

## Theological Musings from Dave's Laptop

July 17, 2018

At Saturday's Men in Ministry gathering, part of the conversation included concern for the many children and youth who grow up these days without a male presence in the home—that is, without *any* male presence, not to mention a *Christian* male presence. The reasons for the increase of such families are complicated, and there doesn't seem to be a great deal of agreement about causes; but whatever the causes, doing all we can to remedy such huge deficits in nurture and example is thoroughly Christlike.

We as a congregation are already involved with many such families, both through Pastor Tim's ministry and through next week's Vacation Bible School. And we will be investing heavily in continuing and deepening our youth and family ministry in Oakland Mills through the calling of a full-time Associate Pastor for Youth and Community Ministry before summer's end.

One of the things our men talked about on Saturday is the fact that no matter how capable and committed Pastor Tim or our new Associate Pastor may be, it is simply not possible for one person to do all that needs to be done to improve family life and Christian witness in Oakland Mills. Our Associate Pastor may be the Team Leader, but *without a team*, not much transformation will take place.

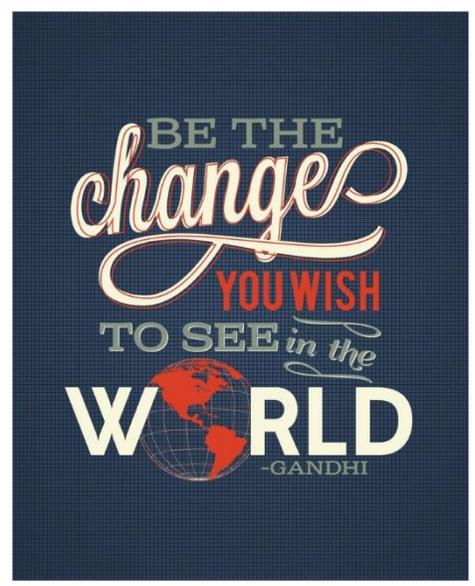
As a result of this conversation, our men decided that they should meet with our new Pastor straightaway to offer their presence, influence, example, and skills to the project of youth and community ministry in Oakland Mills. And that caused me to think further about the parts God has *for every one of us to play* as we begin a new chapter of ministry together.

For starters, I invite you to think carefully about the following questions:

- 1. What does our congregation do very well that we clearly need to *continue* to invest in?**
- 2. What core ministries do we need to invest in *improving*?**
- 3. What mission-critical things might we need to *begin* doing, even at an experimental level?**
- 4. What things (if any) haven't worked well for a long time and need to be *discontinued*?**

Once you've thought about those questions, I invite you to consider what your part might be in bringing about the change you'd like to see in the world, in Columbia, in Oakland Mills, and in our Fellowship. God doesn't intend for there to be bench warmers in the Kingdom. **Every one of us has been called by God to be "out on the field."**

There are many worthy community efforts to which we all might contribute, but those contributions need to be organized around our service to God's Kingdom. While each of us needs to be doing *something* each and every week to build up our local congregation



(“Ministry”; “third base”), it’s just as important—and probably more important—that we be doing something each and every week to make a difference in the world for the Kingdom of God (“Mission”; “home plate”).

There’s an opportunity *this Saturday* to be involved in mission as we gather to prepare “Packages of Love for the Homeless.” I hope you’ll come and help! But I also hope that you’ll reflect on the attached handout, “What I’m Good at Doing.” God has made you good at *something*—maybe several things—and God intends for you to use that ability/those abilities to make a difference in the world!

As you prepare for that exercise, let me remind you to consider your “S.H.A.P.E.” I’ve also attached our CBF S.H.A.P.E. inventory as an aid to this reflection. You may remember that S.H.A.P.E. is an acronym for God’s unique organization of your **S**piritual Gifts, your **H**eart, your **A**bilities, your **P**ersonality, and your life **E**xperience to prepare you for the particular “WiLTS-work” God has prepared for you. Here’s a quick summary of how that works:

**Spiritual gifts** are abilities that God empowers in such a way that their “output”—their effect—is much greater than your “input.” Effectively-deployed spiritual gifts have an added “Wow!” factor that can only be explained by God’s work through you. Spiritual gifts may be similar to talents, but they don’t have to be. You may not even be aware of what your spiritual gifts are, but if you’re a Christian, they’re there. Ask someone who knows you well what they see in you.



“**Heart**” has to do with what you love to do best and with what you care about most. Where is your passion? Where is your joy? What activities cause you to become so involved that you lose track of time? The Bible encourages us to “*do the will of God with all your heart*” (Ephesians 6:6). Sometimes we get the idea that doing God’s will means doing things we hate to do, but the truth of the matter is exactly the opposite. God’s purpose in your life has to do with finding that service in which you, too, can say “WiLTS” and “WooHoo!!!”

