

CHURCH 301

Exploring Personal Ministry

ENCOUNTER CHURCH



Building People and Transforming Lives

Student's Manual

NAME _____



Seminar Outline

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Welcome to Church 301: Exploring Personal Ministry

Now that you have completed the course work for CHURCH 101 and CHURCH 201, our pathway toward ministry involvement moves on to CHURCH 301. Here we will focus our attention more specifically on how God has individually created each of us to live and serve as vital members on His ministry team. Enjoy these four dynamic sessions as we begin to “Explore God’s Unique Design for Every Believer.”

APPRECIATION AND RECOGNITION

We first want to express great appreciation to Pastor Rick Warren and the Saddleback Valley Community Church for their development of the Purpose Driven Church model of ministry and a model of this course. We would encourage all Church leaders to read *The Purpose Driven Church* by Rick Warren (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.)

We also want to express appreciation to the “We Build People” team that are part of the Assemblies of God for the “Values Statements” and We Build People logo. We would encourage all Church leaders to read *We Build People: Making Disciples for the 21st Century* by Mike Clarensau, Sylvia Lee, and Steve Mills and *We Build People Pastor’s Kit: Implementation Guide* by Steve Mills, ed (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1997.)

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Session One: Exploring My Experiences



SESSION ONE: EXPLORING MY EXPERIENCES

Exploring God's Plan for Every Believer

1. *Every believer is a chosen _____ and is part of the priesthood of believers.*

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God.”
—1 Peter 2:9

“He has made us competent as ministers of the new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit...” — 2 Corinthians 3:6

2. *Every believer is _____ of God's plan for the church.*

“... those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are **indispensable**.”
—1 Corinthians 12:22

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called . . .”
—Ephesians 4:3-4

3. *Every believer is to _____ God in all areas of their life.*

“With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you **worthy of his calling** . . . We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may **be glorified in you**.”
— 2 Thessalonians 1:11,12

“Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.” —1 Peter 2:12

4. *Every believer has been given a spiritual _____ from the Lord to be used for effective ministry.*

“Each one should **use whatever gift** he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.” —1 Peter 4:10



Exploring My Unique Design for Ministry

“You may believe the common notion that God’s will for your life is sealed in a mysterious time capsule somewhere, only to be found by those who attend the greater number of seminars, prayer meetings, Sunday school classes, outreach events, camps, worship services, and conferences. Fortunately, it is more likely that God’s will is revealed through his **unique design** of the person he made you to be.”¹

In order for us to find our place of ministry in God’s plan we will explore four aspects of our unique design. These four ingredients will be the focus of our Church 301 material.

- Exploring My _____
- Exploring My _____ and _____
- Exploring My _____
- Exploring My _____ For Ministry

Exploring our unique life experiences, passions, personalities and spiritual giftings will contribute to understanding not only what God has made us to **be**, but also what God intends for us to **do**! The purposeful nature of God points to his desire to reveal to each of us his design for our life and ministry. He intends to use every aspect of our nature, experiences and abilities, along with his supernatural giftings, to equip us for the work of ministry. As you apply yourself to these four sessions be sure to prayerfully ask for the Holy Spirit to guide you in the discovery of your unique “design” for ministry!



Four Experiences That Influence Ministry Involvement

1. _____ *EXPERIENCES*

Even through life's difficulties (and sometimes especially through them) God is at work and can use these experiences as part of our design for ministry.

"Now I want you to know, brothers, that **what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel**. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to every one else that I am in chains for Christ." — Philippians 1:12-13

True-Life Story

A thirty-three year old man in a Midwestern city received the tragic news that his wife and three year old daughter had been killed in an auto accident. Four years later, based on his own journey through the depths of his personal pain, he began a "Grief Recovery" ministry in his church that today is touching hundreds of lives.

2. _____ *EXPERIENCES*

We are all a part of the Body of Christ and much of the exploration of our ministry design is influenced by our relationships with one another and those outside the church.

"When he [Paul] came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. **But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles . . .**" — Acts 9:26-27

3. _____ *EXPERIENCES*

We are to learn from life's triumphs. How do we handle success in life and ministry? Often our achievements can not only point to areas of personal success, they can also indicate abilities and skills that God desires to use within our ministry efforts.

"While the beggar held on to Peter and John, **all the people were astonished and came running to them**. . . When Peter saw this, he said to them: 'Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?'" — Acts 3:11-12

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Session One: Exploring My Experiences



4. _____ *EXPERIENCES*

As we dedicate ourselves to serving the Lord the experiences we gain through our commitment will provide new opportunities for God to reveal to us our unique design for ministry.

“While Peter was still speaking [preaching] these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles.”

— Acts 10:44-45

True-Life Story

A twenty six year old single woman from Minnesota went on a ten day missions trip to West Africa. Normally, she worked as a Physicians Assistant at a clinic near the church. On this short trip she was working with the medical team and was deeply touched by the needs around her. During the ministry trip God began to deal with her heart about a long-term commitment to that region of the world. One year later she is passionately serving full-time with a relief effort dedicated to treating the sick and injured.



The Relationship Between Life Experiences and Ministry

As we explore how God has uniquely designed each person for ministry we must take a moment to examine our own unique life experiences and see how God can use them to divinely direct us toward present and future ministry opportunities. For instance, in the case of Joseph in the Old Testament his experiences served to fulfill God's plan for his life and ministry.

