

exploring your life purpose



God's calling and your vocation:
an initiative of the navigators

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PREFACE

God's Calling and Your Vocation Initiative seeks to engage you in meaningful conversations on calling and vocation from a Biblical point of view. Why are we so interested in this subject?

We want to see multitudes of students and young workers who are passionately pursuing God, living out of a Biblical view of calling, making Biblically-informed career choices and contributing to God's broader Kingdom purposes and the common good of mankind.

Research has shown that "those who participated in exploration programs demonstrated – one year after graduation from college – greater intentionality, more resilience, and broader life satisfaction than those who did not participate in such programs. Analysis of alumni surveys reveal that the benefits of purpose exploration grow stronger with time as life decisions accumulate" (*The Purposeful Graduate: Why Colleges Must Talk to Students about Vocation* by Tim Clydesdale, pg. 211).

To those ends, we have designed this resource to help you explore your God-given life purpose and to better understand how God has made you and guided you into your unique contribution to His Kingdom, your life experiences and the hopes and dreams He is using to draw you toward your future destiny. This will be an exciting journey! Take the time to enjoy it.



Don Bartel

Executive Director

God's Calling and Your Vocation Initiative

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INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Five sessions are recommended to go through this material. They may be scheduled weekly, bi-weekly or using any other pattern that fits your schedule.

Each session is designed to take about 60 minutes to prepare and 60 minutes to discuss. It's recommended that you spend an equal amount of time on each session rather than dwelling too long on any one session.

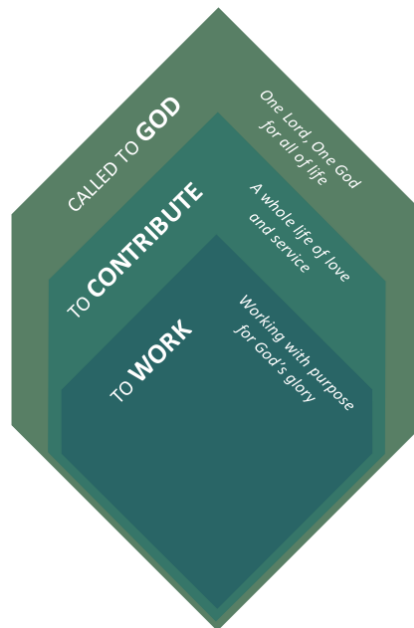
This exploration process is a journey rather than a destination. You can come back to this resource again and again over time in order to gain greater clarity and understanding.

GOD'S CALLING AND YOUR VOCATION

God's Calling and Your Vocation is an initiative of The Navigators. The other resources in this initiative include the following Bible studies:

- A Biblical Perspective on Work, Vocation and Calling
- Nehemiah: When God's Call Comes Calling at Work
- Daniel: Thriving at Work as an Exile

The diagram and explanation below provide a framework for all the resources. This resource, *Exploring Your Life Purpose*, touches on all three categories.



Called to God: First and foremost, God calls us to Himself. Everything is God's. All of life is based on God's authoritative call on our lives. He wants all of us, all the time.

Called to Contribute: Inside this call to God, God asks us to join Him in His work of restoring and rebuilding our world. In every aspect of life, we are called to contribute.

This contribution includes work but also areas such as being a good neighbor, volunteering and other types of formal and informal contributions.

Called to Work: Within God’s call to contribute, God leads most people into a career. The Bible teaches that it is not just *how* we relate to people at work that makes a difference. Very often, it is *the work itself* that provides a way for us to do good (for example, the farmer who grows food, the doctor who helps people get healthy or the engineer who helps design safer vehicles). Work is not the “center of the bull’s-eye,” but it can be a significant place for us to do our part to change the world and make it a better place.

CORE ELEMENTS IN THE PROCESS

Exploring Your Life Purpose follows four core elements that build upon one another like rungs on a ladder. The exploration process will help you take steps in understanding your God-given design and “climb higher” in appreciating, celebrating and understanding yourself and others.

Element One: *Understanding*: “Who am I?”

We all live with an incomplete and inaccurate view of who we are, first, in our identity in Christ and, secondly, in our unique design. We need time + freedom to discover our true design and to appreciate His work in us.

Element Two: *Appreciating* our Unique Gifts and Those of Others

Our heart beats with the desire to live and work in a way we can understand and appreciate. We want to work within our design but also to do work that is meaningful and significant (John 10:10). This inclination is inherent in the *imago dei* – we are created in God’s image.

Element Three: *Celebrating* and Using our Unique Contribution

Your design and desires are no mistake! God loves diversity and uniqueness. Look at the grand diversity within His creation. We are created uniquely both inside and out.

Element Four: The Wisdom to *Defer* to Others in the Workplace

We *defer* to others by accepting their unique gifts and respecting each other’s God-inspired differences. We show humility by seeing the distinctive differences in the people around us and by allowing God to use their uniqueness in concert with our own.

As you begin this study, here are a few questions to consider:

1. Where are you in the journey of *understanding* the critical question, “Who am I?” Have you ever paused to consider your unique God-given design?
2. Do you *appreciate* the way God has designed you? Are there areas that are initially challenging for you to embrace or receive?
3. Have you ever considered that *celebrating* your design is a form of worship? What would that practically look like as you engage in this journey?
4. How is the idea of *deferring* to one another’s design a sign of love?



inward

INWARD

We expect people to look different than us on the *outside*, but we often expect them to think and act the same as us on the *inside*. Why are we surprised when people think differently or process information differently than we do? God designed you completely uniquely on the outside *and* inside. We each have a unique purpose, design, and preferences.

What do you see when you look in the mirror? (Describe yourself physically.) What is unique about you?

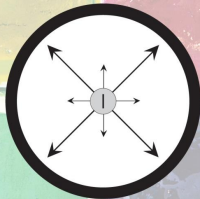
What would you see in an X-ray if you could look inside your unique design? What is unique about how you think and see the world?

During this session, we want to give you words to describe who God made you on the inside. Below, you will find four different ways to examine God's unique design: your preferences in how you approach the world and others, your strengths, your values and your spiritual gifts.

At this time, we suggest that you use just one of these four tools. (Too much of a good thing is not a good thing! Later, you may want to use the others.) Unless your group has already looked at personality types before, we suggest that you use the first tool below, "Preferences."



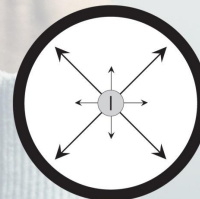
preferences



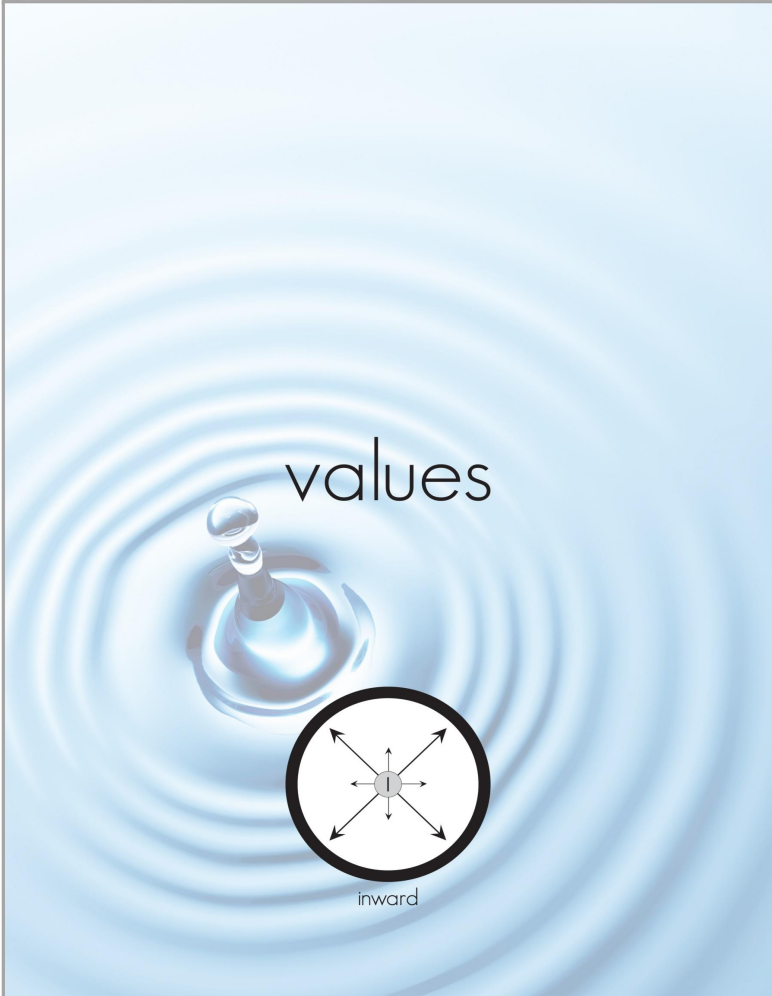
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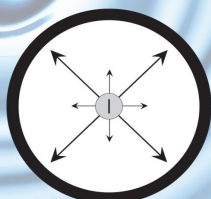
strengthsfinder



inward



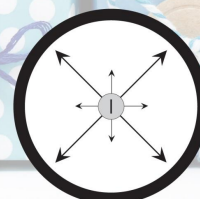
values



inward



spiritual gifts



inward

PREFERENCES

In this section, we are going to attempt to identify your personality preferences.¹

Preferences are innate aspects of your larger God-given design and are a very powerful tool in understanding yourself and others. The goal of this exercise is not to “fit into” a certain personality type but to gain understanding and words to describe yourself.