Third, your **abilities** or talents are related to your “heart.” Whatever you’re able to do well, God has enabled you to do, not only to make a living but also to build the Church and to advance the Kingdom. As you assess your abilities, try to be honest with yourself about what you really do well and what you don’t do so well. Ask people who know you for their feedback. They probably see things that you don’t see.

Don’t get hung up on what you think you *should* be good at doing. Don’t get sidetracked by someone else’s purposes for your life. Let yourself “know what you know” about your abilities, and then follow your “heart.” If you’re doing what God intends for you to be doing, you’ll have *energy*, you’ll be *effective*, and you’ll experience *joy*. As Olympic champion Eric Liddell put it, “God made me fast, and when I run, I feel his pleasure!”

Fourth, people with similar abilities often have rather different **personalities**. Some of us are “night people,” and some of us are “morning people.” Some of us like to work alone, and others much prefer to be around others. Some folks have to reason things out, while others “just know” what they believe. Some people are most comfortable with a specific plan, while working within a plan is a bother to others. We tend to think that other people ought to see things as we see them, but “different” is okay, because God made us that way on purpose.

God intends for us to approach life within the structures of our own personalities, and God intends to transform every one of us into the character of Christ.

The final aspect of your S.H.A.P.E. has to do with your life **experiences**. What have you learned from your family experiences? Your educational experiences? Your vocational experiences? Your spiritual experiences? Your experiences in ministry? And how about your painful experiences?

While we seldom see it at the time, God is at work in our lives even in our most painful experiences. God doesn't cause everything that happens to us, but God intends to use everything that happens to us to shape our character. And it's often those painful experiences—once they have achieved some measure of healing—that God is able to use most effectively in caring for the needs of others (2 Corinthians 1:4).

Rick Warren, the inventor of S.H.A.P.E., has pointed out that “While knowing your SHAPE is important for serving God, having the heart of a servant is *even more important*. Without a servant's heart, you will be tempted to misuse your S.H.A.P.E. for personal gain. You will also be tempted to use it as an excuse to exempt yourself from meeting some needs. God often tests our hearts by asking us to serve in ways we're not shaped.”

“Your *primary* ministry should be in the area of your S.H.A.P.E.,” Rick counsels, “but your *secondary* service is wherever you're needed at the moment. Your S.H.A.P.E. reveals your ministry, but your servant's heart will reveal your maturity. No special talent or gift is required to stay after a meeting to pick up trash or stack chairs. Anyone can be a servant. All it requires is character.”<sup>1</sup>

You know, I'm sure, that each player on an athletic team has specific responsibilities, and each is essential if the team is to be successful. In football, the halfback doesn't do what the fullback does, and the fullback doesn't do what the quarterback does. Each is uniquely needed. So it is that God has given you specific abilities for Kingdom Work in Oakland Mills, and you have both the opportunity and the responsibility to discover what these are and to deploy them on the field of life in a way that nurtures faith and spiritual maturity.

*“Now there are different gifts, but the **same Spirit**.*

*There are different ministries, but the **same Lord**.*

*And there are different activities, but the **same God** produces each gift in each person.*

*A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good”*

*(1 Corinthians 12:4-7).*

I can hardly wait to see what's NEXT!

Dave

doing**my**part

---

<sup>1</sup> Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life*, p. 255.

**Name:**

**Date:**

**My Guiding Metaphors:**

<b>things I really like to do</b>	<b>things I'm really good at</b>
<b>things I moderately like to do</b>	<b>things I'm moderately good at</b>
<b>things I don't much like to do</b>	<b>things I'm okay at</b>
<b>things I really don't like to do</b>	<b>things I'm no good at</b>

**Questions for self-evaluation from John Upton (BGAV):**

1. Has the path that you have taken made you more open to your family or less?
2. Is your heart now more open to real intimacy or less?
3. Is the circle of your love for neighbor/stranger bigger than it was or smaller?
4. Are you less anxious, less driven than you were, or are you more anxious and more driven?
5. Is your sense of joy deeper or duller?
6. Have you grown more generous or somehow more tightfisted?
7. Are you more aware of your world and alive to it or less?
8. Is there more of a receptive space in your heart for God, or have you grown more distant?
9. Is your spirit freer than it was or somehow more enslaved?
10. Is there more of Christ in you now than there was, or less?

# What S.H.A.P.E are you?

A Personal Profile of  
Members and Participants of Columbia Baptist Fellowship

S.H.A.P.E. – Spiritual Gifts – Hearth – Abilities – Prayer – Experience  
Original Concept from Saddleback Church, Lake Forest, California. Used by Permission.