JOSEPH'S EXPERIENCES

Difficult Experiences:

- ◆ Lived as a _____ in a foreign land
- ◆ Falsely accused by Potiphar's wife
- ◆ Thrown into prison

Relationship Experiences:

- ◆ Sold into slavery by his own brothers
- ◆ _____ by his friends while in jail
- ◆ Reunited with his family

Achievement Experiences:

- ◆ Placed in charge of Potiphar's entire household
- ◆ _____ for all of Egypt

Ministry Experiences:

- ◆ Was given a dream as a boy regarding future events
- ◆ Interpreted the _____ of Pharaoh while still in prison
- ◆ Was used by God to spare the people from the years of famine

The story of Joseph's life reminds us that "**in all things [experiences] God works for the good** of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose [plan]" (Romans 8:28). In fact, it was Joseph himself who shared with his brothers that what they had intended for evil turned out to be experiences in his life that God used for the good (Genesis 50:20).

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Session One: Exploring My Experiences



Reflections on My Life Experiences

The following represents a series of questions intended to explore the experiences that have contributed to the unique design God has created within each of us. Briefly respond to each question and be prepared to share your answers as you begin to explore your design for ministry in the church.

Which of the following describes your family life as you were growing up?

(place an ☒ in front of every description that matches your experiences)

- ☐ A "Leave It To Beaver" Rerun (traditional family)
- ☐ The Original "Home Alone" (latchkey kid, absentee parents, etc.)
- ☐ The "Brady Bunch" (blended family)
- ☐ Grandparents in Charge
- ☐ Single Parent Home
- ☐ The Work-a-holic Home
- ☐ "Animal House" (leisure, play time)
- ☐ The "Addams Family" (strange and bizarre)
- ☐ The Dysfunctional Nightmare
- ☐ Other: _____

Which of the following best represents your religious background as you were growing up?

(you may select more than one)

- ☐ Pentecostal / Charismatic
- ☐ Catholic
- ☐ Mainline Denominational (Methodist, Presbyterian etc.)
- ☐ Baptist
- ☐ No Formal Religious Background
- ☐ Other _____

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Session One: Exploring My Experiences



Share in the space provided ONE of your most significant life experiences based on the four general descriptions (difficult, relationship, achievement and ministry) highlighted earlier in this session. It may include the death of a parent, an experience on a short-term missions trip, a change in jobs, a divorce or other significant experience **that has influenced the formation of your Christian character and ministry interests.**

❖ **A Rewarding Ministry Experience . . .**

❖ **A Gratifying Personal Achievement Experience . . .**

❖ **A Touching Relationship Experience . . .**

❖ **A Tremendously Difficult Life Experience . . .**

Sharing Activity

After completing this exercise share in groups of three how these experiences have helped shape your Christian character and ministry interests.

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Session Two: Exploring My Passions and Personality



SESSION TWO: EXPLORING MY PASSIONS AND PERSONALITY

What Is Passion?

“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. **Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor [passion],** serving the Lord.”

— Romans 12 9-11

“Passion is a God-given capacity to _____ attach ourselves to an object (people, a cause, an idea, an area of ministry) over an _____ period of time to meet a need.”²

—Aubrey Malphurs

“Passion has great power. It is an _____ emotion; a compelling action; a strong _____ to some object, activity or concept. Passion is the starting point of all achievement . . . Passion is the _____ of our soul.”³

—John Maxwell



Why Is Passion Important?

A wonderful example of the power of passion is found in the life of **Nehemiah**. He had been living in exile with many other Jews and one day he received the tragic news that the city of Jerusalem was still in ruin. His story reveals to us four keys to understanding the importance of exploring our passions and why it is so vital to finding our place in ministry.

1. *Passion represents the _____ of our heart.*

“When I heard these things, **I sat down and wept**. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.” — Nehemiah 1:4

2. *Passion provides the _____ for action.*

“Then I prayed to the God of heaven, and I answered the king, ‘If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, **let him send me to the city** in Judah where my fathers are buried **so that I can rebuild it.**’” — Nehemiah 2:4-5

3. *Passion helps develop specific _____ for ministry.*

“Come let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace. They replied, ‘Let us start rebuilding.’ So they began this good work.” — Nehemiah 2:17-18

4. *Passion creates a sense of _____ within us—especially in the face of opposition.*

“After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, ‘**Don’t be afraid of them**. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and **fight for your brothers, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.**’”
— Nehemiah 4:14



The Impact of My Passions and Interests

One of the best ways to determine our God-given passions for life and ministry is to reflect on those things that have the greatest impact on our values, convictions and emotions. Take a few moments to reflect on each of the “**Six Passion Indicators**”, and the corresponding scriptural references, before you attempt to more specifically identify your own passionate design for ministry.

My Passions Will:

1. **Shape my** _____.
(Joshua 24:15, Philippians 3:7-11)
2. **Adjust my** _____.
(Matthew 4:19; 8:19-22; Luke 9:23; 1Peter 2:21)
3. **Direct my** _____.
(Philippians 3:19; 4:8,9; 2Peter 3:1)
4. **Cause me, at times, to do the** _____.
(Judges 7:1-8; 1Kings 18:30-38; Matthew 3:1-10)
5. **Shape my** _____.
(Joshua 14:6-11; Matthew 16:13-17)
6. **Reveal my** _____.
(Matthew 26:62-64; John 18:33-37; Acts 6:8-15; Galatians 2:20)

BONUS:
Passion is Contagious



Identifying My Passions and Interests

While our personal interest is not the determining factor in exploring God's unique design for our lives, our passions will help guide us on the road to finding our place in ministry. Generally, we tend to focus our passion and interests within two basic categories.