The Power of Preference

To demonstrate the idea of preference, please sign your name on the line below.

Now, switch your pen to your other hand and sign your name again.

What was it like writing your name the first time? How about the second time?

Just as we have a natural preference for which hand we use to write with, we also have natural, innate mental and behavioral preferences. What would it be like to write with your non-dominant hand all day? Probably exhausting and a lot of work! Similarly, when we operate outside of our natural personality preferences, we may feel drained. That is why it is helpful to identify our natural preferences so we can determine the environments where we will thrive and understand our design in relation to others.

¹ This material is based on the theory of Carl Jung, Katherine Briggs and her daughter, Isabel Briggs-Myers.

FOUR PREFERENCES

These behavioral and mental preferences can be described by four scales:

1. Extraversion / Introversion

Where do you prefer to focus your attention for inner **energy**?

2. Sensing / Intuition

How do you prefer to **gather information** or perceive your environment?

3. Thinking / Feeling

How do you prefer to draw conclusions and **make decisions**?

4. Judging / Perceiving

How do you prefer to **orient yourself** to the outer world and live out your life?

PREFERENCE THEORY QUIZ

There are many misconceptions about personality preferences. Answer true or false to the following statements:

1. Your preferences change over time.
2. Your environments (work, social, home, etc.) affect your preferences.
3. There are some preferences that are better than others.
4. There is an equal distribution of preferences across the U.S. population.
5. We have to use all of the preferences at some time or another.
6. People with opposite preferences will usually experience some degree of tension or conflict.
7. People who don't have a clear preference on one or more of the scales will likely experience some level of internal tension.
8. Your personality preferences explain everything about you.
9. It is mature to not have strong preferences and to be adaptable.

Answers

1. False – Preference theory is based on *innate* preferences that do not change over time. However, in certain seasons of your life, you may be forced to use a preference that is outside of your innate preference, and you may “score” differently on an assessment.
2. True – Your family of origin or work environment, for example, may affect your ability to operate according to your natural preferences. Sometimes it can be difficult to discern what is an innate preference versus what you are forced into based on your environment.
3. False – We are not measuring holy or sinful preferences. These are simply spiritually neutral. However, when relating to someone with an opposite preference, it can *feel* like they are wrong and your way of seeing the world is right.
4. False – Some preferences are more common than others, and some personality types are more common than others.
5. True – Just as you had the ability to write with both hands, we all have to use each preference in the course of our lives. This is easier for some than others.
6. True – People with opposite preferences see and approach the world very differently. This could result in tension and conflict in our relationships. Understanding your preferences can help you appreciate people who are different from you.
7. True – It’s been reported that those with little to no preference on a given scale feel a degree of internal tension because they can “write with both hands” essentially. This is not a negative thing, but helps provide understanding.
8. False – Your preferences are a helpful piece of understanding your personality, but they only help to explain your tendencies. You are much more than the combination of your four preferences!
9. False – Maturity is recognizing your preferences and the clarity of those preferences and being willing to adapt when necessary or to put your preference aside in order to meet another person where they are.

IDENTIFYING YOUR PREFERENCES

Self-Selection Process to Identify Preferences

This process will help you identify your preference for each of the four preference scales. Remember, the goal of this session is to give you a general sense of your preferences. The discovery process can take ongoing observation and discussion with those who know you and can help you discover your true preferences. It is less important today to “find your type” than it is to gain ways to describe yourself.

Directions: For each of the following four scales, check the boxes that best describe you. Each preference characteristic is listed in opposition to the one directly across from it. As much as possible, try to choose one of the characteristics, not both. You may have checks in both columns.

EXTRAVERTS (E)	INTROVERTS (I)
-----------------------	-----------------------

Where do you prefer to focus your attention for inner energy?

The Outer World of People and Things

- Prefer to be in the midst of things
- Engage with others to think
- Speaks frequently
- Initiate introductions
- Expressive body language
- Socially open
- Broad interests
- Expend energy
- Focus outwardly and live
- Understandable and accessible
- Think out loud
- Enjoy social groups

The Inner World of Thoughts and Ideas

- Prefer to limit intrusions
- Disengage to think
- Reflects on things
- Respond to introductions
- Reserved body language
- Prefer privacy
- Deep understanding
- Conserve energy
- Focus inwardly and examine
- Subtle and unknown
- Think to oneself
- Enjoy intimate one-to-one

I prefer: _____ (Extraversion/Introversion)

The clarity of my preference is _____ (very clear, moderately clear, slightly clear, unclear).

I am energized and stimulated by _____

Some of my characteristics are:

SENSORS (S)	INTUITIVES (N)
--------------------	-----------------------

How do you prefer to gather information or perceive your environment?

Use of Five Senses

- Current tangible realities
- "What is present"
- Focus on the physical and the parts
- Attentive to the past or present
- Straightforward, concrete
- Collect information sequentially
- Pay attention to specifics
- Precautionary, refining what exists
- Pragmatic and helpful
- Often contented
- Want things as they are
- Trust past experience

Use of Insights (Sixth Sense)

- Abstract connections/projections
- "What could be"
- Focus on themes and the whole
- Visualize the future
- Conceptual, imaginative
- Collect information randomly
- Focus on the big picture
- Innovative, learning new things
- Speculative and inspiring
- Often restless
- Want to change things
- Trust imagination and hunches

I prefer: _____ (Sensing/Intuition)

The clarity of my preference is _____ (very clear, moderately clear, slightly clear, unclear).

I gather information by _____

Some of my characteristics are:

THINKERS (T)	FEELERS (F)
---------------------	--------------------

How do you prefer to draw conclusions and make decisions?

Based on Logic

- Rationality and clear-cut
- Truth valued over tact
- Logical and deliberative
- Cause and effect focus
- Questioning things
- Identifying inconsistencies
- Analyzing and critiquing
- Guided by logical consequences
- Impersonal evaluation
- Brief and direct, businesslike
- Seek competence and achievement
- Explain, compare, clarify

Considering Values and Relationships

- Harmony of relationships or values
- Tact valued over truth
- Personally considerate
- Empathetic and sentimental
- Accommodating people
- Identifying commonalities
- Understanding and appreciating
- Focus on people impact
- Must feel right about a situation
- Holistic “heart” appeal
- Seek mutual appreciation
- Care, understand, include

I prefer: _____ (Thinking/Feeling)

The clarity of my preference is _____ (very clear, moderately clear, slightly clear, unclear).

I decide on the basis of _____

Some of my characteristics are:

JUDGERS (J)	PERCEIVERS (P)
--------------------	-----------------------

How do you prefer to orient yourself to the outer world and live out your life?

- | | | |
|---|----------|--|
| <p>Decisive, Planned, Orderly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Organize outer world toward goals <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer plans and decisions <input type="checkbox"/> Move to order and closure <input type="checkbox"/> Definitive, structured, “final” <input type="checkbox"/> Goal-oriented <input type="checkbox"/> Work from plans <input type="checkbox"/> Systematic and exacting <input type="checkbox"/> Share definitive opinions <input type="checkbox"/> Start early and complete projects <input type="checkbox"/> Steady, sustained effort <input type="checkbox"/> Do the right thing <input type="checkbox"/> Accused of being rigid | <p>⋮</p> | <p>Flexible, Adaptable, Spontaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to outer world <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer curiosity and spontaneity <input type="checkbox"/> Entertain enjoyable options <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible, adaptable, tentative <input type="checkbox"/> Journey-oriented <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to the moment <input type="checkbox"/> Casual and tolerant <input type="checkbox"/> Share provisional information <input type="checkbox"/> Begin many new projects <input type="checkbox"/> On-and-off effort <input type="checkbox"/> Experience everything <input type="checkbox"/> Accused of being irresponsible |
|---|----------|--|

I prefer: _____ (Judging/Perceiving)

The clarity of my preference is _____ (very clear, moderately clear, slightly clear, unclear).

I prefer a lifestyle that is _____

Some of my characteristics are...

My four preferences in combination are: ____ ____ ____ ____ (example INFJ)

These four letters in combination are called your **personality type code**. Below are some brief descriptors of each type. Remember, this is your best guess at this point in your life. You may find that on one or more of the scales, you do not have a clear preference. In that case, it may be helpful to explore a few other type codes. For example, if you are unclear in your preference for sensing or intuition but clear on the other preferences, check out ISFJ and INFJ. Certain phrases or descriptions from both types might be helpful.

