



The *Incendiary Fellowship* had its last meeting last night . . . at least for the present. Varying from 5-10 persons over a period of fifteen months, we read and discussed ten books<sup>1</sup> in an effort to “hoist our sails into the wind of the Spirit and let the Wind take us where He will.” The purpose of the effort was to listen together for God’s guidance in living as passionate followers of Jesus all the way to the end of life’s journey.

That experience, combined with teaching 1 Corinthians 12 last Wednesday evening and teaching Romans 12 in Gen21 last Sunday, both of which have to do with spiritual gifts and the unique place each of us has in the Body of Christ, has caused me to reflect once more on the idea of “vocation.”

The Apostle Paul famously wrote that “*It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do*” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

How would you tell someone about what it is that God has “prepared in advance for you to do”? *For what purpose were you created?* How does that eternal purpose relate to what you do “for a living”? Do you think that purpose or those purposes change over time? Does God have a purpose for your life beyond your working years?

My friend, Steve Hadden, once observed that the world is forever asking “What do you do?” but that this is the wrong question. Steve noted that the real question is “**What are you doing with your life?**” Most of us can’t answer that question. We really don’t *know* what we’re doing with our lives.<sup>2</sup> Toyohiko Kagawa spoke for many when he wrote, “I read in a book that a man called Christ went about doing good. It is very disconcerting to me that I am so easily satisfied with *just going about.*”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The books were these:

1. Sheldon, Charles, *In His Steps: What Would Jesus Do?* (1896)
2. Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, *The Cost of Discipleship* (1937)
3. Nee, Watchman, *The Normal Christian Life* (1938)
4. O’Connor, Elizabeth, *Call to Commitment: The Story of the Church of the Savior, Washington, D.C.* (1963)
5. Colson, Charles, *Loving God* (1983)
6. Blackaby, Henry, *Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God* (1990)
7. Cymbala, Jim, *Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire: What Happens When God’s Spirit Invades the Hearts of His People* (1997).
8. Chan, Francis, *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God* (2008)
9. Platt, David, *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream* (2010)
10. Ripken, Nik, *The Insanity of Obedience: Walking with Jesus in Tough Places* (2014)

<sup>2</sup>Stephen L. Hadden, “A Vocation Clarification Seminar for College Students at Faith Baptist Church, Georgetown, Kentucky” (D.Min. project, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1987), p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Epigram attributed to Toyohiko Kagawa and cited by Donald R. Heiges, *The Christian’s Calling*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), p. 25.

The question of what we're doing with our lives is the question of vocation. "Vocation" is derived from the Latin *vocare* ("to call") and *vocatio* ("call" or "calling"). Vocation is not something reserved for "clergy" and "missionaries," and vocation doesn't necessarily have to do with what we get paid to do. Vocation has to do with what God has shaped us for and called us to do with our lives.

It is because God has shaped each of us uniquely for "the good works prepared in advance for us to do" that our MINISTRY team makes available a "S.H.A.P.E. Inventory" as a resource for exploring that uniqueness (a copy is attached with this *Laptop*).<sup>4</sup> Most of us would do well to remain curious across life about what "the particular qualities of our lives say about what we were made to do."<sup>5</sup>

There are several definitions of "vocation" that continue to help me. Parker Palmer wrote that vocation is "*something I can't not do*, for reasons I'm unable to explain to anyone else and don't fully understand myself but that are nonetheless compelling."<sup>6</sup> My favorite definition comes from Frederick Buechner: "Neither the hair shirt nor the soft berth will do. **The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.**"<sup>7</sup>

It seems to me that our vocation in Christ is less like a "plan" than a "posture." Vocation has to do with an expectation that God is always at work and a curiosity about and an anticipation of what spiritual adventure may come to us next. I've been helped over the years by the way my friend Mark Jensen described the development of personal vocation over time:

"The deep meaning of Christian vocation finds a more solid foundation than job or role. The foundations of Christian vocation find their foundation in the calling to be a follower of Jesus, and join with a community of believers in welcoming the good news of the kingdom of God in Jesus Christ.

"To extend the metaphor, the role or job that we occupy at a given time is the *furniture* that we place upon the *foundation* of vocation. It is the chair we sit in, but it rests on a foundation that supports the whole house. Certainly some chairs are more comfortable than others. Some mean a lot to us because they have been passed on to us from another generation. Some suit our tastes better than others or fit with the rest of the furniture in the house. Some we might have built ourselves. *But it is still furniture.*



<sup>4</sup> In the CBF version, S.H.A.P.E. is an acronym for "Spiritual Gifts," "Heart" or passion; "Abilities," "Prayer," and "Experience."

<sup>5</sup> Ryan Pemberton, "Follow the Caller, not the Calling: What We Forgot about Vocation," *Christianity Today*, September 2015, 65.

<sup>6</sup> Parker Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*, quoted in Pemberton, 64.

<sup>7</sup> Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 95.

“Furniture can be moved. From time to time we might decide to rearrange a living room. That does not change the fact that it is a living room, nor does it change the foundation on which the house rests. Few of us nail our furniture to the floor or anchor it in a concrete foundation. We rest comfortably in it because we feel secure resting on a foundation that is secure.

“From time to time we might even decide to get new furniture. Sometimes even favorite chairs and sofas wear out and need to be recovered or discarded. It may be hard for us to do because we liked the old furniture, but it simply was not useful any longer. So it is time we begin to break in a new favorite chair. It may take a while to feel like it fits us like the old one.

“Jobs and roles are the furniture that rest upon the foundation of Christian vocation. From time to time the furniture may change. When the chair wears out or breaks, we do not burn the house. We seek a new chair that we think will fit us.”<sup>8</sup>



And, since vocation is really about following Jesus, I usually end my meditations on vocation with these words from Albert Schweitzer:

He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old by the lake-side, He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: “Follow thou me!” and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfill for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as in ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience Who He is.<sup>9</sup>

May I, and may you, “find the chair that fits us” for these days.

Dave



<sup>8</sup>Mark Jensen, *Shattered Vocations*, “The Bible and Personal Crisis,” ed. Edward Thornton (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1990), pp. 162-163.

<sup>9</sup>Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: A Critical Study of its Progress from Reimarus to Wrede*, 3rd. ed., trans. W. Montgomery (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1954), p. 401.

P.S. Did you see the news that CBF now has its own *YouTube* channel on which you can watch our morning worship services? The most recent service is usually posted online by the middle of the day on Tuesday, and is available here:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC\\_WqibCJj7LQ\\_fad7rSOBF](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_WqibCJj7LQ_fad7rSOBF)

P.P.S. Did you see the “Super Moon Eclipse” on Sunday evening? Although it was cloudy, I was able to watch it live via a NASA video feed. Here’s one photographer’s chronicle of the event (from <http://apod.nasa.gov/apod/astropix.html>). The smaller photo is from the live feed, and shows the difference between the penumbra and the umbra (see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umbra,\\_penumbra\\_and\\_antumbra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Umbra,_penumbra_and_antumbra)).





# 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 – Prayers – Experiences  
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: \_\_\_\_\_

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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: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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# 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:

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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.