God has created you and shaped your life in unique and wonderful ways so that you can experience the joy of helping the Kingdom of God “*to come on earth as it is in heaven*” (Matthew 6:10). We do different things to make a living, but we all have the same calling to use our talents, abilities, interests, personality and experience to follow Jesus, to strengthen His Body, the Church, and to enlarge God’s Kingdom on earth. When we use our abilities for God’s glory, we come to know God more fully as we obey Him and He accomplishes His work through our lives.

The CBF Ministry Team is asking every member and regular attendee to complete this Personal Profile.

Please fill out your information, then fill in the **BEST** way to contact you:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**BEST WAY TO CONTACT YOU:** \_\_\_\_\_

# S.H.A.P.E. – **Spiritual Gifts** – Heart – Abilities – Prayer – Experience

## **What is a Spiritual Gift? What is YOUR Spiritual Gift?**

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was given to all believers (Acts 2:3-4), and the Spirit continues to be given to every person who believes in Jesus (Acts 2:38; Romans 8:9). **God gives at least one spiritual gift to every believer** (1 Corinthians 12:7, 11; Ephesians 4:4-7). Three good tests for the presence of a spiritual gift are:

1. You will enjoy using this ability
2. You will be effective in using this ability
3. Other people will confirm that God is using you in this way

No believer has every spiritual gift and no single gift is given to everyone (1 Corinthians 12: 27-31). Our different spiritual gifts complement each other to accomplish God's purposes through the church (Romans 12: 4-6, 1 Corinthians 3: 6-9, 12: 4-7).

While knowing your spiritual gift(s) is helpful, this is not as important as **making sure that your life is a blessing to others. Love is the most important factor in spiritual gifts** (1 Corinthians 12: 31-13:13, Matthew 22: 39-40) and the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives turns our-lives-as-a-whole into gifts!

On the next page are descriptions of many spiritual gifts. Please mark those gifts you believe are active in your life. If this is a new concept to you or if you need help with this idea, the following internet links provide on-line gift assessments:

[www.spiritualgiftstest.com](http://www.spiritualgiftstest.com) (click on Tests tab then choose your test)

<http://mintools.com/spiritual-gifts-test.htm> (on the left side under Spiritual Gifts, click on Spiritual Gifts Test Online)

[www.elmertowns.com](http://www.elmertowns.com) (click on Resources and then Spiritual Gifts Test)

<b>Spiritual Gifts</b>	<b>Description</b>
Artistic Creativity	Christians with this gift use their creative ability to help others deepen their relationship with God – can include art, poetry, prose, drama, etc.
Counseling	Christian Counseling can serve others through advice, comfort and encouragement so that they experience help and healing.
Craftsmanship	This gift enables Christians to use a trade or craft for the good of the body of Christ.
Discernment	Christians with this gift are especially good at distinguishing truth from error.
Encouragement	This Christian sees the positive and the potential in others and encourages them to use their gifts to the glory of God and the spread of the Gospel.
Evangelism	This gift enables Christians to communicate the gospel to non-Christians in a manner conducive to leading them to faith.
Giving	These Christians give materials things cheerfully and generously.
Healing	This gift enables Christians to serve as God’s instrument for restoring the health of others.
Helping	The ability to joyfully work with others to complete the task God has given them.
Hospitality	Christians with the gift of Hospitality enjoy having guests in their homes, and they enjoy making others welcome and comfortable in other settings as well.
Knowledge	This studious Christian shares, investigates, collects and/or analyzes information that is needed for the health and administration of the church.
Leadership	The ability to inspire and motivate other Christians to work toward a common cause or goal to achieve the work of the church.
Mercy	This Christian demonstrates empathy through practical deeds toward those who need help with issues concerning mind, body and/or spirit.
Missionary	Christian missionaries utilize their gifts to expand God’s kingdom beyond their own culture.
Music	Through singing, playing an instrument or directing, musical Christians worship and help others to worship and to know the Risen Savior.
Organization	This gift enables Christians to understand goals for specific areas of ministry and to draft effective plans toward reaching these goals.
Prayer Intercessor	This diligent Christian will pray continually over extended periods of time, pleading to God on behalf of another, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
Prophecy	Some Christians are able to perceive a message from God, recognize that it is by the Holy Spirit and to then communicate it to others.
Service	This gift enables Christians to recognize where their participation is needed and to act on it.
Shepherding	This gift enables Christians to assume the personal responsibility for the spiritual well-being of a group of believers.
Teaching	Teachers in the Christian faith are able to communicate Truth in a manner that enables others to learn and grow in their faith journey.
Wisdom	This gift enables Christians, with the intercession of the Holy Spirit, to understand a deeper meaning, apply that knowledge and insight and to share that with others.