TYPE DESCRIPTION CHART

ISTJ “DOING WHAT SHOULD BE DONE” organizer, compulsive, private, trustworthy, rules 'n regs, practical MOST RESPONSIBLE	ISFJ “A HIGH SENSE OF DUTY” amiable, works behind the scenes, ready to sacrifice, accountable, prefers doing MOST LOYAL	INFJ “AN INSPIRATION TO OTHERS” reflective/introspective, quietly caring, creative, linguistically gifted, psychic MOST CONTEMPLATIVE	INTJ “ALWAYS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT” theory-based, skeptical, “my way,” high need for competency, sees world as a chessboard MOST INDEPENDENT
ISTP “READY TO TRY ANYTHING ONCE” very observant, cool and aloof, hands-on practicality, unpretentious, ready for what happens MOST PRAGMATIC	ISFP “SEES MUCH BUT SHARES LITTLE” warm, sensitive, unassuming, short-range planner, team player, in touch with self and nature MOST ARTISTIC	INFP “PERFORMING NOBLE SERVICE FOR SOCIETY” strict personal values, seeks inner order/peace, creative, non-directive, reserved MOST IDEALISTIC	INTP “A LOVE OF PROBLEM SOLVING” challenges others to think, absent-minded professor, competency needs, socially cautious MOST CONCEPTUAL
ESTP “THE ULTIMATE REALIST” unconventional approach, fun, gregarious, lives for here and now, good at problem solving MOST SPONTANEOUS	ESFP “YOU ONLY GO AROUND ONCE IN LIFE” sociable, spontaneous, loves surprises, cuts red tape, juggles multiple tasks, quip master MOST GENEROUS	ENFP “GIVING LIFE AN EXTRA SQUEEZE” people-oriented, creative, seeks harmony, life of the party, more starts than finishes MOST OPTIMISTIC	ENTP “ONE EXCITING CHALLENGE AFTER ANOTHER” argues both sides of a point to learn brinkmanship, tests the limits, enthusiastic, new ideas MOST INVENTIVE
ESTJ “LIFE’S ADMINISTRATORS” order and structure, sociable, opinionated, results driven, producer, traditional MOST HARD CHARGING	ESFJ “HOSTS AND HOSTESSES OF THE WORLD” gracious, good interpersonal skills, thoughtful, appropriate, eager to please MOST HARMONIZING	ENFJ “SMOOTH TALKING PERSUADER” charismatic, compassionate, possibilities for people, ignores the unpleasant, idealistic MOST PERSUASIVE	ENTJ “LIFE’S NATURAL LEADERS” visionary, gregarious, argumentative systems planners, takes charge, low tolerance for incompetence MOST COMMANDING

PREFERENCES SUMMARY WORKSHEET

SAMPLE

My “best guess” type code is: I S T J

STEP 1: List key phrases from the information gained from the above resources:

- I am present oriented and gather information through my senses
- I base my decisions on logic and objective analysis
- I take a planned and organized approach to life and like closure
- I accept responsibility for things being done, often going beyond the call of duty
- I look for solutions to present problems in the successes of the past
- I get things done on schedule and am strong on details and follow through
- I prefer a work environment that is orderly, task oriented and that allows for uninterrupted work
- I sometimes find it difficult to delegate - to trust others to do the job right

STEP 2: Select a few key words or phrases from the above list:

- Logical and objective
- Oriented toward the present
- Closure
- Responsibility
- Experience oriented
- Task oriented

STEP 3: Put all the key words or phrases into one or two sentences that describe you:

I am logical and objective in decision-making. I operate in the present and bring past experiences to bear on current decisions. Bringing tasks to closure is important. I accept responsibility for things being done, often going beyond the call of duty.

PREFERENCES SUMMARY WORKSHEET

My “best guess” type code is: ____ ____ ____ ____

STEP 1: List key phrases from the information gained from the above resources including the chart and type descriptions.

STEP 2: Select a few key words or phrases from the above list:

STEP 3: Put all the key words or phrases into one or two sentences that describe you:

STEP 4: What implications do you see for your vocation, relationships or current realities?

STRENGTHS

“When we discover our talents (strengths), when we give them a name, something resonates deep within us. It gives us permission to stop trying to be who we are not and concentrate on who we are - who we were originally created to be.” (Living your Strengths, Winseman, Clifton, Liesveld, 2003-2004)

God has given each person strengths that make them unique. The StrengthsFinder approach is based on research that shows it is more effective for people to focus on their strengths rather than their weaknesses (*StrengthsFinder 2.0*, Tom Rath, 2007). Imagine a baseball team that puts the pitcher in the catcher’s spot and asks the pitcher to be the designated hitter. The best coaches know the strengths of each player and develop and utilize those strengths to create the best team.

StrengthsFinder is an assessment created by Gallup that measures 34 innate talents found globally. When a talent is developed, it is referred to as a strength. When you take the assessment, you will discover your top 5 strengths.

Take the StrengthsFinder assessment at gallupstrengthscenter.com. Scroll down to Clifton StrengthsFinder and click purchase. Buy the “Top 5 Strengths Access” (\$15.00) and follow the online instructions to complete the assessment. Download your eBook after taking your assessment.

Processing Instructions:

- a. Print out your Signature Themes Report.
- b. Highlight any word or phrase that accurately describes you.
- c. Think about a story or experience that illustrates how these strengths are being used in your life.
- d. How do these strengths complement each other? How do you see them working together?
- e. Fill out the summary worksheet that follows.

STRENGTHSFINDER SUMMARY WORKSHEET

SAMPLE

STEP 1: List your top five StrengthsFinder themes.

1. Strategic
2. Communication
3. Futuristic
4. Learner
5. Input

STEP 2: Select a few key words or phrases from your StrengthsFinder themes.

- Big picture
- Like to think outside the box to solve problems
- Can sort through lots of information
- Insights into the future
- Think ahead
- Create detailed and vivid images of future possibilities
- Thirst for new ideas and knowledge
- Enjoy reading and making discoveries
- Good communicator

STEP 3: Put all the key words or phrases into one or two sentences that describe you.

I enjoy creating vivid images of the future that are new and different from the past. I have a thirst for new ideas, knowledge, and discoveries which I communicate to others to help them in their journey toward Jesus.

STRENGTHSFINDER SUMMARY WORKSHEET

STEP 1: List your top 5 StrengthsFinder themes.

STEP 2: Select a few key words or phrases from your top StrengthsFinder themes.

STEP 3: Put all the key words or phrases into one or two sentences that describe you.

STEP 4: Are there one or two Strengths that you would like to develop further? What are some next steps you can take?

PERSONAL VALUES

What drives you? Why do you value some things more than others? Why do you react with negative emotions when your values are violated? How do you find your values?

This assessment focuses on personal values that *drive our behavior*, not the foundational or basic needs that most people have in common.

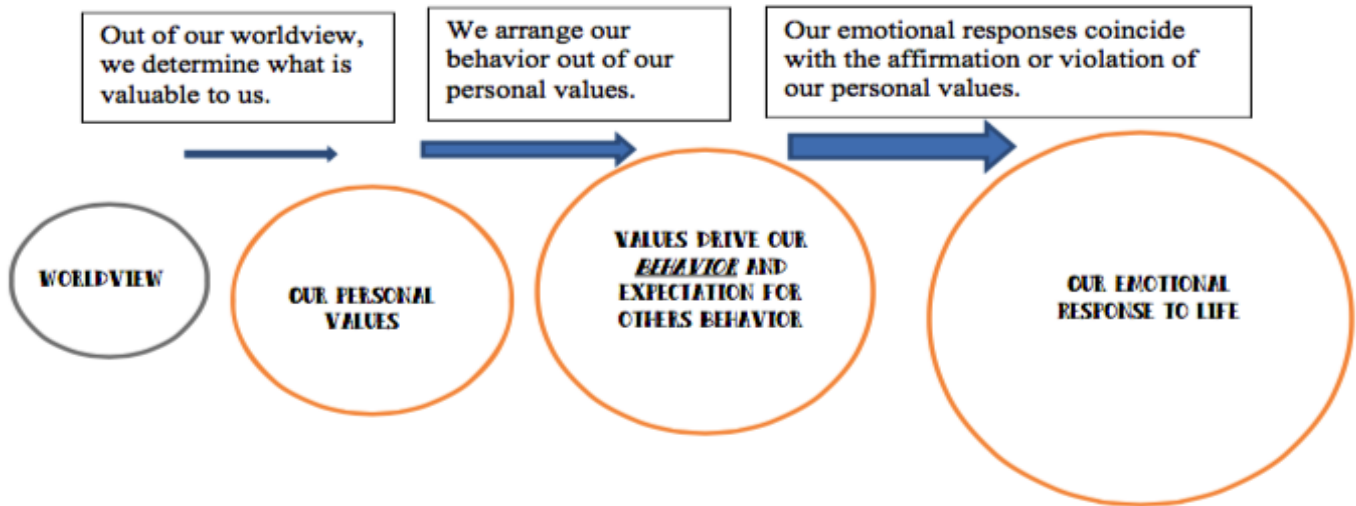
What are values? “Values are a measure of the ultimate worth of a thing or an action. They can represent principles, standards or rules of conduct (behavior) derived from one’s worldview. Each of us has deeply held core values that we generally learn as very young children or develop—often without being conscious of it—from life experiences.” (Worldviews and Values,” McGraw-Hill, 2007. Available at <http://www.mhhe.com/Enviro-Sci/CaseStudyLibrary/>)

Read Luke 18:15-17

1. What do you think the disciples valued at the time?
2. What do you think Jesus valued at the time?
3. What were the cultural values at the time? (Search with www.blueletterbible.com for more insight)
4. What were a few of Jesus’ personal values relating to this story beyond his respect for children?

Our personal values come out of our personal worldview.

What is a worldview? “A worldview is the framework from which we **view reality** and make sense of life and the world.” (<http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian-worldview/whats-a-christian-worldview/whats-a-worldview-anyway>)



Key Information on Personal Values:

- Usually you will know you've had a value violated if you have an emotional response to a situation.
- Values can change over time.
- The definition of values is not a complete list. You can add a value if it is not listed.
- Values are not sinful. Under the submission of Christ, the values themselves are not wrong to hold. We just need to be careful how we try to fulfill them.

PERSONAL VALUES SELECTION

Read through the value definitions below and mark them into categories 1 through 4 according to **Always Valued = 4, Often Valued = 3, Sometimes Valued = 2, Seldom Valued = 1.**

“I value...”