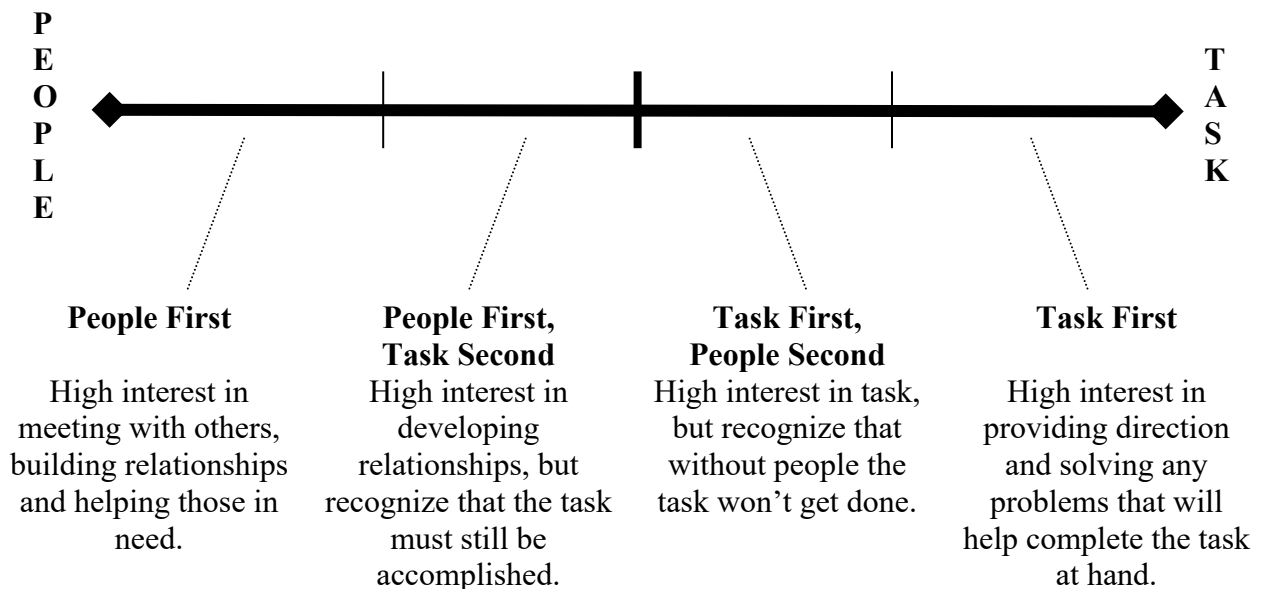
❖ _____-Oriented Passion

Our passion for ministry in this first category focuses primarily on helping people grow in the Lord or supporting them during times of crisis. These individuals find great enjoyment in socially active ministry areas that place real value on nurturing personal relationships and helping others in need.

❖ _____-Oriented Passion

Some people find that their passions are found in things like problem-solving, systems development, organizing ministry resources and assessing the effectiveness of our ministry efforts. These important God-given passions often help bring the clarity and direction necessary for effectiveness in the work of ministry.

Based on the descriptions above, mark where your passions tend to fall on the scale below, then answer the questions on the following page.



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Session Two: Exploring My Passions and Personality



Be sure to review the section entitled “The Impact of My Passions and Interests” prior to answering these questions.

1. What ministries, needs, activities or causes do you enjoy thinking, reading or talking to others about?
2. What activities, causes or people-groups (i.e., children, youth, etc.) personally energize you?
3. Which activities do you truly enjoy doing so much that you tend to lose track of time in the process?
4. What causes, activities or people-group would you like to personally make a positive impact upon? (List no more than three.)
5. Based upon your response to the previous questions, make a list of TWO specific areas of personal passions and interests.
 - a.
 - b.

Your passion speaks of the God-given capacity within you to both glorify God and encourage others. If your passions and interests are not directed toward either of these then you need to re-examine the source of that personal passion. Remember, you are called to “delight yourself in the Lord and **he will give you the desires [passions and interests] of your heart**” (Psalm 37:4).

Sharing Activity:

Take a few moments to share with others in your group **one** area of passion in your life as it relates to possible ministry opportunities.



A Personality Comparison

One of the great challenges to effectiveness in our ministry endeavors will involve how well we learn to work with others (little has changed since kindergarten). Since ministry in the body of Christ often calls for us to learn to collaborate with others toward achieving common goals, it is important for us to not only identify our unique personality mix but also understand the characteristics of other personality styles. Carefully review the comparative chart below and **CIRCLE THE ONE IN EACH CATEGORY THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR PERSONALITY TENDENCY**, then add up the total for each column.

