PSALM 37:4 (NIV)

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. COLOSSIANS 3:23-24 (NIV)

The ultimate contribution God has for you to make will align with the passions He has given you for His kingdom. Our hearts reflect our dreams and desires. The key is to let God help you unlock your heart so it can start beating for Him.

I see countless thousands of souls that will one day spend eternity in hell if they do not find the Savior. —Dwight Moody¹

Key #1: Who do I love to serve?

God wants you to serve the people He has placed in your life.

Define your TARGET.

cont.>

¹ Dwight L. Moody, *Through the Bible with Today in the Word*, Bible.org (from a February 1, 1997 sermon), 6, <https://bible.org/node/13088>

SESSION 3



VIDEO LESSON

Hearing My Heartbeat | CONTINUED

Key #2: What needs do I love to meet?

He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. 2 CORINTHIANS 1:4 (NLT)

God can use our weaknesses and failures, as well as our strengths and passions, as part of the masterpiece of ministry that He is creating. Your experiences can give you empathy to connect with others who might be going through something similar.

Because there are so many needs to be met, focus is the key. Here are several categories to consider:

Spiritual Needs: You love helping people discover Christ and reach their full potential in Him.

Physical Needs: You use your resources to provide practical expressions of love, such as food, clothing, shelter, and other simple necessities.

Relational Needs: You enjoy helping people develop authentic, Christ-centered relationships with others.

Emotional Needs: You find gratification by counseling, encouraging, and listening to others who are hurting.

Educational Needs: You enjoy helping people learn and showing them how to live life to its fullest.

Vocational Needs: You enjoy training, coaching, and consulting others to help them overcome barriers, reach their goals, and maximize their personal or professional potential.

Key #3: What causes would I love to conquer?

If you take time to listen long enough, God will stir in your heart and direct you to a cause He has personally chosen for you.

Closing Thought

Have fun discovering together how special God has made each of you.
Use this time to affirm and help clarify things for each other.

cont.>

SESSION 3



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What kinds of things make your heart beat emotionally? Share with the group one or two chief desires of your heart.
2. Who do you think God wants you to reach? How can you identify your target audience?
3. Think about how God met you in difficult times in your life. How could you use those encounters to help someone else? How do you think God might use your gifts, abilities, personality, and experiences to reach your target audience?
4. What makes you angry? This is another avenue to discover your passions.
5. How could your God-given passions benefit your group? Discuss some ideas.



PRAYER DIRECTION

As you pray this week, start out as a group and then pair up for a more intimate time of conversation with God.

Together: Let God know how thankful you are for His inimitable mark on each life in the group. Ask Him to reveal to each person in your group their unique heartbeat for service.

In Pairs: Admit those things that might be keeping your heart from truly beating for God and for what He has given you to do. Ask God to take you deeper into what He is revealing. What might He want you to let go of in order to be more effective in service? What do you need to embrace?



PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Return to the journal you began last week. What are you learning about your heart (passions) that is unique to you? Passions can motivate us in positive ways. Where is your heart/passion leading you?



DIVING DEEPER

For expanded understanding on any issues related to hearing your heartbeat, read Chapter 3, "Heart," in the book, *S.H.A.P.E. Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life*.

Discovering My Natural Abilities

CLARIFYING YOUR GOD-GIVEN STRENGTHS

CHECKING IN

- Did you consider the questions about your heartbeat for ministry from last week's "Putting It into Practice" section? Take a few moments to offer a new insight you gained.
- Here at the halfway point of this study, how is your perspective changing? Is God giving you a clearer picture of your unique life purpose?
- Spend a minute or two sharing at least one thing for which you have a natural aptitude.

KEY VERSE

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'" MATTHEW 25:23 (NIV)



VIDEO LESSON

Watch the Session 4 video <https://saddleback.com/watch/discover-your-shape> as a group or teach through the following outline.

Discovering My Natural Abilities

When you discover your natural abilities, you unlock potential for serving others. Natural abilities are a collection of strengths God wants you to use to fulfill your unique kingdom purpose. God doesn't waste abilities. He matches your calling and your capabilities.

Where do you naturally excel?

Your strengths and talents are there to show off God's greatness. The LORD has given them special skills as jewelers, designers, weavers...They excel in all the crafts needed for the work. EXODUS 35:35 (NLT)

God has given you special ABILITIES to excel in certain areas for His purposes. Whatever you do, do it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men . . . It is the Lord Christ you are serving. COLOSSIANS 3:23-24 (NIV)

Reevaluate the abilities God has given you in light of His eternal purposes and the life situation in which you have been placed. It could open the door to a ministry more fulfilling than you ever imagined!