- ___ **Adventure:** Experiencing a high degree of excitement throughout my life.
- ___ **Aesthetics:** Studying or appreciating the beauty of things, ideas, etc.
- ___ **Affiliation:** Being part of a company, organization or work team that accepts me as a team member.
- ___ **Artistic Expression:** Engaging in creative work with aesthetic value.
- ___ **Authenticity:** Genuine, accurate, honest.
- ___ **Challenging Opportunities:** Opportunities to stretch myself with new, unique or difficult situations.
- ___ **Change and Variety:** Responsibilities and activities that frequently change in their content and/or setting.
- ___ **Competition:** Engaging in activities that pit my abilities against myself and others.
- ___ **Creativity:** Innovating, inventing or imagining new things or ideas, resulting in originality.
- ___ **Decision Making:** The power to decide courses of action, policies, etc.
- ___ **Efficiency:** Achieving maximum productivity with minimum wasted effort or expense.
- ___ **Exercise Competence:** The opportunity to work in those areas in which I feel I have talents and can excel.
- ___ **Fairness:** The quality of making judgments that are free from bias and injustice.
- ___ **Fast Pace:** Living life rapidly with a lot of activity.
- ___ **Financial Freedom:** Financial means that allow me to experience things I consider essential and luxuries of life.
- ___ **Friendships:** Developing close personal relationships with people as a result of where you live, work and play.
- ___ **Fun:** Experiences of pleasure, enjoyment, amusement and playfulness.
- ___ **Health and Fitness:** An active lifestyle that allows time to maintain good exercise and diet discipline.
- ___ **Helping Others:** Providing services, assistance or support to others in a direct or behind-the-scenes way, either individually or in small groups.
- ___ **Independence:** Determining the nature of what I do; setting my own direction.

- ___ **Influence People:** Changing other's attitudes or modifying opinions that impact actions.
- ___ **Job Security:** Being assured of keeping my job and a reasonable financial reward.
- ___ **Knowledge:** Spending time in pursuit of knowledge, truth and understanding.
- ___ **Leadership:** Opportunities to lead others through direction, influence, and motivation.
- ___ **Leisure:** Having enough time for personal interests and pursuits.
- ___ **Location:** Living in a geographical area that suits my lifestyle.
- ___ **Mental Stimulation:** Work which requires that I constantly use my mind and continue to develop my intellect.
- ___ **Peace and Harmony:** Freedom from conflict.
- ___ **People Contact:** Having a lot of day-to-day interaction with people.
- ___ **Power and Authority:** The ability to influence activities and rewards for others.
- ___ **Precision Work:** Involvement in situations that require a high level of accuracy.
- ___ **Pressure:** Situations where time pressure is prevalent and productive.
- ___ **Problem Solving:** Bringing resolution to difficult issues or situations.
- ___ **Recognition:** Rewards or public acknowledgment for the quality of my contribution.
- ___ **Responsibility:** Opportunities to oversee projects and/or personnel.
- ___ **Safety:** Being safe from danger, fear, or the unknown.
- ___ **Solitude:** Time for reflection.
- ___ **Stability:** A life routine that is predictable and unchanging.
- ___ **Status:** A position that others respect and idolize.
- ___ **Structure:** A framework that provides boundaries and organization.
- ___ **Time Freedom:** Having responsibilities that I can pursue according to my own schedule.
- ___ **Work Alone:** Doing projects by myself without any significant amount of contact with others.
- ___ **Work on the Frontiers of Knowledge:** Working in a company that is leading its industry and striving for product innovation or advancement.
- ___ **Work with Others:** Having close working relationships with a group; working as a team toward common goals.

VALUES ASSESSMENT

The lists you have sorted represent the values that many people hold in life. These are important. Your sense of fulfillment in your life is usually related to these values.

1. Select your top five values from the “**Always Valued**” category and list them under “Highest Values.”
2. Next, select your lowest five values from the “**Seldom Valued**” category and list these under “Lowest Values.”

HIGHEST VALUES

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

LOWEST VALUES

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. For each of your highest values, how often are you experiencing those in your current situation? Give some examples.
2. Of your highest values, are there any that you are not experiencing in your current situation? Explain.
3. Have your values changed within the last three to five years? Explain.
4. For each of your lowest values, list something you are currently doing that falls within that category.”
5. Why is knowing other peoples’ values important?

VALUES SUMMARY WORKSHEET

SAMPLE

STEP 1: List key values and key phrases from each of your highest values.

- *Relationships - develop relationships where I live, work and play*
- *Influence people - change or modify opinions that impact others*
- *Leisure - have time for personal interests and pursuits*
- *Problem solving - bring resolution to difficult situations*

STEP 2: Select a few key words or phrases from the above list. (Sometimes, it is the descriptors that are more important than the labels.)

- *Develop relationships*
- *Impact and influence people*
- *Personal pursuits*
- *Difficult situations*

STEP 3: Put all key words or phrases into one or two sentences that describe you.

I value influence and impact on others and bringing resolution to difficult situations. I enjoy developing relationships but also want time reserved for personal pursuits.

STEP 4: How might this description help you in your relationships and vocational choices?

It will be important for me to find a work situation that has a balance of teamwork and work that I can do on my own. Eventually, I will probably need to find a place that allows me to exercise leadership.

VALUES SUMMARY WORKSHEET

STEP 1: List key words and key phrases from each of your highest values.

STEP 2: Select a few key words or phrases from the above list. (Sometimes, it is the descriptors that are more important than the labels.)

STEP 3: Put all key words or phrases into one or two sentences that describe you.

STEP 4: How might this description help you in your relationships and vocational choices?

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.” 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 (ESV)

The Bible teaches that followers of Jesus receive “gifts.” These gifts are referred to as manifestations of the Holy Spirit, special abilities or supernatural capabilities, but we most commonly refer to them as “spiritual gifts.” These are different from our personality preferences and natural talents.

Describe a few times where you sensed the supernatural hand of God at work through you. Are there any similarities in these experiences?

Read the following passages about spiritual gifts. What stands out to you about them and their purpose?

Romans 12:4-8

1 Corinthians 12:4-20

Ephesians 4:11-13

1 Peter 4:10

From these passages, we see that God gives spiritual gifts to each of his followers to help us all grow in maturity. If you are in your early 20s and 30s, your spiritual gifts may be challenging to identify. Over time, however, it will be important to clarify what

special capabilities God has given you so that you can steward them well for the benefit of God's Kingdom and your joy. It is also helpful to have a clear perception of your lowest gifts. Knowing these helps you adapt your service by compensating or deferring to others.

A few warnings

1. Don't expect others to do naturally what God has gifted you to do supernaturally.
2. Avoid elevating or devaluing certain gifts over others.
3. Don't use your gifts in isolation, without the support of other gifts.
4. Don't confuse positions (jobs or tasks) with spiritual gifting. For instance, just because someone has the title of pastor does not mean they have the gift of teaching or pastor/shepherd.
5. Differentiate between spiritual gifts and Biblical imperatives. For example, Jesus commands all His followers "to go and make disciples of all nations" Matt 28:19, not just those with the gift of evangelism.

Assessment directions

1. To help you discern your own gifts, **take Ralph Ennis' assessment online** at <http://www.LeadConsulting-USA.com>. (Cost: \$6.50). If it is not available, order a hard copy from LEAD Consulting at website above.
2. For further clarity, read through the following short and long definitions of spiritual gifts. Highlight phrases and words that describe God's work through you.
3. As time allows, look at the Biblical references to the gifts.
4. Fill out the summary sheet.

SHORT DEFINITIONS*

GIFT	FUNCTION	DEFINITION
Administration	Organizing, Coordinating	Ability to organize information and things to work effectively in the Body of Christ
Apostle	Pioneering	Ability to see the overall picture of how the purposes of God can be best furthered
Discerning Spirits	Evaluating, Differentiating	Ability to perceive whether a person ministering in God's name is really from God
Evangelist	Recruiting, Persuading	Ability and drive to communicate the good news of Jesus Christ to those who are not believers
Exhortation	Counseling, Motivating	Ability to comfort, encourage, confront, instruct and inspire practical application
Faith	Looking Ahead	Ability to confidently believe God for changes and spiritual growth that enhances the purposes of God
Giving	Resourcing (Physical Needs)	Ability to determine the physical needs of people and provide physical resources to help meet those needs
Healing	Restoring Physical Health	Ability to call upon God to heal the sick by supernatural means
Helps	Implementing Plans and Processes	Ability to work alongside another and help that person complete the tasks God gave them
Interpretation of Tongues	Interpreting Another Language	Ability to understand and communicate the meaning of an unknown language spoken by someone with the gift of tongues
Knowledge	Researching, Understanding	Ability to seek out, remember and make effective use of a variety of information on a number of diverse subjects
Mercy	Relieving Emotional Hurt/Pain, Showing Compassion	Ability to perceive the hurts of others and console them without condemnation
Miracles	Authenticating, Substantiating	Ability to call upon God to do supernatural acts
Pastor/Shepherding	Spiritual Caregiving (Long-Term)	Ability to care for the spiritual needs of people and oversee their growth in Christ

GIFT	FUNCTION	DEFINITION
Prophecy	Controlling Quality, Proclaiming Truth	Ability to recognize sinful behavior and a driving compulsion to confront others
Ruling/Leadership	Overseeing, Giving Direction	Ability to motivate others to do God's work while coordinating their efforts and overseeing the big picture
Serving	Providing Practical, Physical Caregiving	Ability to identify and meet the physical needs of others
Teaching	Communicating, Illustrating	Ability to understand and communicate the truth of God in a clear and relevant manner
Tongues	Speaking Another Language	Ability to speak a language, known or unknown, without prior knowledge of that language
Wisdom	Applying Truth	Ability to discern applicable principles from God's Word for complex situations

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LONG DEFINITIONS

ADMINISTRATION

Description: The ability to organize information and things for themselves and others to work efficiently in the Body of Christ.

