



What Are Your Passions and Gifts? Discovering Your Unique Shape

Grace BFC – “This We Believe” class – May 8, 2011
Mark Bickel

Devotional: Jesus Christ - What Was Christ's Passion / What was His mission?(10 minute)

Last week – looked at God the Father - Today look at Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit

Who is He?

- **John 1:1-4, 14** – Word, from Beginning, Creator. Light, Life ... Become flesh!
- **Luke 1:31-33** – Called Jesus - Throne of David, reign forever
- **Matthew 1:21** – Called Jesus – Save his people from their sins
- **John 1:29** – Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the World

What Did He Do?

- **Luke 4:16-21** – from Isaiah – good news to poor, freedom, sight, Lord favor
- **Mark 1:14** – Proclaimed: Time fulfilled, Kingdom at hand, Repent & Believe the Gospel
- **Mark 1:38** – left to preach in other towns – for that is why I came
- Call disciples, confront false religion, minister to people in need

What Was His Larger Mission?

- **Mark 8:31** – Son of man must suffer many things, be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, that he must be killed, and after three days raise again
- **John 7:3** - knew when it was time – before Passover “Not time yet”, not go to Jerusalem
- **Luke 9:52** - “resolutely set out for Jerusalem”, undeterred from fulfilling His mission
- prayed in the Garden for cup to be taken ... Yet not my will, but your be done

**** Luke 19:10** – For the son of man came to seek and save what was lost

**** Mark 10:45** – For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many

**** John 10:14-18**

¹⁴“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and **I lay down my life for the sheep.** ¹⁶I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸**No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.** I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

**** I Timothy 1:15-17**

¹⁵Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.** ¹⁶But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life. ¹⁷Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Devotional: The Holy Spirit – What is the Spirit's mission? – (5 minute)

Last 2 weeks – looked at God the Father and Jesus Christ ... Today consider the Holy Spirit

- John 14:15-22, 25-27

¹⁵ “If you love me, you will obey what I command. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you....

²⁵ “All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

- John 15: 26-27

²⁶ “When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. ²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

- John 16:7-15

⁷ But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; ¹⁰ in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; ¹¹ and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

¹² “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. ¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. ¹⁵ All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

- Acts 1:8

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

- **Acts 2:** Disciples wait, pray for H.S., at Pentecost H.S. comes in power! And is promised to us as well!

- Acts 2:38-39

³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

What Are You Most Passionate About? (50-60 minute main talk)

Intro: What are you passionate about?

- **Video: "Get Passionate!"** (by Worship Films, downloaded from SermonSpice.com)
- **Your Passion?** ~see handout, 3 question on Left of side one (the side with the Logo)~
 - What are you passionate about? (what do you talk about most)
Me: God, Star Trek, Sci-Fi, Amusement Parks, Games, Church, and Teaching
You: What are you passionate about? (*fill in box 1*)
 - What specific recent events have gotten you most excited? What energizes you?
Me:
You: What most excites / energizes you (*fill in box 2*)
 - What do you dream of? As you look 5 years out / to epitaph – what do you most desire to do / accomplish with your life?
Me:
You: What do you want to accomplish with your life? (*fill in box 3*)

Passion / Calling / Purpose / Mission:

"Passion is the God-given desire of the heart to make a Kingdom difference somewhere"
(see full quote, Bruce Bugbee, "What You Do Best in the Body of Christ", p. 77)

1) God's Common Call for each of us

- **Ephesians 1:3-14** ... - Purpose – saving, adopting, making holy, giving grace and eternal life ... all to the praise of God's glory
- **Romans 8:28-30**
²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.
- **Elsewhere** – called to know Christ, to know hope, to be a disciple, to preach gospel, to make disciples
- **What are you Passionate about?**
Is your greatest passion knowing Christ and making Him known?