We often can find opportunities to put our abilities into action for the benefit of others in the simplest moments throughout the day.

cont.>

SESSION 4



VIDEO LESSON

Discovering My Natural Abilities | CONTINUED

See the *List of Fifty Natural Abilities* (page 25). The goal is for you to embrace the things you love to do, not just the things you can do. One day, each of us will have to give an account to God for what we did with the talents He gave us. So make the choice now to use what He's given you.

So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. ROMANS 14:12 (NIV)

The Parable Of The Talents

Jesus told the story about a man who gave money to three of his servants before leaving on a journey. The first two put his money to work and gained a profit. But a third, fearing his boss, buried the money. When the boss returned, he rewarded the two who had increased his estate, praising them for being good and faithful. But the third wasn't as fortunate. His boss ordered:

"Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away." MATTHEW 25:28-29 (NLT)

Life is too short to settle for doing less than our best for God.

If we hold back the natural abilities God gave us at birth, or if we use those abilities for purposes that don't include God, they will not be used to their full potential.

Closing Thought

Do you know the abilities you were born with? Do you know the things you love doing? Start figuring out ways to express those abilities in your everyday life. Grab hold of your natural abilities, and aim high for God's glory!

The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it. —Michelangelo



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What characterizes an activity you love to do? Offer one or two top qualifications.
2. Think about the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14–30. Why does it matter that we make the most of our abilities now? What could be the harm in putting them off or neglecting them?
3. Share with the group something you know you do well, but that you no longer do at all. Why did you stop doing it? Is there a way you could include it again in your lifestyle? Ask the group to pray for you to find that answer.

cont.>

SESSION 4

4. How could your natural abilities benefit your group? Share one way you think God could use something you know you do well.



PRAYER DIRECTION

Thank God for the fact that He has given each of you natural talents and abilities. Ask God to help you see more clearly how He wants you to use them. If you're already using them, ask Him what more He has for you. Don't miss God's best for your life!



PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Return to your journal. What abilities has the Lord given you for His glory? Remember, this journal is helping you build your unique S.H.A.P.E.



DIVING DEEPER

Explore your natural abilities in greater depth by reading Chapter 4, "Abilities," in the book, *S.H.A.P.E. Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life*.

Recognizing My Personality

GOD LOVES VARIETY

CHECKING IN

- What did you learn through the review of your natural abilities? Did the additional list help you recognize more possibilities? Share one new insight with the group.
- Were you able to meet with your spiritual partner? How did that connection help expand or affirm what God is showing you?
- Now that your group has been together a few weeks, take a few minutes to affirm in each person something that has blessed the group.

KEY VERSE

God works through different people in different ways, but it is the same God who achieves His purpose through them all. 1 CORINTHIANS 12:6 (PHILLIPS)



VIDEO LESSON

Watch the Session 5 video <https://saddleback.com/watch/discover-your-shape> as a group or teach through the following outline.

Recognizing My Personality

God loves variety. There are no “wrong” or “right” temperaments. God wants to use them all. God doesn’t measure people the way most of us do.

The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. 1 SAMUEL 16:7B (NIV)

The world places value on external things like prestige, position, and wealth. God places the highest value on less obvious aspects of our lives. The personality you have is God’s gift to you. He created it and gave it to you to use for His glory.

Personality: The complex of characteristics that distinguishes an individual [Webster’s Dictionary]. Your personality takes center stage in all areas of your life!

Ideas About Personality Traits

An indisputable truth is that God has instilled a unique personality in each one of us. Your kingdom purpose is all about people, so it is important to discover how you relate to those around you. Because you’ll encounter many serving opportunities throughout your life, understanding how you react to various situations will help you make the best choices.

cont.>

SESSION 5



VIDEO LESSON

Recognizing My Personality | CONTINUED

How Do I Relate To Others?

Outgoing	OR	Reserved
Self-Expressive	OR	Self-Controlled
Cooperative	OR	Competitive

How Do I Respond To Opportunities?

High Risk	OR	Low Risk
People Driven	OR	Project Driven
Follow	OR	Lead
Solo	OR	Team
Routine	OR	Variety

Closing Thought

The key is to determine how you best relate to others and respond to serving opportunities. God works through different people in different ways, but it is the same God who achieves His purposes through them all. 1 CORINTHIANS 12:6 (PHILLIPS)



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you think discovering the way God has wired your unique personality will help you fulfill your kingdom purpose?
2. If you had the opportunity to choose the ideal situation that would enable you to make the greatest difference for God, what would it look like? Respond to that question by thinking back over recent life opportunities. Which one brought the greatest sense of fulfillment and purpose?
3. Why do we tend to think of certain personality traits as “wrong” or “right”? How have you seen your personality up to now? Had it occurred to you before this lesson that God has a divine use for your personality—that He intentionally made you the way you are? Share one or two key thoughts with the group.
4. What difference does it make for you to know that God intentionally made you the way you are, whether you are outgoing or reserved, self-expressive or self-controlled, cooperative or competitive? Others may see one trait as preferred, but God made all traits specifically for His deliberate use.
5. How can our personalities bless others in our small group? Take a moment or two to affirm a characteristic in each group member.