	D	I	S	C
Behavior Pattern	Direct/Controlling	Direct/Supportive	Indirect/Supportive	Indirect/Controlling
Pace	Active/Decisive	Active/Spontaneous	Passive/Relaxed	Passive/Systematic
Inner Need For	Power & Control	Popularity & Acceptance	Sincerity & Appreciation	Accuracy & Precision
Fears	Being taken advantage of	Loss of social recognition	Sudden changes & instability	Personal criticism of work
Security Through	Control & Leadership	Playfulness & approval	Friendship & cooperation	Preparation & thoroughness
Motivated By	Results, challenge, action, and the "Win"	Recognition, approval, visibility, and the "Show"	Relationships, appreciation, the "Participation"	Being right, quality, the "Process"
Major Strength	Goal oriented, gets things done	Enthusiasm, gets people motivated	Good people skills, team player or leader	Thoroughness, accuracy in analyzing
Major Weakness	Can be insensitive to others feelings	Impulsive; may not focus on details	May sacrifice results for group harmony	Overly cautious; can be too thorough
Teamwork	Initiates action, takes charge, works toward goals	Influences and motivates people to work together	Builds relationships ensures follow through, supportive	Focuses on details, offers technical skills and quality control
Time Management	Focus: efficient use of time; likes to get to the point	Focus: tends to rush to next exciting thing	Focus: spends time in personal interaction	Focus: works more slowly to ensure accuracy
Decision Making	Decisive, at times impulsive; makes decision with goal in mind	Intuitive; quick and spontaneous, lots of wins and losses	Relational, makes more slowly, needs input from others, avoids risks	Reluctant; cautious logical, thorough, needs lots of data
Communication	One-way; not as good a listener, better at initiating	Enthusiastic; stimulating, often one-way; inspiring	Two-way flow; a good listener	Good listener, especially in relation to tasks
Conflict Style	Autocratic	Attacks	Acquiesces	Avoids
Sensitivity to the feelings of others	Tends to be insensitive, sees life as a battle	More sensitive to others, wants others to be happy, quick to offer support	Conscious of feelings, tries to avoid hurting others, avoids conflict and controversy	Task-oriented, takes a logical approach to feelings
TOTALS	D:	I:	S:	C:



What Are the Four Personality Styles?⁴

We each have a unique personality—unique in many ways. We behave in different ways, respond to people, pressures and problems differently and tend to see life from our own unique perspective. As we explore our design for ministry in the church it is vital that we look, not only to the external needs around us, but also internally at who we are and what we have to offer. We all have something to learn and appreciate about our own personality and the personalities of others. Better understanding our own personality will not only help us build on our strengths but also acknowledge the weaknesses in our personality design. One useful exercise for helping us explore our ministry design is found in understanding the four recognized personality styles.

D Dominant, Direct, Decisive

(Strong-willed, born leader, organized, delegates work, goal-oriented, always striving to achieve, determined, thrives on change, has little need for close friends)

I Inspiring, Influential, Impressing

(Appealing personality, makes friends easily, enthusiastic and expressive, talkative, life of party, storyteller, influencing, interactive socializer, colorful and creative)

S Submissive, Steady, Stable

(Low-key but happy, patient, calm and cool, many friends, easy to get along with, good listener, peace-maker, has administrative ability, well-balanced, steady)

C Competent, Compliant, Cautious

(Deep, thoughtful, analytical, organized, very orderly, likes charts, lists and graphs, perfectionist, detail conscious, quiet, cautious thinker, pessimistic nature, serious and purposeful)

More detailed explanations of each of the four basic personality types are outlined in the following pages. As you review each, begin to assess your unique personality style or combination of styles. Then you may want to ask several people who know you well to offer their opinions concerning the accuracy of your conclusions from this session.



THE DOMINANT “D”

(Active / Task-oriented)

Biblical Character: _____

Basic Description: A very strong personality that tends to be driven by a task or goal and possesses a powerful presence that may lack social skills but will usually get the job done with excellence! (*Dominant, Direct, Demanding, Decisive*)

Basic Motivation: _____ and _____

Basic Desires:

Freedom from control

Authority

Varied activities

Difficult assignments

Opportunities for advancement

Choices, rather than ultimatums

Responds Best To Leader Who:

Provides direct answers

Sticks to task

Gets to the point

Provides pressure

Needs To Learn:

You need people

Relaxation is not a crime

Some controls are needed

Sensitivity to people's feelings is wise

Everyone has a boss

Self-control is very important

To focus on finishing well is important

Perceived Strengths:

Independent

Efficient

Practical

Determined

Potential Weaknesses:

Pushy

Dominating

Insensitive

Unreasonable

Biblical Advice:

Be gentle, not bossy “Wisdom from above is . . . gentle,” —James 3:17 (NASB)

Control your feelings / actions “In your anger do not sin.” —Ephesians 4:26

Focus on one thing at a time “But one thing I do . . .” —Philippians 3:13

Have a servant's attitude “Serve one another in love . . .” —Galatians 5:13



THE INSPIRING “I”

(Active / People-oriented)

Biblical Character: _____

Basic Description: A personality that includes an outgoing nature, optimistic outlook and the ability to keep everyone loose. Usually the first to volunteer for a job but usually becomes disinterested and prefers to move on to other fun adventures rather than finish the work. Their enthusiasm is often contagious and they usually show everyone else how to have a good time. (*Inspiring, Influencing, Impressing, Inducing*)

Basic Motivation: _____ and _____

Basic Desires:

Prestige

Friendly relationships

Freedom from details

Opportunities to help others

Opportunities to motivate others

Chance to verbalize ideas

Responds Best To Leader Who:

Is fair and also a friend

Provides social involvement

Provides recognition of abilities

Offers rewards for risk-taking

Needs To Learn:

Time must be managed

Deadlines are important

Being responsible is more important than popularity

Listening better will improve one's influence

Perceived Strengths:

Enthusiastic

Dramatic

Outgoing

Personable

Potential Weaknesses:

Egotistical

Undisciplined

Manipulative

Talkative

Biblical Advice:

Be humble / avoid pride “Be completely humble and gentle . . .” —Ephesians 4:2

Control your speech “Be quick to listen, slow to speak . . .” —James 1:19

Be more organized “Everything should be done in an . . . orderly way” —1 Corinthians 14:40

Be patient “The fruit of the Spirit is . . . patience . . .” —Galatians 5:23



THE SUBMISSIVE “S”

(Passive / People-oriented)

Biblical Character: _____

Basic Description: A personality known as more of an introvert who is often found observing situations and tends to be rather pessimistic. Their low-key nature can be a calming force in times of crisis and they can serve as effective peacemakers. Tends to have many friends and will choose to sacrifice achieving the task if it means that relationships may suffer. (*Submissive, Steady, Stable, Security-oriented*)

Basic Motivation: _____ and _____

Basic Desires:

An area of specialization

Security of situation

Identification with a group

Consistent, familiar environment

Established work patterns

Responds Best To Leader Who:

Is relaxed and friendly

Allows to work at own pace

Allows time to adjust to changes

Gives personal support

Needs To Learn:

Change provides opportunity

Discipline is good for us

Friendship isn't everything

Risk taking is sometimes necessary

Perceived Strengths:

Patient

Potential Weaknesses:

Awkward

Dependable

Dependent

Reliable

Slow

Agreeable

Fearful

Biblical Advice:

Be bold & strong “Be strong and courageous.” — Joshua 1:6

Be confident “God did not give us a spirit of timidity . . .” — 2 Timothy 1:7

Be more passionate “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart. . .” — Colossians 3:23



THE COMPETENT “C”

(Passive / Task-oriented)

Biblical Character: _____

Basic Description: A personality best described as an introvert who is a thinker and tends to view life from a rather pessimistic perspective. Known to be very analytical, serious and detail conscious. Often the plotters and strategists in the group who are schedule oriented and determined to keep everyone on track. *(Competent, Compliant, Cautious, Calculating)*

Basic Motivation: _____ and _____

Basic Desires:

Clearly defined tasks
Details

Limited risks
Time to think

Responds Best To Leader Who:

Provides reassurance
Listens to suggestions

Spells out detailed operating procedures
Provides resources to do task correctly

Needs To Learn:

Optimism leads to greater success
Thorough explanation is not everything

Total support is not always possible

Perceived Strengths:

Persistent
Organized
Serious
Industrious

Potential Weaknesses:

Moody
Indecisive
Moralistic
Picky

Biblical Advice:

Be positive “If anything is excellent . . . think about such things.” —Philippians 4:8

Avoid a bitter spirit “Get rid of all bitterness . . .” —Ephesians 4:31

Be joyful “The fruit of the Spirit is . . . joy . . .” —Galatians 5:22

Don’t worry “Do not fret . . .” —Psalms 37:1



Reviewing My Unique Personality Design

When we explore our personality design it is vitally important for us to also recognize that God is at work in us by His Spirit: “. . . being confident of this, that **he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus**” (Philippians 1:6). While we must honestly accept who we are today, the truth is that God is at work in us and we must be willing to allow the Holy Spirit to blend our unique personality traits so that our strengths can be an asset to our ministry and our weaknesses are recognized and put under the controlling power of God’s Spirit.

List three strengths and how each can be used to bring glory to God through your personal ministry involvement.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Whatever our personality style may be, we all have recognizable limitations that need our attention. Therefore, honestly reflect on one or two of your personal liabilities and their potential impact (if not changed) upon your effective service in ministry.

- 1.
- 2.

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Session Three: Exploring My Giftedness



Session Three: Exploring My Giftedness

What Are My Natural Abilities?⁵

Look over the following list and place an ☒ in front of those abilities that you feel best match your own.

- ☐ **Musical ability:** to sing or play an instrument with competence
- ☐ **Clerical ability:** to handle general office work with enthusiasm
- ☐ **Researching ability:** to read, gather information, collect data
- ☐ **Artistic ability:** to conceptualize, picture, draw, paint, or photograph
- ☐ **Graphics ability:** to lay out, design, create visual displays or banners
- ☐ **Evaluating ability:** to analyze data and draw accurate conclusions
- ☐ **Planning ability:** to strategize, design and organize programs and events
- ☐ **Managing ability:** to supervise people to accomplish a task or event
- ☐ **Counseling ability:** to listen, encourage and guide with sensitivity
- ☐ **Writing ability:** to write articles, letters, books
- ☐ **Editing ability:** to proofread or rewrite
- ☐ **Promoting ability:** to advertise or promote events and activities
- ☐ **Repairing ability:** to fix, store, maintain
- ☐ **Mechanical ability:** to operate equipment, tools or machinery
- ☐ **Public Relations ability:** to relate to others and handle complaints with courtesy
- ☐ **Composing ability:** to write music or lyrics
- ☐ **Landscaping ability:** to do gardening and work with plants
- ☐ **Decorating ability:** to beautify a setting or room tastefully
- ☐ **Carpentry ability:** to build from wood, metal or other materials
- ☐ **Childcare ability:** to care for children with gentleness and joy
- ☐ **Other** _____
- ☐ **Other** _____



What Are Spiritual Gifts?