2) God's Unique Call as seen in Scripture

- **I Corinthians 1:1** – Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Jesus Christ ...
- **Christ** – called to die for our salvation
- **Paul** – called as an apostle ... and not just any apostle ... the Apostle to the Gentiles
 - **Galatians 1:13-16a**
¹³ For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. ¹⁴ I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers. ¹⁵ But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles
 - note that God used even his life before Christ to build the passions He would use in spreading the gospel!
 - Paul knew and accepted the unique Call of God on his life
- **Timothy** – Pastor of a church
- **Moses** – Passion for God and God's People
 - God set up experiences to give him access to Pharaoh
 - Moses false start – kill guard – then 40 years in wilderness – prepare for God's call
 - God calls to lead people to freedom – using gifts, experience ... and weakness
 - on Mt. pleads with God for the People of God ... and for sake of God's name
- **Deacons** – when needs in church not in calling of leaders – they do not abandon, nor do they drop what they are doing to go do it, or add it to their tasks ... Instead look for others:
 - **Acts 6:1-4**
In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³ Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."
- **What were they Passionate about?**
 - God gave each a very unique calling and passion that gave each a vital role in building the Kingdom of God.

3) God's Unique Call for Each of Us

- **S.H.A.P.E.** (from Erik Rees, "S.H.A.P.E. – finding and Fulfilling your Unique Purpose for Life")
 - Spiritual Gifts
 - Heart
 - Abilities
 - Personality
 - Experiences

We want to look at all 5 of these, but I am going to actually look at heart first, then take a significant portion of our time today to look at Spiritual Gifts. Depending on the time, we may end with a brief look at Abilities, Personality and Experiences, or we may save those for next week.

- **Heart** (or passion)
(see quote from Rick Warren in "S.H.A.P.E.", p. 77)
 - Know what drives you
 - Know who you care about
 - Know the needs you will meet
 - Know the cause you will help conquer
 - Know your ultimate dream for God's kingdom

Example: My mission statement

Training God's People in God's Word for God's Glory

- Training ... not just teaching, but training ... unique style and focus
- God's People ... always heart, commitment, loyalty to the church
 - esp. lay people and young adults (not seminary per se), and overseas
- God's Word ... how to read, study, know, understand, apply Scriptures ...
 - esp. OT, "in-depth-overview", how fit together, how intersect with life
- God's Glory – not for me, or organization... but for God (also reformed perspective)
- Guides my choices in life
 - Could be full time or not (was not always full time for me)
 - God does call to other things as well ... and to weakness ... and even for times to entirely other things that were needed ...
 - But I expect and look for an overall trajectory of ministry that fulfills this vision
 - And I did not apply for positions significantly outside this ... God has others there
- **What are you Passionate about?**
 - Can you clearly express it?
 - If not, how are you working on discovering it?
 - Are you living out what you know of your calling ... or working to it
 - or are you being distracted, pressured into other things

- Spiritual Gifts

Intro Question: What are Spiritual Gifts?

What are “Spiritual Gifts”?

- “Spiritual”

- Dealing with God
- In this case – gifts given by the Holy Spirit for purposes of God / His Kingdom

- “Gift”

- Give by someone
- Giver chooses what to give
- Receiver gets for free

- Implications:

- God gives spiritual gifts to us, at his choosing, not based on anything about us
- The gifts are not simply natural abilities, but things of a spiritual nature
- I do not earn them, or demand them, but rather I accept and use them

Three main passages on “Spiritual Gifts”

(2 use the term, the 3rd lists several of the same gifts)

- I Corinthians 12

- Begins: “Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.”
- Contains 2 lists of gifts, part of several chapters on how to use / no use the gifts

- Romans 12:3-8

- Encouraging us to use the gifts God has given
- Several of same images as I Corinthians describing their place in the body

- Ephesians 4: 11-16

- Shows us how people with certain gifts should use those in the church
- Larger context, esp. 4:1-10, stresses similar themes to context of Rom. 12 and I Cor. 12

These three passages contain 4 lists of gifts, namely:

Ephesians 4: 11	Romans 12: 6-8	I Corinthians 12: 8-10	I Corinthians 12: 28-30
Apostles			Apostles
Prophets	Prophecy	Prophecy	Prophets
Evangelists			
Pastor – teachers*	Teaching		Teachers
	Leading		
	Giving		
	Encouraging		
	Showing mercy		
	Serving		Helps
			Administrations
* can be translated as		A word of wisdom	
1 gift: Pastor-Teacher		A word of knowledge	
Or 2: Pastor, Teacher		Faith	
		Healings	Healings
		Workings of miracles	Miracles
		Distinguishing of spirits	
		Speak in kinds of tongues	Speak in kinds of tongues
		Interpretation of tongues	Interpret (tongues)

Observations:

- Some similarities, but most items different on each list
- Some potentially one time, or at least in a moment each time (heal, word of knowledge..) while some more positional / ongoing (apostle, pastor), or less formal ongoing (serving)
- Some clearly ‘need’ spirit (heal, tongue, prophecy, miracle) others mundane (serve, give)
- Many are things we are all called to do (evangelism, service, giving...)

Implications:

- Can be ‘gifted’ for a moment or a lifetime, in obvious or less obvious ways
- Even in things we all are called to be involved in some will be especially gifted
- Several lists, all different ... likely not all inclusive, even when combined
- While all we have and can do is a gift of God, I would not want to say every talent is a spiritual gift ... yet, I would also not want to limit the list to just these – so what is deciding factor? – Spirit enables, and for the purpose of spiritual gifts ...
- So what is that purpose?

Why does God give “Spiritual Gifts”?

- Read Romans 12:1, 3-8 (commenting as we go)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship...

- Entire chapter based on God’s mercy, and giving self to serve God ...
- Thus spiritual gifts also given of God’s mercy, and be used as worship to God

³ 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 judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

- Key to serving God, and using gifts – Humility (not allow gifts to make proud!)

⁴ Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

- One body ... gifts function as parts of body – each different, each needed, and all work together for the benefit of the one body

⁶ 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. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ 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.

- We each have gifts (not only some of us, since we are all in the body by definition of being in Christ, thus all have a function, and all have the gifts to do that function! ... more soon)
- Gifts from God, given as He has seen fit
- We are each to use our gift – not let it sit, not use someone else’s gift ... but use our gift!
- And do it with the right attitude – generously, cheerfully, etc.

- Read I Corinthians 12:1, 4-31 (commenting as we go)

Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant...

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

- One Spirit gives each one of the different gifts, we should expect them to be different, yet all come from, point to, acknowledge the same God and Jesus Christ as Lord

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

- Again stresses he gives them all ... FOR THE COMMON GOOD – not for fun, or for each of us as one, or what we can each accomplish alone ... but for a common good

¹² The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

- Also uses body image – one body, not many – again not place to boast

¹⁴ Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. ¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

- We are who God made us to be – should not want to be another part, instead be our part

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” ²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

- Some tempted to boast, others tempted to think they are unimportant – yet God especially values and protects those who have more modest roles

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. ²⁸ 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. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? ³¹ But eagerly desire the greater gifts.

- *One body – which all are part of it*
- *We are to want greater gifts ... why?*
 - *not because they are 'better' or more godly, they are all equal*
 - *not because we are more, or less worthy to have them – God gives as He pleases*
 - *I read this to say we should seek to be used by God in greater and greater ways, we should not sit back satisfied if God uses us to heal someone, or give a serve a few people ... We should go back to God and say we are willing, even eager to be used in greater ways ... As God would choose and enable*

- **example:** When God first moved me to State College and gave me new and greater responsibilities over effecting more people, and using some of my perceived weaknesses more than my strengths, I prayed more than once for God to let me go back, to not give me more, but actually less – yet here Paul says we should want more, not less of God's grace, gifts and with it responsibility

