



# Shaped for Serving God

Chapters 29 & 30

BibleTract.org

Notes: This Bible Study is intended to be a companion to “The Purpose Driven Life” by Rick Warren. The Scripture references in this Bible study are taken from the New King James Version.

## Chapter 29: Accepting Your Assignment

### What is the fourth major purpose God has for us per Ephesians 2:10?

Ephesians 2:10 - For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

God created us to serve Him by doing good works. He has given each of us a particular assignment that was determined before we were even born... as to Jeremiah, He said:

Jeremiah 1:5 - Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.

### What kinds of things do we do to serve God?

We serve God by serving others...

Matthew 25:40 - And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’

### What does 2 Timothy 1:9 have to say about why God saved us?

2 Timothy 1:9 - who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began

God saved us to serve His own particular purpose. Note that we are not saved according to our works but according to God’s purpose and grace.

### How does the truth that God has a particular purpose for us give us significance and value?

In God’s kingdom, we have a purpose to fulfill on His behalf. Our significance comes from God Himself. When I was in the Army, I served as a staff officer for the Brigade Commander, a Colonel... I gave directives to battalion commanders, Lieutenant Colonels, “for the commander” even though I was just a First Lieutenant. My significance came from the one for whom I spoke.

### What does 1 John 3:14 have to say about how we prove that we are saved?

1 John 3:14 - We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.

Our service to others shows that we love them and this proves that that we are saved. As James said, “*I will show you my faith by my works*” (James 2:18). If we don’t love others enough to serve them, we need to question whether Christ is really in us.

### How is what most people think of “ministry” different from how the Bible represents it?

Most people consider ministries as something done by pastors, evangelists, chaplains, and other professional clergy. In the Bible, the terms servant and minister are synonyms... when you are serving, you are ministering.

### How does the story of Jesus healing Peter’s mother-in-law provide a good example of the reason God saved us?

Matthew 8:14-15 - Now when Jesus had come into Peter’s house, He saw his wife’s mother lying sick with a fever. So He touched her hand, and the fever left her.

And she arose and served them.

Jesus healed Peter’s wife’s mother so that she could serve others. We are healed to help, blessed to be a blessing, saved to serve... not to sit around waiting for heaven.

### Is there anyone here that feels like you are called to full-time Christian service?

This is a trick question... the Bible says that we are all called to full-time Christian service...

1 Peter 2:9 - But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light

A non-serving Christian is an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms.

### What does 1 Corinthians 12:25-27 have to say about where we should exercise our service to others?

1 Corinthians 12:25-27 - there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

We need to be connected to a church family to fulfill our calling to serve others. Each of us has a role to play and is gifted by God to fulfill the service to which we have been called.

### **What happens when one part of the body is not doing what it is supposed to?**

The whole body is sick if one part is failing. Likewise, the church suffers when any of its members do not fulfill their purpose. This is compounded when multiple members fail. This is what is causing churches to die because Christians are unwilling to serve.

### **What does Matthew 20:28 have to say about why we should serve others?**

Matthew 20:28 - "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Jesus set the example for us... He acted in obedience to the Father who sent Him to serve us by paying our penalty for sin. Likewise, we are commanded to serve others, service is not an option for true Christians.

### **What is the objective for the spiritual growth God blesses us with?**

Spiritual maturity is not just for our own benefit, it is so that we may minister to others. Maturity is for ministry! Impression without expression causes depression. The Sea of Galilee and the Dead sea illustrate the difference here... the Sea of Galilee is full of life because it takes water in but also discharges water, the Dead Sea only takes water in and nothing lives in it.

### **What can we do to exercise our spiritual muscles?**

We need to seek service experiences, to seek to be a blessing rather than to be blessed. The amazing things about blessings are that we are blessed when we bless others. The mature Christian does not ask, "who will meet my needs?" but asks instead, "who's needs can I meet?"

### **Romans 14:12 says, "each of us shall give account of himself to God." What should we be seeking to do in light of this?**

We should be seeking to serve more people while we can because some day we will find ourselves before God accounting for what we did with the time, resources, talents, and opportunities He gave us. We will be judged on how much of our gifts we spent on ourselves versus how much we used for others.

Romans 2:5-9 - the righteous judgment of God... will render to... those who are self-seeking: indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish

### **What excuses do you think God will accept for failing to use opportunities to serve others?**

"I was too busy working, having fun, or preparing for retirement" will fall on deaf ears. As I learned as a pledge in Pershing Rifles (a military fraternity in college) there are only three acceptable responses: "yes Sir," "no Sir," or "no excuse Sir."

**Consider Mark 8:35 where Jesus said, "whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it."**

### **What does it mean to lose your life?**

Losing your life this while in this world means setting aside serving yourself for serving others, but losing your life after we die is a reference to the second death, spending eternity separated from God in hell.

### **What does Mark 8:35 have to say about the purpose that God has for us?**

Life is meant for ministry. God intends for us to use our lives to serve others. If we are not serving others, we are not fulfilling our purpose.