1. *Spiritual gifts are* _____ *...*
(Therefore, *spiritual* gifts are not the same as *natural* talents or skills.)

SPIRITUAL GIFTS	NATURAL TALENTS	SKILLS
Given by Holy Spirit	Natural abilities	Learned abilities
Discovered after spiritual birth	Present from natural birth	Acquired with training
God-given to all members of the body of Christ	God-given to all members of humanity	Developed by people over time

2. *... that God gives to* _____ *...*

“All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to **each one**, just as he determines” —1 Corinthians 12:11.

3. *... to* _____ *the Body of Christ ...*

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” —1 Peter 4:10

“... so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” —Ephesians 4:12-13

4. *... and* _____ *for ministry to the world.*

“Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers . . . But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all . . . “ —1 Corinthians 14:22, 24



Five Principles Concerning Spiritual Gifts

- ❖ **Principle #1:** Spiritual gifts are absolutely _____ to the work of ministry for every believer.

“All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own., but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.”

— Acts 4:32-33

“. . . until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” — Ephesians 4:13

- ❖ **Principle #2:** Spiritual gifts are freely given to every believer and it is our responsibility to both _____ and _____ our gift(s) within the context of ministry to the body of Christ and the lost people among us.

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But eagerly desire the greater gifts.” — 1 Corinthians 12:27-31

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” — 1 Peter 4:10

- ❖ **Principle #3:** Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit to _____ the body of Christ for faithful, _____ ministry.

“It was he [Jesus] who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” — Ephesians 4:11-12

“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgement, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is

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Session Three: Exploring My Giftedness



serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.” — Romans 12:3-8

- ❖ **Principle #4:** Spiritual gifts are to be used to release the _____ of God through His believers.

“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” — Acts 2:1-4

“Then Peter said, ‘Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.’ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and hands became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.”
— Acts 3:6-8

- ❖ **Principle #5:** Spiritual gifts are both _____ and _____ within a nurturing _____ of believers who are united under common ministry goals.

“When he [Paul] came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus.”
— Acts 9:26-27

“Timothy, my son, I give you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.” — 1 Timothy 1:18-20



How Spiritual Gifts Relate To Life and Ministry

1. *Spiritual Gifts Are Not _____, Abilities or Skills, But Both Are Used By God.*

While spiritual gifts and natural abilities are not the same, both are vital to discovering our unique place in the work of ministry! Your unique contribution to ministry will come from both areas. So, what are your talents or skills?

2. *Spiritual Gifts Are Not The _____ of The Spirit, But Both Are Needed To Be Effective.*

While both are to be manifested in the life of every believer, the Fruit of the Spirit expresses the qualities of a maturing Christian life. However, the gifts of the Spirit are not the same for everyone and are designed for the outward activity of ministry to the Body and not the inward attributes of a spiritually mature follower of Christ.

3. *Spiritual Gifts Are Not The Same As _____, But Our Giftedness Will Help Us Discover Those Roles.*

One's Christian role does not automatically determine that they will have the corresponding gift to function effectively in that Christian role. Gifts are not distributed by the Holy Spirit based simply on a person's title. They are sovereignly selected and it is our responsibility to make sure that the Christian role matches the Spiritual gift and not vice versa.

4. *Spiritual Gifts Are Not The Same As _____, But Everyone Needs Both.*

All believers are to walk in faith, to pray diligently, to show mercy, to give generously, and to be a witness for the Lord. However, there are certain individuals in the body of Christ to whom God gives a special gifting in many of these same areas. This does not eliminate the rest from investing in the spiritual disciplines outlined in God's Word.



How Can I Discover My Spiritual Gift(s)?

Developing the use of your spiritual giftedness in ministry is not an automatic thing. It will take time and a willingness to perhaps explore a variety of ministry opportunities.

Key Elements to Exploring My Spiritual Giftedness . . .

- ❖ ***I Must Be Willing To _____ What The Bible Has To Say.***
It is helpful to carefully explore the Bible passages that not only teach us about spiritual gifts but also explore their purpose in God's plan for ministry.
- ❖ ***I Must Be Willing To _____ To What I Discover.***
Gift discovery is a process of exploration. We should not be threatened by this. It is not an unspiritual step but rather a very helpful part of the discovery process.
- ❖ ***I Must Be Willing To _____ On My Ministry Experiences.***
It is important to take the time to assess our feelings and allow the Holy Spirit to speak to us about our ministry experiences. He will guide us in the process of matching our spiritual gifts to the ministry area where we will be most effective.
- ❖ ***I Must Be Willing To _____ The Impact of My Involvement.***
A vital part of the gift discovery process will include times for personal reflection and assessment of my effectiveness within a specific ministry area.
- ❖ ***I Must Be Willing To Look For The _____ of Others.***
The unique ministry design God is developing within each person will also be recognized by others, especially those within our church.

"The central clue to discovering our spiritual gifts is to get in touch with the areas of service that produce a flow of inner joy, excitement, and energy."⁶



Spiritual Gifts Reflection

At this time you will be taking a “Spiritual Gifts Discovery Survey”. After completing the survey write your three top scoring gifts in the spaces provided below. Then circle the number that reflects how accurate you feel the rating of each gift is to your own thoughts prior to taking the survey.