# S.H.A.P.E. – Spiritual Gifts – **Heart** – Abilities – Prayer – Experience

When we speak of someone’s passion, of what he or she is really motivated to do, we sometimes say that “she/he has a **heart** for that ministry”. Even as we have differing gifts, so we have differing interests and passions as well. Some of us “have a heart” for athletics, some for aesthetics, some for outreach, some for youth, etc. How would you complete the following sentence?

- I love to \_\_\_\_\_
- I love to \_\_\_\_\_
- I love to \_\_\_\_\_

What groups do you like to work with? (Check all that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Infants-Kindergarten | <input type="radio"/> “Gen X” – born early 1960s to early |
| <input type="radio"/> Elementary School    | <input type="radio"/> 1980s                               |
| <input type="radio"/> Middle School        | <input type="radio"/> “Gen Y”/Millennial                  |
| <input type="radio"/> High School          | <input type="radio"/> Generation – born                   |
| <input type="radio"/> College              | <input type="radio"/> early 1980s to early 2000s          |
| <input type="radio"/> Singles              | <input type="radio"/> Seniors                             |
| <input type="radio"/> Couples              |   |

What group do you enjoy working with THE MOST? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What church ministries, issues or needs inspire you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What concerns you the most? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Is there a ministry or mission that keeps coming to your mind again and again?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## S.H.A.P.E. – Spiritual Gifts – **Heart** – Abilities – Prayer – Experience

A number of possible ministries are listed below. If you have a heart for any of these, please put an “X” in the box beside that ministry.

- Abuse/Family Violence
- At-Risk Children/Youth
- Benevolence/Mercy Ministries
- Bereavement
- Church History
- Community Issues
- Disaster Relief
- Drama
- English as a Second Language
- Environment
- Financial Management
- Food Pantry
- Greeters/Ushers
- Health/Fitness
- Homeless
- Hospice
- Hospitality
- Library/Media Center
- Men’s Ministry
- Missions: International
- Missions: Local
- Missions: Stateside
- Music
- Organization
- Outreach
- Prison Ministry
- Publicity
- Serving/Helping
- Social Events/Picnics
- Teaching
- Tutoring
- Visitation
- Women’s Ministry

S.H.A.P.E. – Spiritual Gifts – Heart – **Abilities** – Prayer – Experience

Jobs or skills in which I have experience: \_\_\_\_\_

---

If you have abilities for any of the following, please put an “X” in the box beside that item.

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration       | <input type="checkbox"/> Graphic Design        | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Speaking      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts/Crafts          | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospice               | <input type="checkbox"/> Puppets              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athletics/Sports     | <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance             | <input type="checkbox"/> Repairs              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audio/Visual         | <input type="checkbox"/> Library Science       | <input type="checkbox"/> Scenery Production   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cake Decorating      | <input type="checkbox"/> Microsoft Access      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sewing               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catering             | <input type="checkbox"/> Microsoft Office      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sound System         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computers/Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Music: Composition    | <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking/Baking       | <input type="checkbox"/> Music: Directing      | <input type="checkbox"/> Teller               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data Entry           | <input type="checkbox"/> Music: Instrumental   | <input type="checkbox"/> Van/Bus Driver       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decorating           | <input type="checkbox"/> Music: Vocal          | <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle Maintenance  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Desktop Publishing   | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing Arts/Drama | <input type="checkbox"/> Videography          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electronics          | <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel Management  | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Leadership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance              | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography           | <input type="checkbox"/> Web Design           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Floral Arranging     | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning Trips/Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Word Processing      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food Preparation     | <input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint            | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing              |

Languages, specify: \_\_\_\_\_

---

S.H.A.P.E. – Spiritual Gifts – Heart – Abilities – **Prayer** – Experience

What would be your prayer for CBF for the future? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

How would you pray to be involved in CBF in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

# S.H.A.P.E. – Spiritual Gifts – Heart – Abilities – Prayer – **Experience**

Please complete: Because of some of my own experiences, I believe I could relate to and encourage someone who is going through:

---

Please provide your specific qualification for the following, i.e. Nurse, Lawyer, date of certification, etc:

Certified Teacher

Law Enforcement Professional

Commercial Driver’s License

Legal Professional

Construction Professional

Medical Professional

Counseling Professional

Ministry Professional

Disaster Relief Certification

Passed Background Check for Working with Children

Formal Education, Seminars, Special Training: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**THANKS FOR YOUR HELP !**

If you are providing this information in paper form, please turn in to a member of the staff or of the MINISTRY Team.