Common traits and functions: Organizing, systematizing, efficiency oriented, coordinating.

Best use: Organize information, materials and people in an efficient manner for a particular task.

Worst use: Counseling people regarding personal problems.

Developmental ideas: Observe how others with this gift have organized for efficiency. Understand available organizational tools (computer, accounting systems, etc.). Study the value of relationships versus organization.

Scripture: 1 Cor. 12:28

APOSTLE

Description: The ability to see the big picture of the Body's ministries and provide what is lacking through pioneering a ministry.

Common traits and functions: Envisioning, building, decisive, practical and conceptual.

Best use: Pioneer new and innovative ministries. Overhaul existing ministries which have lost their sense of purpose and direction. Train others in ministry by mentoring them.

Worst use: Maintain an existing ministry with little opportunity for changing it.

Developmental ideas: Network with others who have this gift. Work in conjunction with others with the gift of wisdom and knowledge.

Scripture: Eph. 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:28. Example from Scripture: Paul, Apollos

DISCERNING SPIRITS

Description: The ability to perceive whether a person ministering in God's name is really from God, Satan or acting out of human power and the ability to perceive whether a person is unique, authentic and honest.

Common traits and functions: Spiritually perceptive, sensitive to moral issues, personally steadfast, rightly evaluating

Best use: Interviewing people seeking ministry positions. Evaluating the quality and maturity of a ministry. Identifying insincere and dishonest people.

Worst use: Designing solutions for improvement and implementing them.

Developmental ideas: Work through personally difficult issues where self-righteousness and defensiveness often breed. Understand the biblical difference between judging to condemn and judging to correct with mercy and truth.

Scripture: 1 Cor. 12:10; 1 John 4:1-3; Gal. 1:6-9

EVANGELISM

Description: The ability and drive to communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ to those who are not believers.

Common traits and functions: Bold communicator, secure, eternity focus, deep concern for the eternal destiny of others

Best use: Serve on a mission team. Initiate conversations about Christ with nonbelievers. Special outreach ministries. Train others in sharing Christ.

Worst use: Too much involvement with Christians so as to severely limit contact with non-Christians.

Developmental ideas: Understand and appreciate the pressure points of non-Christians (i.e., where the world system is insufficient). Understand how to defend the Gospel through truth and relationships. Have a clear understanding of what the Good News of Jesus is.

Scripture: Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5; Acts 21:8. Example from Scripture: Philip

EXHORTATION

Description: The ability to identify the deep needs of individuals and guide them to meaningful resolution of those needs through comfort, encouragement, confrontation, and instruction. And/or the ability to motivate people to meaningful growth through instructing them in the biblical truths regarding growth processes.

Common traits and functions: Relationally perceptive, motivating, process oriented, growth oriented

Best use: Guiding another individual or small group through difficult personal problems. Motivating groups of people to apply biblical truths which lead to maturity.

Worst use: Become overloaded with too many people. Required to lead a group of people.

Developmental ideas: Understand what God's Word says about the nature of man, the attributes of God, evil and pain, confession, repentance, and sanctification (i.e., the process of changing to be like Christ).

Scripture: Rom. 12:8; John 16:7-11

FAITH

Description: The ability to confidently believe God for changes and spiritual growth which will enhance the purposes of God.

Common traits and functions: Future oriented, biblical values, change oriented, confident.

Best use: Involved in new ministry initiatives where resistance from Satan is

encountered.

Worst use: Tasked with maintaining the status quo in a ministry.

Developmental ideas: Study faith from the Scriptures. Pray with others with the gift of faith. Understand faith, intuition, and presumption.

Scripture: 1 Cor. 12:9; Heb. 11; Matt. 17:19-21

GIVING

Description: The ability to determine the physical needs of people and provide physical resources to help meet those needs.

Common traits and functions: Resourceful, considerate, generous, materially unsparing.

Best use: Contributing material resources beyond their natural ability for the work of God.

Worst use: Under-challenged. Restricted to give to one ministry.

Developmental ideas: Be exposed to a variety of ministries. Pray with those with the gift of giving and the gift of faith. Understand the biblical teachings on possessions and material resources.

Scripture: Rom. 12:8; Acts 5:1-11; 2 Cor. 8:1-9:15

HEALING

Description: The ability to call on God to heal the sick by supernatural means.

Common traits and functions: Trusts God's ability, compassionate, supports the infirm, prayerful.

Best use: Healing the sick as a means of demonstrating the power and glory of God.

Worst use: Seeking self-glorification.

Developmental ideas: Understanding the healing ministries of Jesus and Paul.

Scripture: 1 Cor. 12:9,30; Peter and John (Acts 3:1-16)

HELPS

Description: The ability to work alongside another and help that person complete the task God has given him/her.

Common traits and functions: Supportive, loyal, detail oriented, responsive to the initiatives of others.

Best use: Serve as a detail person for a leader of a ministry.

Worst use: Leading a ministry.

Developmental ideas: Understand the value God places on serving. Understand the limits and dangers of complying to another person's wishes.

Scripture: 1 Cor. 12:28. Example from Scripture: Aphrodite's

INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

Description: The ability to understand and communicate the meaning of an unknown language spoken by one who has the gift of tongues.

Common traits and functions: Perceptive of meanings, linguistically proficient, careful with interpretations, seeks edification of all.

Best use: Interpret an unknown tongue within corporate worship.

Developmental ideas: Understand the biblical teaching on the value and dangers of tongues.

Scripture: 1 Cor. 12:10,30; 14:1-19

KNOWLEDGE (Word of Knowledge)

Description: The ability to seek out and remember a myriad of facts on various subjects.

Common traits and functions: Analytical, objective, accumulate information, researching.

Best use: Delineating a detailed plan for a ministry vision, project or activity.

Worst use: Leading and implementing the plan.

Developmental ideas: Exposure to information relevant to his/her ministry of interest. Exposure to decision-makers who will use this knowledge. Understand the dangers and benefits of knowledge.

Scripture: 1 Cor. 12:8; 1 Cor. 8:1

MERCY

Description: The ability to perceive the hurts of people and console them without condemnation.

Common traits and functions: Perceptive of feelings, consoling, not condemning, accommodating.

Best use: Consoling those with emotional scars from sin.

Worst use: Evaluating the intentions of others.

Developmental ideas: Understand the mercy and justice of God from the

Scriptures. Be exposed to the exhortation gift. Understand the benefit of mercy with cheerfulness.

Scripture: Rom. 12:7

MIRACLES

Description: The ability to call on God to do supernatural acts.

Common traits and functions: Substantiates God's claims, supernatural focus, daring, perceptive of God's will

Best use: Believing God for miracles which will bring glory to God and cause others to consider God's will for their lives.

Worst use: Seeking self-glorification.

Developmental ideas: Understand from Scripture God's purposes for doing miracles and withholding miracles.

Scripture: 1 Cor. 12:10,29

PASTOR/SHEPHERD

Description: The ability to oversee and care for the spiritual needs of a group of people.

Common traits and functions: Sensitive to group needs, caring for people, guiding others, people gatherer

Best use: Pastor a local group of believers. Train others by mentoring them.

Worst use: Pioneer a new ministry. Heavy load of personal counseling.

Developmental ideas: Understand God's dealing with groups of people. Understand biblical principles of group conflict resolution.

Scripture: Eph. 4:11 (Note: some consider this to be one gift—pastor-teacher); 1 Pet. 5:1-4

PROPHECY

Description: The ability to recognize (and a driving force to confront) the sinful behavior of individuals, groups and/or cultures—and the ability to perceive implications and consequences of current actions.

Common traits and functions: Sensitive to sin, determined, high value on biblical behavior, quality control.

Best use: Influence believers and society toward biblically moral behavior. Train others by mentoring them.

Worst use: Leading a group.

Developmental ideas: A broad study of biblical teachings. Understanding of moral absolutes and relatives from Scripture. Understand the role of faith in prophecy.

Scripture: Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10,28; Eph. 4:11. Example from Scripture: Peter, Agabus.

RULING/LEADERSHIP

Description: The ability to serve by overseeing, coordinating, and motivating others in the work of God.

Common traits and functions: Purposeful, destiny driven, comfortable with power, views leading as a service.

Best use: A primary leader of a ministry.

Worst use: Detail implementation.

Developmental ideas: Understand God's perspective on leadership, power, submission, and serving. Understand the limits of authority of a spiritual leader.

Scripture: Rom. 12:8; Heb. 13:17

SERVING

Description: The ability to identify and the desire to help meet the physical needs of others.

Common traits and functions: Perceptive of physical needs, eager to serve, empathetic toward the needy, eases burdens.

Best use: Help meet the physical needs of people.

Worst use: Personally removed from the needs of others.

Developmental ideas: Study when and how Jesus said "No" to the physical needs of people.

Scripture: Rom. 12:7

TEACHING

Description: The ability to understand and communicate the truth of God in a clear and relevant manner.

Common traits and functions: Cause-effect focus, brings clarity, concern for relevance, illustrating truth.

Best use: Speaking to various sizes of groups of believers. Speaking on subjects with personal conviction. Train others by instructing and mentoring.

Worst use: Expecting all teachers to be good evangelists and prophets.

Developmental ideas: Exposure to other teachers and teaching methods. Systematic study of the Old and New Testaments.

Scripture: Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:29; Eph. 4:11 (Note: some consider this to be one gift—pastor-teacher.)