SESSION 5



PRAYER DIRECTION

Thank God for the personalities He has given each of you. Ask Him to help you see where a trait needs to be submitted to the power of His Spirit for change, and ask Him to show you how to be yourself for His sake. Ask for the power that only comes through a surrendered life of worship.



PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

God only made one of you. How has the Lord uniquely crafted your personality? Add your thoughts to the journal you are keeping.



DIVING DEEPER

Learn more about your natural abilities in Chapter 5, “*Personality*,” from the book *S.H.A.P.E. Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life*.

Understanding My Experiences

GOD USES OUR EXPERIENCES FOR HIS GLORY

CHECKING IN

- What did you learn through the review of your personality tendencies? Did the additional list help you recognize more possibilities? If possible, share one new insight with the group.
- Tell the group one new lesson you've learned about your God-given personality, or share a story about how God has used you already to impact others' lives.
- As you head in to this last session, briefly share what this series has meant to you so far and how you think it will impact your future.

KEY VERSE

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 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 (NIV84)

VIDEO LESSON

Watch the Session 6 video <https://saddleback.com/watch/discover-your-shape>

Understanding My Experiences

There is purpose in your past.

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. ROMANS 8:28 (NLT)

If you truly embrace Romans 8:28, you will realize that God takes all of our experiences—the good and the bad—and uses them for His glory.

Joseph (Genesis 37-50)

- Betrayed by his brothers
- Rose to become the second most powerful man in Egypt
- Sold into slavery
- Saved millions of lives
- Thrown into prison
- Never forgot that God was in control

cont.>

SESSION 6



VIDEO LESSON

Understanding My Experiences | CONTINUED

[Joseph said,] “You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.” GENESIS 50:20 (NIV)

As God lovingly crafts the masterpiece of our lives, He uses every experience to complete the finished product. Consider the events of your life that have helped *S.H.A.P.E.* the person you are today:

- Childhood joys and sorrows
- The pain and thrill of adolescence
- The struggle and accomplishment of adulthood

The Gallery Of Your Life

The possibilities for your life achievements and experiences to become action steps for God are almost limitless. God’s delight and pride in you is not based on what this world celebrates. Think of your experiences in these five general areas:

Positive Portraits:

1. Personal Experiences (an award)
2. Vocational Experiences (a pattern of achievement)
3. Relational Experiences (a godly marriage or a friendship that comforts or challenges you)
4. Educational Experiences (academic degrees or training in areas of special interest)
5. Spiritual Experiences (a history of success in sharing your faith or leading Christians to deeper insight; your own acceptance of Christ and spiritual growth.)

Painful Portraits:

God wants to use your painful experiences to minister to others as well—times when your pain threshold was tested and your endurance was stretched to the breaking point.

Divorce	Death	Cancer
Job loss	Eating disorders	Suicide
Affairs	Abuse	Alcoholism
Depression	Bankruptcy	Miscarriages
Abortion		

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 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 (NIV84)

cont.>

SESSION 6



VIDEO LESSON

Understanding My Experiences | CONTINUED

Examine the moments of your life and think about how you could help others who are suffering. How could your crisis become a catalyst for Christ?

Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that.
GALATIANS 6:5 (THE MESSAGE)

Take A Test Drive

Challenge everyone in your group to commit to taking a 90-day test drive. It's during this trip you will start to refine your S.H.A.P.E. and begin to define your kingdom purpose.

**Experiment with various ministry opportunities. Not sure how to start?
Try friscofirst.church/shape. This tool will match you with a service opportunity.**

Four great places to use your S.H.A.P.E. and start serving during your test drive:

1. Use your S.H.A.P.E. to make deposits of love in your **home**.
2. Use your S.H.A.P.E. to serve others at **work**.
3. Use your S.H.A.P.E. to volunteer at your **church**.
4. Use your S.H.A.P.E. to bless your **small groups**.

Closing Thought

You now have the opportunity to continue what God has started as you run the next leg of your race with Him.

Run your race to win. To win the contest you must deny yourselves many things that would keep you from doing your best. An athlete goes to all this trouble just to win a blue ribbon or a silver cup, but we do it for a heavenly reward that never disappears. So I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I fight to win.

CORINTHIANS 9:24-26 (TLB)

The Final Goal

"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" MATTHEW 25:21 (NIV)



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Share with your group a few positive portraits from your past and how they could provide a platform to serve others.
2. Discuss how your salvation experience could be a springboard for ministry. How might God want to use your testimony to reach others?