- **After I Corinthians 12** – Chapter on how all is useless without love
 - Romans 12 also goes one next to describe how we **love one another**
 - I Corinthians 14 then gives **practical instruction** on using the gifts in the church, again stressing that they are for the building up of the body and thus should be used / controlled so as not to cause confusion or division, not for each person individually but for the body as a whole, and as a witness to outsiders

- **Read Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-13** (commenting as we go)

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³

- *Use of gifts part of living life in a worthy manner ... worthy of our calling*
- *Repeats need for humility, patience and love*

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to one hope when you were called— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

⁷ But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

- *Again, stress on Oneness, gifts should accentuate not undermine oneness*
- *Given by one God, but to each by grace as he apportions it ...*

¹¹ It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,

- Again – He gives, but note here the gift is a person, and the recipient is the church

¹² to prepare God's people for works of service,

*- **Goal:** prepare God's people for service ... new dimension, the gift is not just for me to exercise, it is to use to prepare others to serve*

so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ 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.

*- **Goal:** build up the body of Christ ... use our gifts so others reach maturity*

*- **Ephesians goes on***

- to talk about us no longer being infants, tossed about*
- to grow up into Christ*

- Implications:

- We each have a gift or gifts, given by God, for His purposes
- We each need to use our gifts – body will suffer if any part not working
- We need to be humble, not think too much of our gifts, yet also eagerly desire more
- The gifts are designed to build up the body, to unify us – not divide
- We should be using our gift to edify other, and to equip them to serve better
- We should be growing ourselves and through our gifts growing others to maturity

We will say more about the use of our gifts next week, let close this week by briefly looking at the other three aspects of shape and an example of two people's journey in discovering their unique SHAPE

- Abilities

- Personality

- Experiences

4) Discovering Your Unique SHAPE

- So how can I figure out what God is calling me to, what passions I have and should act on?
 - Some good questions you can use to help think about it (see books)
examples: What have you achieved in the past? What people / needs / causes get you excited? What do you dream of?
 - note: must conform to Scripture, advance kingdom (see calling for all)

Optional: **Example: Paul's Journey** (may use next week)

- **Look back at Galatians 1:11-24 (summarize)**
 - Persecute Christians
 - God appeared
 - Zeal turned to gospel, to gentiles
 - Then go study for 3 years
 - Then went on first journeys – still not known to church
 - Now as they heard of him and Christ's work they praised God

Optional: **Example: My Journey** (may use next week)

- Youth / Drexel – try hand at lots of things – drama, booktable, disciple new believers, small group, President fellowship, outreach (small and large) ... and discipled
 - Church – head up missions committee, go overseas, later head up college and career
 - Job / Ministry – Billy Graham service, then Computer full time ... try start student group in church, then espresso bar at Tyler, then teaching and leadership on 2 campuses, eventually full time
 - DM – Found place I fit – camp energizing, create new with winter breakaway and summer session ... Then God move for need and develop additional gifts
 - Biblical / Grace – but not teaching, so God moved me where call better fulfilled
- **How Will You Discover Your SHAPE?**
- Step up and try things – lots of them
 - Where get excited do more
 - Not worry about full-time, other parts of life ... just find room for passions
 - As begin understanding call move away from other things and toward it
 - Allow God to change / grow and to call to other things for a time ...
 - But keep praying, asking God, looking for opportunities to live out of passion

THIS WEEK: "Who Am I / Where Do I Fit" Packet!

Gift Discovery: See Mark Bickel for several different Spiritual Gift Discovery surveys you can take

For Further Study:

- Book: **"S.H.A.P.E. – Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life"** by Erik Rees
- Book: **"What You Do Best in the Body of Christ"** by Bruce Bugbee
- Workbook: **"Discover Your Spiritual Gifts the Network Way"** by Bruce Bugbee
{note: other Spiritual Gift & Personality tests also available}
- Bible Study: **"Identity: Becoming What God Wants Us To Be"** NavPress