TONGUES

Description: The ability to speak a language (known or unknown) without prior knowledge of that language.

Common traits and functions: Contextualizes the gospel, uncomplicated speech, open to the uncommon, inspires movement toward conversion.

Best use: Sharing Christ with non-Christians in a language that they can understand and that moves them to a heart response.

Worst use: Public worship without interpretation.

Developmental ideas: Understand the scriptural teachings on tongues: the benefits and dangers to the furtherance of the Gospel.

Scripture: 1 Cor. 12:10,30; 14:1-19

WISDOM (Word of Wisdom)

Description: The ability to discern applicable principles from God's Word to complex situations.

Common traits and functions: Synthesizing, intuiting meaning, designing, observing and concluding.

Best use: Consulting and advising regarding the foundations, direction and design of a ministry.

Worst use: Detailed implementation and leading.

Developmental ideas: Broad study of Scripture in order to understand a biblical world view. Broad exposure to people and ideas. Exposure to decision-makers.

Scripture: 1 Cor. 12:8. Example from Scripture: Paul as the writer of Romans.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS SUMMARY

Do not regard the result of this exercise as final; however, it does provide a pathway to learn.

Summarize your results from Ralph Ennis' assessment and the previous pages:

Gift	Function	Key words	Implications
Composite			Primary contribution
High Traits, Low Experience			Consider this as part of your self-development
High Experience Low Traits			Arenas where stress occurs if maintained over a long period of time
Lowest Scores			Areas to avoid responsibility

SPIRITUAL GIFTS SUMMARY WORKSHEET

EXAMPLE

STEP 1: List key phrases from each of your four to five highest spiritual gifts.

- *Leadership - coordinate and oversee others*
- *Teaching - communicate and illustrate truth*
- *Administration - develop plans and processes*
- *Helps - implement plans and processes*

STEP 2: Select a few key words or phrases from the above list.

- *Coordinate*
- *Communicate*
- *Develop*
- *Implement*

STEP 3: Put key words or phrases into one or two sentences that describe you.

I enjoy communicating and illustrating relevant and practical information while overseeing and coordinating efforts that result in the development and implementation of plans and processes which provide help to others.

STEP 4: Considering your observations about your spiritual gifts, which ones are being adequately utilized in your current environment? What steps can you take to learn more about your spiritual gifts?

As a student, I have many opportunities to learn new things but less opportunities to teach. I'd like to study more about what good teaching is like and what the Bible says about leading.

STEP 5: What calling or job implication do your spiritual gifts hold for you?

In my work, I am just beginning to be asked to help develop plans. I rarely have the chance to see them implemented. I'd love the opportunity to do more teaching and more practical work putting plans into action.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS SUMMARY WORKSHEET

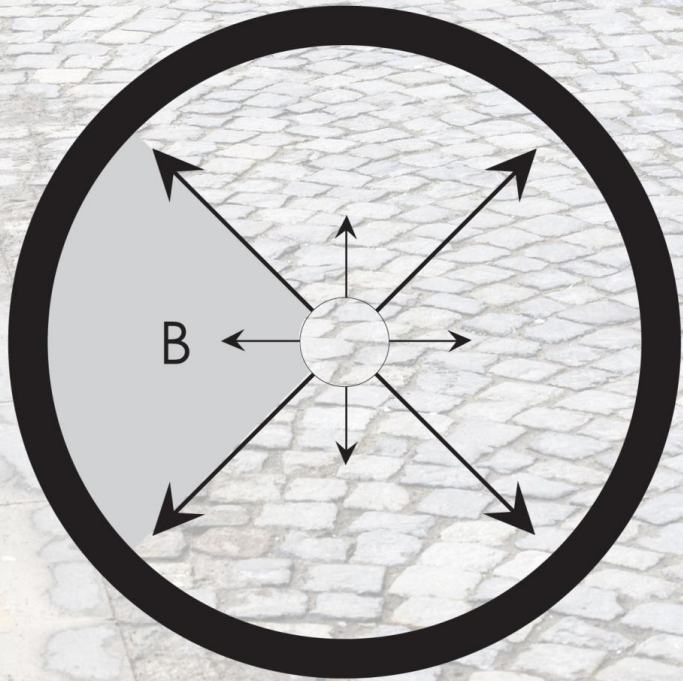
STEP 1: List key phrases from each of your four to five highest spiritual gifts.

STEP 2: Select a few key words or phrases from the above list.

STEP 3: Put all key words or phrases into one or two sentences that describe you.

STEP 4: Considering your observations about your spiritual gifts, which ones are being adequately utilized in your current environment? What steps can you take to learn more about your spiritual gifts?

STEP 5: What calling or job implication do your spiritual gifts hold for you?



backward

BACKWARD

MEMORIAL STONES

The idea behind “memorial stones” comes from this (and similar) stories from the history of Israel:

“These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever...’ He said to the Israelites, ‘In the future when your descendants ask their fathers, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them, ‘Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.’” (Joshua 4:7, 21-22, NIV)



Read Joshua 4:1-24. Why do you think God had the Israelites create a memorial?

What has God been doing in your life? What are your significant stones of remembrance?

Why is it important to remember and reflect?

Spiritual maturity comes as we discover God’s objectives in the circumstances of our lives. The old saying, “experience is the best teacher,” is only true if we take time to reflect.

Late in his life, Joseph looked back at the harm his family had done to him. What he saw was the hurt they caused but also the purposes of God:

“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.” (Genesis 50:20)

The same is true for your life. As we reflect, we can often (though not always) see something of the plan and purposes God has for us.

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. (Romans 8:28)

What God has done in your life, He wants to do *through* your life for someone else.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. (2 Corinthians 1:3,4)

Reflecting on these experiences can help make the lessons learned easier to pass on to another.

Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well. (1 Thessalonians 2:8)

MEMORIAL STONES EXERCISE

This exercise will be helpful in identifying your life themes. The goals of this exercise are...

1. To identify how God has worked in your life through people, circumstances and events.
2. To crystallize lessons learned and deepen convictions on the principles and patterns of how God works in your life.
3. To reflect on the major contributors (stones) that have shaped your life.

Exercise

Use the chart below to identify both positive and negative experiences that have become memorial stones—people, circumstances and events that God has used to shape your life. Consider, but do not limit yourself to, some of the following categories:

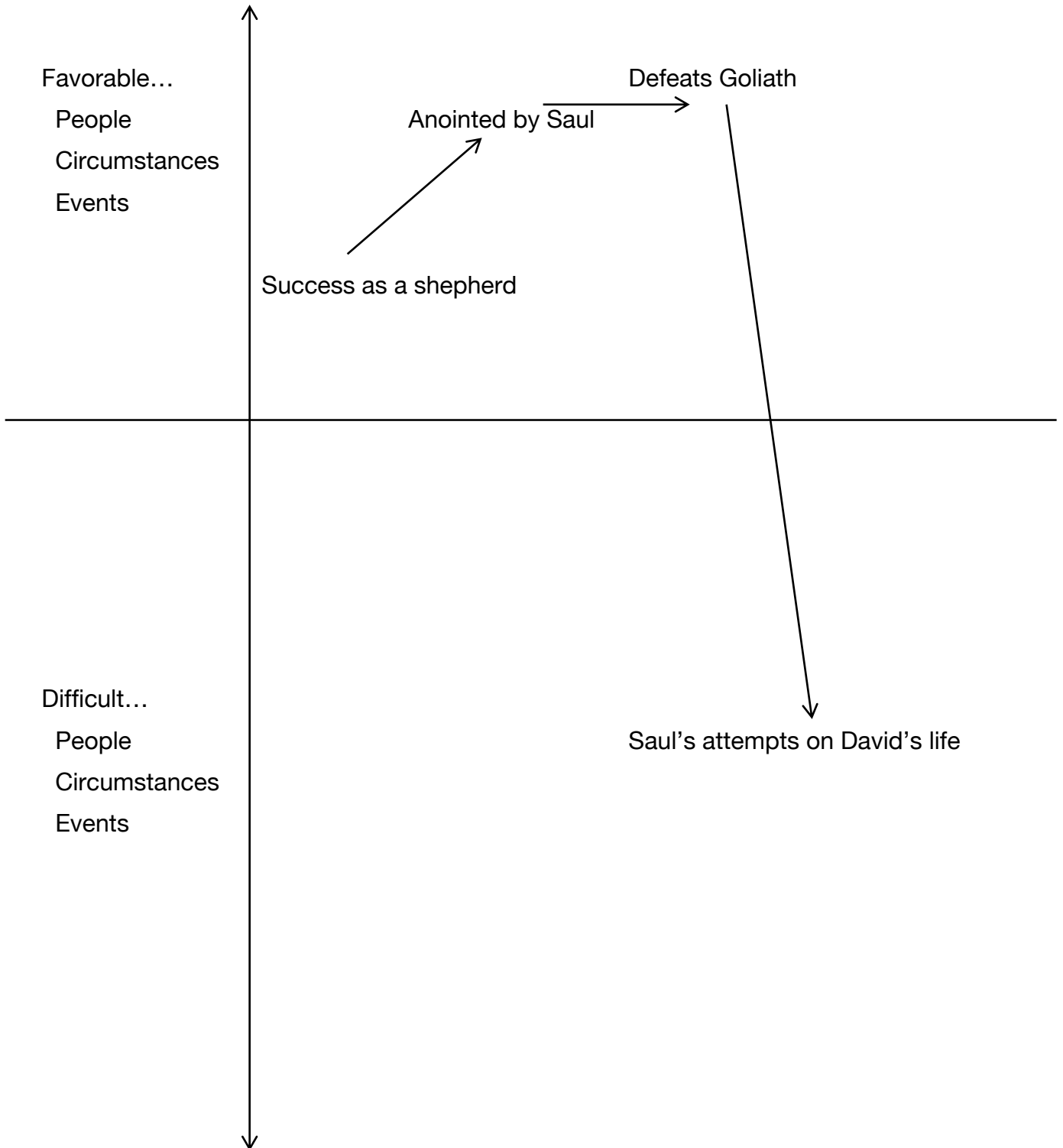
- ❖ Crisis/Loss
- ❖ Defeat/Failure
- ❖ Adverse circumstances
- ❖ Friends, mentors
- ❖ Parents, significant relatives
- ❖ Conflicts
- ❖ Successes
- ❖ Meaningful Scripture, promises
- ❖ Major decisions
- ❖ Pain

When you are done, be sure to spend time in prayer. Ask God to reveal to you elements of your life that could establish patterns as to how He has developed you.