Spiritual Gift	Right On				Missed the Mark
1. _____	5	4	3	2	1
2. _____	5	4	3	2	1
3. _____	5	4	3	2	1

GROUP EXERCISE: (5-10 minutes)

Take a few minutes to share your survey results in groups of three and discuss how these insights can help you in exploring your design for ministry.

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Session Four: Exploring My Design for Ministry



SESSION FOUR: EXPLORING MY DESIGN FOR MINISTRY

Exploring the Ministry of the Church

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. . . All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need . . . And the Lord added to their numbers daily those who were being saved.” —Acts 2:42, 46-47

The Five-Fold Mission of the Christian Community

1. **THE LEARNING COMMUNITY:** *They Committed Themselves To Growing Spiritually and Being _____ For Ministry*

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching . . .” (Acts 2:42)

❖ **Key Principle:** Focus on learning and growing in God’s Word.

❖ **Key Passage:** “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” —2 Timothy 3:16

2. **THE RELATING COMMUNITY:** *They Committed Themselves To Building _____ With Other Believers*

“ . . . and to the fellowship,” (Acts 2:42; see also Acts 2:45)

❖ **Key Principle:** Giving ourselves to God in worship and growing in relationship with one another.

❖ **Key Passage:** Our attitude toward others should include compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness and love. Our response to God should be to live within the unity of the Spirit. — Colossians 3:12-17



3. THE WORSHIPING COMMUNITY: They Committed Themselves To
_____ Their Relationship With The Resurrected Lord

“ . . . to the breaking of bread ” (Acts 2:42)

- ❖ **Key Principle:** We are to worship the Lord as we celebrate His wonderful work of salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His marvelous resurrection.
- ❖ **Key Passage:** “They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.” —Acts 2:46

4. THE PRAYING COMMUNITY: They Committed Themselves To
_____ Seek God’s Wisdom, Healing and Guidance.

“ . . . and to prayer. ” (Acts 2:42)

- ❖ **Key Principle:** Prayer is the power for Godly living and effective ministry!
- ❖ **Key Passage:** “After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.” —Acts 4:31

5. THE RECONCILING COMMUNITY: They Committed Themselves To
_____ For The Needs of Others and Winning The Lost.

“ . . . they gave to anyone as he had need. . . And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. ” (Acts 2:45, 47)

- ❖ **Key Principle:** The Church is called to carry on the ministry of Jesus Christ to a lost and hurting world. God will do the rest.
- ❖ **Key Passage:** “All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation . . . We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.” —2 Corinthians 5:18, 20



The Holy Spirit's Direction For Ministry

There are five significant things that Jesus told his followers about the role of the Holy Spirit within the life and ministry of each believer in the New Testament Church.

- ❖ He “will **teach** you all things” —John 14:26
- ❖ He “will **remind** you of everything I have said to you” —John 14:26
- ❖ He “will **testify** about me” —John 15:26
- ❖ He “will **guide** you into all truth” —John 16:13
- ❖ He “will **tell** you what is yet to come” —John 16:13

Examples from the Book of Acts

Many of us have little problem believing that God speaks to us through His Word, the Bible, and few would argue that He also speaks powerfully through supernatural means. However, as we explore our unique design for ministry we are challenged to look at what God is saying to each of us through our unique life experiences. For instance, from the book of Acts we find the following examples:

1. The Holy Spirit gives us _____ for ministry.

“The Spirit told Philip, ‘Go to that chariot and stay near it’ . . . Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.” — Acts 8:29, 34

2. The Holy Spirit will _____ us about the new things God is doing.

“As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning... So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?” — Acts 11:15-17

3. The Holy Spirit will _____ us about God's plan of ministry.

“Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, **having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching** the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but **the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them** to. . . During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’ After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that **God had called us to preach the gospel to them.**” — Acts 16:6-10



My Ministry Design Profile

In the previous three sessions you were asked to reflect on a variety of personal aspects of your design for ministry. At this time please record those insights in the space provided. Use this profile information to help you in the process of discovering your unique place in ministry.

1. What life experiences are influencing you in searching for a specific place of ministry? (see page 7)

1.

2.

3.

2. What current or previous ministry experiences are influencing you in searching for a specific place of ministry?

1. Ministry Area: _____

1
Not Very
Rewarding

2

3

4

5

6
Very
Rewarding

2. Ministry Area: _____

1
Not Very
Rewarding

2

3

4

5

6
Very
Rewarding

3. Ministry Area: _____

1
Not Very
Rewarding

2

3

4

5

6
Very
Rewarding

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3. List three of your most powerful passions and interests. (see page 17)

1.

2.

3.

4. Describe your personality style (profile) in 25 words or less.

5. List three specific natural abilities.

1.

2.

3.

6. List your three highest scoring spiritual gifts

1.

2.

3.



Ministry Opportunities at ENCOUNTER CHURCH

Ministry Profile Response

1. Write down the specific ministry or ministries at ENCOUNTER CHURCH where you are interested in possibly getting involved.

2. Is there a new ministry idea that you feel the church leadership should explore? (briefly describe your idea)

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NOTES:

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Appendices



Spiritual Gifts⁸

The Gift of ADMINISTRATION

The special ability to identify the immediate and long range needs of the body of Christ and provide the organizational planning necessary to help them execute the work needed to increase the church's effectiveness. (pilot or helmsman)

(Acts 27:11-20, 27-29; 1 Corinthians 12:28)

The Gift of APOSTLE

The special ability given by God to certain individuals to give spiritual oversight to a group of churches and exercise spiritual authority over them in spiritual matters.