### **Is there anyone who wants to share what is holding you back from God's call to serve Him?**

I realize that there is nothing really holding me back but sometimes get distracted by the world and so I regularly need to reset my priorities.

## **Chapter 30: Shaped for Serving God**

### **If God created each of us for a unique purpose, what does this imply about the characteristics He gave us?**

God is equipping each of us to accomplish the purpose for which He made each of us...

Isaiah 43:21 - This people I have formed for Myself; they shall declare My praise.

God first planned what we'd be used for then He shaped us to be able to follow through on His plan...

Ephesians 2:10 - For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

### **Rick Warren uses the acrostic SHAPE to help us remember the five factors that determine our ability to accomplish His purpose for us. What are these five factors represented by the word SHAPE?**

Spiritual gifts  
Heart  
Abilities  
Personality  
Experience

## **SHAPE: Spiritual Gifts**

### **What are spiritual gifts?**

Spiritual gifts are special empowerments that God has given each of us for ministry...

Romans 12:6-8 - Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

### **What are we to do with our spiritual gifts?**

God gave us special empowerments to use in our service to others.

### **1 Corinthians 12 provides a thorough description of spiritual gifts. What do the following selected verses have to say about spiritual gifts?**

1 Corinthians 12:4 - There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

The power of the Holy Spirit is behind our spiritual gifts and there is a great diversity of the gifts that are given to us. Each of us is unique in our own special mix of gifts. There is always a dominant gift that can be placed in the general categories the Bible gives but all Christians also have some degrees of other gifts as well. These combinations make each of us unique.

1 Corinthians 12:7 - But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

Every Christian receives spiritual gifts that are to be used to benefit others in the church. They are not for our own benefit exclusively but primarily intended to be used to help others. This is reinforced in Ephesians 4:11-12, *"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."*

1 Corinthians 12:11 - But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

It is God the Holy Spirit who determines which spiritual gifts an individual will receive. We can not force ourselves to have a particular spiritual gift, this is up to God.

### **What is the best way to discover your spiritual gifts?**

Serve... you will not know how God has gifted you until you try different aspects of service. That which God consistently blesses is your gift. As my Dad would say, if you haven't discovered your gift yet, you're not done looking. The tragedy is that a lot of people don't bother to even begin looking.

### **How can misuse or wrong attitudes about spiritual gifts cause trouble within the church?**

**Not using them** – if we don't seek to know our spiritual gifts or don't bother to apply them, we are cheating others out of the benefits of their application.

**Using gifts only for ourselves** – if we are only using our gifts to edify ourselves, we are missing the point for why God gave us spiritual gifts.

**"Gift envy"** – if we desire a gift that someone else has this can cause us to become resentful or jealous of how God uses others.

**"Gift protection"** – if we think everyone else should have our gifts and do what we are called to do, we can become discouraged.

**Too much emphasis on gifts** – our gifts are only one aspect of five factors that shape us for service. A neglect of the other factors can make us out of balance.

## **SHAPE: Heart**

### **What does the term "heart" generally mean in the Bible?**

The term "heart" generally refers to our desires, hopes, interests, ambitions, dreams, and affections. Our heart is the source of our motivations and values. Our heart is our inner self, the seat of our emotions, what we truly are, and what we are passionate about. Our heart determines how we feel and act the way we do.

### **How are people's hearts different?**

Each of us have special passions that others do not share as intensely as we do. Likewise, there are subjects that bore certain people to tears that get others jazzed up.

### **How can what interests you that others do not seem as interested in be a clue to where we should be serving?**

What interests us is part of how God has equipped us for a particular area of service. We should seek to do what we are interested in and enjoy because God has given different people the capacity to appreciate different things.

### **Deuteronomy 10:10 says, "serve the Lord with all your heart." How do we know when we are serving God with all our heart?**

**Enthusiasm** – If we are enthusiastic about the service we are doing, this is a sign we are serving God with all our heart. When we are helping others by doing what we love to do, we don't need any rewards or payment. The opposite is also true, if a person does not have a heart for what they do, they will quickly become discouraged.

**Effectiveness** – When we do what we love to do, we will become good at it. As Rick Warren said, "passion drives perfection." Taking a job just for the money is a big mistake, instead we should all seek to do what we have a passion for. You can have a lot to live on and still nothing

to live for. Instead, figure out what you love to do and do it for God's glory.

**Is there anyone who would like to share in what way you can see yourself passionately serving others and loving it?**

I like to see customers getting DSPs into production. I enjoy living comfortably in harsh conditions like the mountains or the desert and helping others to do the same thing. And I enjoy discussing spiritual matters with people and helping them get to know the Lord better.

**Is there anyone who would like to share what you love to do that you can use to serve others in the family of God?**

I love to do Bible study and to share the insights I've learned with others. I love to lead others through a path of self discovery and see them come to the same conclusions that I have about spiritual matters. I love to write about spiritual matters and getting these thoughts into the hands of as many people as possible.