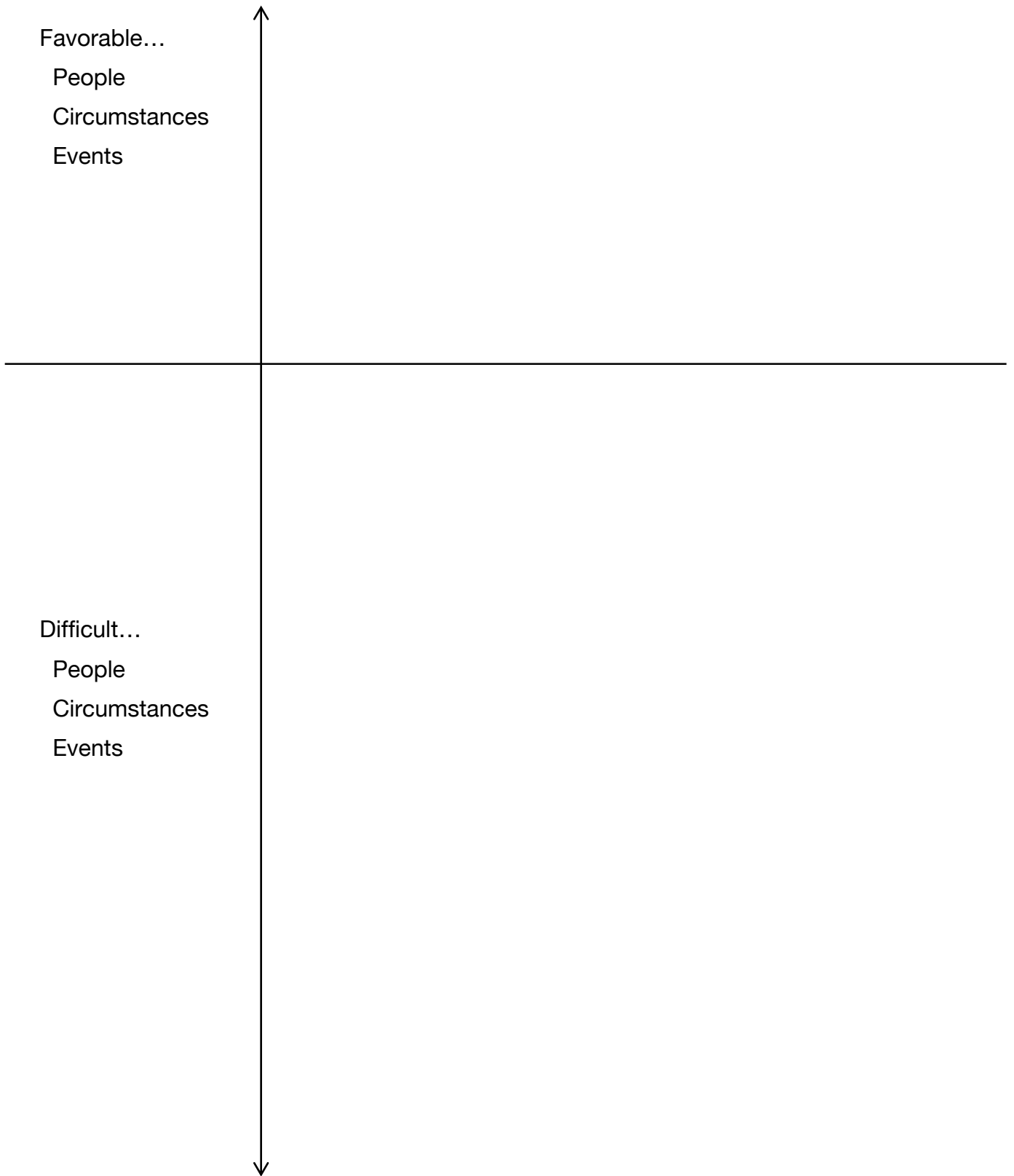
MEMORIAL STONES

EXAMPLE

This chart gives an example of a few significant stones in King David's life that were prominent events.



YOUR MEMORIAL STONES





outward

OUTWARD

OVERVIEW

Have you watched the news or scrolled through social media and wondered, “What is God up to in this crazy world?” From the book of Genesis onward, God has been unfolding His purpose to reunite Himself with humankind and restore the damages caused by us preferring to do our own thing.

In the previous sections, you’ve looked inward to discover your God-given design and backward to see how God has worked in your life. Using this valuable information, let’s turn our attention *outward*. The goal is to explore how you can partner with Jesus Christ in His of engaging and transforming the world around us.

WARM-UP: Review Christ’s heart the world.

What do the following passages say about Christ’s concerns?

Matthew 9:36- “When he (Jesus) saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”

Luke 4:18-19- “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Luke 19:10- “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

How would you describe the state of the world today? Where is it flourishing? Where is there suffering? What gets you “fired up” as you look through the news or social media?

On the pages that follow, let’s explore three broad areas (Global, Spiritual and Community) where God might be drawing you to join Him.

GLOBAL

Select four of the following questions that you are most passionate about and answer them with a global (worldwide) perspective.

What global **needs** do you see that you would like to meet?

What global **wrongs** do you see that you would like to right?

What **problems** do you see in the world that you would like to solve?

What worldwide **causes** do you see that you would like to commit to or promote?

What global **hurts** do you see that you would like to alleviate?

What worldwide **issues** are important to the communities that you belong to?

What categories from the questions above were easier for you to answer? Which were more difficult?

You may not have a clear picture of what God is doing in the world, but He has placed burdens or concerns on your heart that can give you clues to passions He has instilled within you. Here are some areas of concern you may feel drawn to? (Note: As you answer, keep in mind that one category is not better or “more spiritual” than another.)

- **Social concerns** such as the elimination of poverty and corruption or the elevation of human rights
- **Technological concerns** such as energy conservation, space exploration or nanotechnology
- **Medical concerns** such as a cure for cancer, diabetes and obesity or providing access to healthcare to the under resourced
- **Environmental concerns** such as the preservation of plants and animals or the prevention of pollution
- **Governmental concerns** such as preserving life or promoting human flourishing
- **Family concerns** such as raising godly children
- **Community concerns** such as reaching out to your neighbors or beautifying your neighborhood
- **Spiritual concerns** such as preserving the unity of the church or defending the faith
- **Ethnic concerns** such as immigration, egalitarianism and wage discrimination
- **Military concerns** such as fighting ISIS, terrorism, world peace and the protection of citizens

Write a short statement that captures what you sense are your God-given concerns about the state of the world around you.

SPIRITUAL

Now let's look at your spiritual motivations. Here are nine statements that express spiritual concerns. Pick two or three that resonate the most with you and answer the following questions.

- Sharing grace and truth among non-believers.
- Explaining the truth and sufficiency of Scripture.
- Investing in and impacting individuals to grow in the likeness of Christ.
- Leading and directing groups toward spiritual goals.
- Networking in and among Christian groups and believers.
- Bringing communities together for a common purpose.
- Developing leaders and laborers in the kingdom.
- Praying diligently through the Holy Spirit for the promises of God.
- Walking with others through difficulties.

How do your spiritual values contribute towards your unique response to God's call to bring the Gospel to the world?

How do your spiritual values help you answer God's call to be involved in His concerns about the world?

Are there any other words that motivate you to engage with the world around you?

YOUR COMMUNITY

“God has not called you to be all things to all people all the time all by yourself.”

Margin by Dr. Richard Swenson

This exercise is to help you identify the people you are drawn to. Consider the following questions:

1. **Work/School:** Who do you spend your time with at work or at school? Are there commonalities among these people? Does this give any insight into who you might be drawn to in the future?

2. **Home:** Where do you live? Do you spend time with roommates? Family? Neighbors? Do you invest in these relationships? How important is your living arrangement for the future? How important is your city? Campus? Country?

3. **Play:** What are your hobbies? How do you spend your spare time? Who do you spend it with? Does this give you any indication of your view of the world? Does this give you any insight into potential opportunities for service in your future?

4. **Family:** Who are the people in your extended family? Which ones are unbelievers? Who are the believers in your family that may be allies in ministry? Is God leading you to pray for any of them?

After answering these questions, do you have any further insight into the people that you are drawn to or where you might best spend your time?