**VIDEO LESSON**

Understanding My Experiences | CONTINUED

3. Share a few of your painful portraits along with your thoughts on how they could become a catalyst for Christ. Think about whom, in particular, these events might help you reach, either in ministry or evangelism.
4. Share with your group where you will start your ninety-day test drive—at home, work, church, or in your small group?
5. What have you learned as a result of this series that has helped settle any questions about God's purpose in your life? What do you plan to do as a result of these lessons?

Let your next group gathering be a celebration of S.H.A.P.E. Use that time to share additional insights God has given you as a result of this series and to share your S.H.A.P.E. Profiles.

**PRAYER DIRECTION**

Thank God for this series, and for showing you the many reasons He has for making each of you exactly who you are. Pray for one another's needs, asking God to reveal to you through whatever circumstance you are experiencing right now, a way He can use it for service, either now or in the future. Acknowledge it as part of your S.H.A.P.E.

**PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE**

Now you are ready! In order to help you discover your Spiritual Gifts, we have partnered with Ministry Vitals to provide an online spiritual gifts assessment. **Go to firscofirst.church/shape to take the assessment now.** Here you will add your Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Ability, Personality, and Experiences.

**DIVING DEEPER**

Expand your understanding regarding the value of your past experiences by reading Chapter 6, "Experiences," in the book *S.H.A.P.E. Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life*.

SELF-SURVEY

50 Natural Abilities

ABILITY	LOVE IT	LIKE IT	LIVE WITHOUT IT
1. Adapting <i>The ability to adjust, change, alter, modify</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Administering <i>The ability to govern, run, rule</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Analyzing <i>The ability to examine, investigate, probe, evaluate</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Building <i>The ability to construct, make, assemble</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Coaching <i>The ability to prepare, instruct, train, equip, develop</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Communicating <i>The ability to share, convey, impart</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Computing <i>The ability to add, estimate, total, calculate</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Connecting <i>The ability to link, involve, relate</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Consulting <i>The ability to advise, discuss, confer</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Cooking <i>The ability to prepare, serve, feed, or cater</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Coordinating <i>The ability to organize, match, harmonize</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Counseling <i>The ability to guide, advise, support, listen, or care for</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Competing <i>The ability to contend, win, battle</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Decorating <i>The ability to beautify, enhance, adorn</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Designing <i>The ability to draw, create, picture, outline</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Developing <i>The ability to expand, grow, advance, increase</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ABILITY	LOVE IT	LIKE IT	LIVE WITHOUT IT
17. Directing <i>The ability to aim, oversee, manage, supervise</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Editing <i>The ability to correct, amend, alter, improve</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Encouraging <i>The ability to cheer, inspire, support</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Engineering <i>The ability to construct, design, plan</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Facilitating <i>The ability to help, aid, assist, make possible</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Forecasting <i>The ability to predict, calculate, see trends, patterns & themes</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Implementing <i>The ability to apply, execute, make happen</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Improving <i>The ability to better, enhance, further, enrich</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Influencing <i>The ability to effect, sway, shape, change</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Landscaping <i>The ability to garden, plant, improve</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Leading <i>The ability to pave the way, direct, excel, win</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Learning <i>The ability to study, gather, understand, improve, expand self</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Managing <i>The ability to run, handle, oversee</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. Mentoring <i>The ability to advise, guide, teach</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. Motivating <i>The ability to provoke, induce, prompt</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Negotiating <i>The ability to discuss, consult, settle</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Operating <i>The ability to run mechanical or technical things</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Organizing <i>The ability to simplify, arrange, fix, classify, coordinate</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ABILITY	LOVE IT	LIKE IT	LIVE WITHOUT IT
35. Performing <i>The ability to sing, speak, play an instrument, act out</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. Pioneering <i>The ability to bring about something new, ground-breaking, original</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. Planning <i>The ability to arrange, map out, prepare</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. Promoting <i>The ability to sell, sponsor, endorse, showcase</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. Recruiting <i>The ability to draft, enlist, hire, engage</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. Repairing <i>The ability to fix, mend, restore, heal</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. Researching <i>The ability to seek, gather, examine, study</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. Resourcing <i>The ability to furnish, provide, deliver</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. Serving <i>The ability to help, assist, fulfill</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. Strategizing <i>The ability to think ahead, calculate, scheme</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. Teaching <i>The ability to explain, demonstrate, tutor</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. Translating <i>The ability to interpret, decode, explain, speak</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47. Traveling <i>The ability to journey, visit, explore</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48. Visualizing <i>The ability to picture, imagine, envision, dream, conceptualize</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49. Welcoming <i>The ability to entertain, greet, embrace, make comfortable</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50. Writing <i>The ability to compose, create, record</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>