(Ephesians 4:11, 12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Romans 1:5; Galatians 2:8)

The Gift of DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

The special ability to determine with great accuracy whether certain behavior finds its origin within God, man or Satan.

(1 Corinthians 12:10; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Ephesians 6:12)

The Gift of EXHORTATION (Encouragement)

The special ability to offer words of comfort, encouragement, challenge or correction in a way that others in the body of Christ respond positively and are helped.

(Romans 12:8, 15:4; Acts 11:3, 22-25; 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12)

The Gift of EVANGELISM

The special ability to freely share the gospel message with unbelievers in such a way that they make a personal commitment to follow Jesus Christ.

(Ephesians 4:11-12; Acts 8:26-40, 21:8; 2 Timothy 4:5)

The Gift of FAITH

The special ability to place one's complete trust in the Lord and a willingness to act upon God's directions with an extraordinarily unwavering confidence in His ability to help us in every situation.

(Acts 5:1-11; 6:5-7; Hebrews 11:33-34; 1 Corinthians 13:2)

The Gift of GIVING

The special ability to cheerfully and sacrificially give of one's financial resources or personal possessions for the sake of Christ and the church.

(Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-4; Acts 4:36-37)

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Appendix A: Spiritual Gifts



The Gift of HEALING

The special ability to miraculously restore physical or emotional health to an individual through a divine act of God's intervention.

(1 Corinthians 12:28; Acts 19:12)

The Gift of HELPS

The special ability to unselfishly give of one's time and resources to meet the needs of others, thus often freeing them to more effectively exercise their gift(s).

(Romans 16:1-2; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 16:15-19)

The Gift of HOSPITALITY

The special ability to warmly welcome others who are in need by providing food or shelter with a spirit of true servanthood.

(1 Peter 4:9-10)

The Gift of INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

The special ability to interpret messages spoken in other tongues into a language that the listeners can comprehend so that each one may be built up.

(1 Corinthians 12:10; 14:5, 27-28)

The Gift of KNOWLEDGE

The special ability to gain insights about persons, circumstances or pertinent biblical information that is relevant to the health and growth of the church.

(Acts 5:1-10; 1 Corinthians 14:24-25)

The Gift of LEADERSHIP

The special ability to unite others around a common vision for the church and effectively communicate the goals for the future in a way that influences and directs the body of Christ in a spirit of cooperation.

(Romans 12:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; Book of Nehemiah)

The Gift of MERCY

The special ability to express true empathy for those who are suffering physically, emotionally or mentally and demonstrate compassion for them in tangible ways to help ease their pain.

(Romans 12:8; Acts 9:36; James 2:15-16)

The Gift of MIRACLES

The special ability to be used of God to perform powerful acts that transcend the laws of nature and demonstrate the divine activity of God among us.

(1 Corinthians 12:10, 28; Acts 5:12; 8:13)

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Appendix A: Spiritual Gifts



The Gift of PASTOR

The special ability given to certain individuals to care for the spiritual needs and growth of individuals or groups of individuals in the church over an extended period of time.
(*Ephesians 4:11, 12; 1 Peter 5:1-3; John 21:16*)

The Gift of PROPHECY

The special ability to communicate a direct and immediate message from God to His people for their edification or correction.
(*Acts 2:37-40; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:10; 28*)

The Gift of TEACHING

The special ability to clearly and effectively discern and communicate biblical truth in such a way that people learn and grow in their walk with God.
(*1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-12; Romans 12:7*)

The Gift of TONGUES

The special ability to share with the church a divine message from God in a language unknown to the person sharing.
(*1 Corinthians 12:10; Acts 10:45-46; 1 Corinthians 14:26-28*)

The Gift of WISDOM

The special ability to know the mind of the Holy Spirit and apply the revelation of God's Word to specific situations within the church and individual's lives.
(*Acts 6:10; 15:13-22*)

Other Possible Spiritual Gifts

Celibacy
Service

Missionary
Martyrdom

Intercession
Voluntary Poverty



ENDNOTES

- 1 Bruce Bugbee, *What You Do Best in the Body of Christ*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Company, 1995.
- 2 Aubrey Malphurs, *Maximizing Your Effectiveness: How To Discover and Develop Your Divine Design*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995, p. 55.
- 3 John Maxwell, *The Power of Passion* (video presentation). Atlanta: Injoy Resources.
<http://www.injoy.com/>
- 4 Portions of this material have been adapted from the work of Mels Carbonell in *Discovering Your Giftedness in Christ*, Uniquely You, Blue Ridge, GA, 1996.
- 5 Material adapted from the work of Rick Warren in *Discovering My Ministry: C.L.A.S.S. #301*; a ministry of Saddleback Community Church. <http://www.pastors.net/>
- 6 Adapted from Greg Ogden, *The New Reformation*, 199.
- 7 Material adapted from the work of Rick Warren in *Discovering My Ministry: C.L.A.S.S. #301*; a ministry of Saddleback Community Church. <http://www.pastors.net/>
- 8 This list has been influenced by many descriptions of spiritual gifts, most notably those from Paul Ford's *Unleashing Your Church*, C. Peter Wagner's book *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* and the Willow Creek *Networking* curriculum.