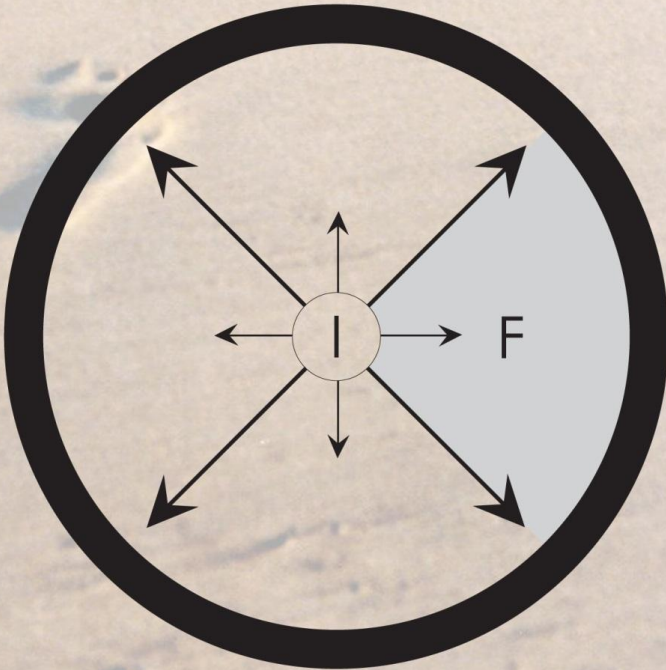
OUTWARD SUMMARY

STEP 1: List key words and phrases from your global, spiritual, and community concerns.

STEP 2: Put all key words or phrases into one or two sentences that describe what concerns you have for the world.

Step 3: What applications do these concerns suggest for you globally, spiritually and in your community? What next steps might you take?

STEP 4: What calling or job implications does your Outward summary hold for you?



forward

FORWARD

FUTURE DESIRE

Identifying your dreams and life goals helps you to prioritize opportunities for work and service. All of us have dreams or ideas floating around in our heads of things we would love to do. In this exercise, you will 1) work on identifying dreams, 2) create a bucket list and 3) identify meaningful scriptures.

As you and God work together on this:

- You will gain clarity and focus on what you want to do with your life.
- You will find a new layer of enthusiasm thinking about what is ahead.

IDENTIFYING DREAMS

To get you thinking, here are some questions:

What are the dreams that draw you toward your future destiny? Dreams are different from fantasies. While a fantasy can be fun to think (“what would I do with a billion dollars?!”) here, we are talking more about vision: things you “see” in your future that motivate you to act in the present.

What do you do for fun? For example, photography, texting, playing a sport, Pinterest, etc.

What do you like to do that gives you a sense of meaning and purpose? For instance: visiting a hospital, taking a mission trip or any other significant life experience.

What kind of work or aspects of work do you find most fulfilling?

What are some things you like to do that seem like play (restorative) but that others would consider work? (Identifying activities that “come natural” to you but are work for others can give insight into directions worth pursuing!)

IDENTIFYING DREAMS SUMMARY

In a few sentences, outline your “dream” future.

BUCKETLIST

Why Create a Bucket List?

A bucket list is simply what you would like to see or do (or how you would like to influence others) before you die. A bucket list of dreams has HUGE potential to make a difference for God, but... you must be willing to put in time, effort and energy to see the things you dream come into reality.

Write down at least 5-10 items on your bucket list. Do not make your list so small that it leaves important things out or so large that it is impossible to accomplish. Do not allow time, money or talent to limit you (e.g., write a novel, play in an orchestra, go to Egypt, get my pilot's license).

SCRIPTURE

Jesus lived His life committed to a mission, and that mission set His priorities. Our dilemma is often the multitude of opportunities we have or a schedule controlled by the demands of others. Sometimes the Scriptures that catch our attention reveal future desires that God has placed in our heart and the mission He designed us for.

What verses or Biblical stories are especially attractive to you?

Pick 5-10 verses that make you pause and any words or phrases within them that immediately grab your attention and write them below. Take a moment to meditate on each verse.

Verse:

Why is it special?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Are there any repeated themes between your dreams, bucket list and the verses you listed?

FORWARD SUMMARY

STEP 1: List key words or phrases from your dreams, bucket list and verse chart.

STEP 2: Select a few key words or phrases from the above list and put them into one or two sentences that summarize your dreams, passions or motivations that are drawing you forward in cooperation with God.

STEP 3: How might these dreams affect your career choices or life decisions?



upward

UPWARD

LIFE PURPOSE STATEMENT

People who are dedicated to finishing their lives well become increasingly more deliberate in what they do and how they do it. A focused life is a result of a compelling, increasingly clear sense of vision. Without an “upward” focus on God’s priorities and growing clarity of His vision for our lives, we are in danger of worshiping our work, working at our play and playing at our worship (Dahl, *Work, Play, and Worship in a Leisure-Oriented Society*).

A PERSONAL LIFE PURPOSE STATEMENT IS...

- A description of how God has used and desires to use your unique design to contribute to His Kingdom.
- Something God reveals, not something you create.
- A summary of your “reason for being” as you understand it.
- What you seek to *do* rather than what you want to *be*.

BENEFITS OF A LIFE PURPOSE STATEMENT...

- Provides a compelling vision and motivation for your life.
- Helps you focus your resources and finish well.
- Clarifies your personal calling with a God-given sense of destiny.

WRITING A LIFE PURPOSE STATEMENT

Discovering your life purpose is often a journey. As a milestone along that journey, the exercises on the following pages are designed to help you capture your life vision as you understand it today.

The goal is to take the information that you have processed and funnel it down to an action-driven statement with a Christ-led outcome.



The first step is to review your summaries of the *Inward*, *Outward*, *Backward* and *Forward* exercises. Write in these boxes any keywords or phrases that stand out to you from these exercises.

Inward

Outward

Backward

Forward

For the next step:

A good life purpose statement consists of three parts:

- Action – what you will do to create specific outcomes. (Insight into the actions you are most ready and able to pursue will likely show up in your summary of the *Inward* and *Backward* sections of this guide.)
- People – those who will receive the benefit of your action (*Outward/Backward*)
- Outcome – the effect your action will have on the audience (*Outward/Forward*)

In the table below, write a rough draft of actions, people and outcomes you sense God is calling you towards.

Action – what you will do to create specific outcomes. (<i>Outward/Backward</i>)
People – those who will receive the benefit of your action (<i>Outward/Backward</i>)
Outcome – the effect your action will have on the audience (<i>Outward/Forward</i>)

Next, write a draft of your life purpose statement. For example...

I am trusting God to help me...

- *teach, lead, and inspire Millennials to fulfill their purpose.*
- *create a safe refuge for abused women through compassionate listening and joyful intercession.*
- *encourage and empower emerging leaders and help them realize their potential and self-worth.*
- *influence others through authenticity and honesty to pursue excellence in every area of their lives.*
- *help the unseen feel valued and loved through compassionate acts of service.*
- *bring beauty and joy into the world by designing images and surroundings that reflect God's creativity.*
- *connect with children to encourage them to grow, heal, and love.*
- *encourage peers to find hope and fulfillment in life.*
- *lead men to develop authentic and intimate relationships.*

Your statement:

If you have a "life verse" that supports this statement, write it here:

The last step is confirmation.

One way to seek confirmation and clarification is by discussing your life purpose statement with others. Share your ideas and ask your friends, family and/or a mentor:

- "Is it consistent with what you see of my God-given design?"
- "Is it inspiring?"
- "Is it compelling and significant?"

Most importantly, spend some time asking the Lord...

- Is there something in my design I need to receive from You?

- What areas of my life purpose are You affirming?

- Are there any verses You are bringing to mind?

- Is there anything You want to say to me?

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.”

(Psalm 32:8, ESV)

CLOSING THOUGHTS

This is only the beginning of your journey. It takes a lifetime to learn our identity and design in Christ. As you mature in Christ, He will teach you through life's ups and downs and grow you through experiences. Keep in mind that life is best experienced in interdependence with believers as you learn about yourself and others. We encourage you to understand, appreciate, celebrate and defer to others in your design. God loves you and you are one of a kind!

Thanks!

The Assessment Team

ADDITIONAL RESEOURCES

Significance of Design and Desires

- *It's Your Call*, Gary Bark low
- *Who is My Neighbor?*, Steve Moore
- *The Dream Cycle*, Steve Moore
- *What If God Wrote Your Bucket List*, Jay Payleitner
- *Margin*, Richard Swenson

Personality Types and Personal Preferences

- *Gifts Differing*, Isabel Briggs Myers and Peter B. Myers
- *Please Understand Me II*, David Keirse
- *I'm Not Crazy, I'm Just Not You*, Roger R. Pearman and Sarah C. Albritton
- *Do What You Are*, Paul D. Tieger and Barbara Barron-Tieger
- *Just Your Type*, Paul D. Tieger and Barbara Barron-Tieger

Spiritual Gifts

- *What Are Spiritual Gifts?*, Kenneth Berding
- *Spiritual Gifts: Their Purpose and Power*, Bryan Carraway

Strengths

- *Why You Can't Be Anything You Want To Be*, Arthur F. Miller, Jr.
- *StrengthsFinder 2.0*, by Tom Rath
- *Living Your Strengths*, Albert Winseman, Donald Clifton, Curt Liesveld

Life Lessons

- *To Be Told: God Invites You to Coauthor Your Future*, Dr. Dan B. Allender
- *Life Mapping*, Dr. John Trent

Spiritual Growth

- *Knowing Me, Knowing God*, Malcolm Goldsmith
- *Pray Your Way: Your Personality and God*, Bruce Duncan
- *Soultypes: Matching Your Personality and Spiritual Path*, Sandra Krebs Hirsh
- *Discover Your Spiritual Type*, Corinne Ware

Work and Vocation

- *Every Good Endeavor*, Timothy Keller