

# Identity Crisis: Discovering Who You Really Are

## *“You are Designed for Purpose”*

### Part 2

**Intro:** We have an exercise this morning. I am going to pull objects out of this bag and you are going to tell me what their purpose is. Don't shout out what it is. Shout out what it does...what is it's purpose. (Hammer / light bulb / hand saw / fishing reel / Stanley Thermos / hair dryer /

- Design = Purpose. Seeing the design automatically tells you what it does.
- We are no different. Each of us has a unique design by God and this design determines our purpose. Today, we are going to explore the truth how God designed each one of us for His purposes.

### 1. God designed you for His purposes

I realize this may be difficult to believe at first. BUT, you are important to God. He knows you and He loves you. Your life matters to Him...so much so that He designed you for His purposes. How do I know this? Because this is what He says and God cannot lie.

- God has plans for your life

*Jer. 29:11 “For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.” (NLT)*

- This does not mean we get a pain free, trouble free existence. Just because God's plans are good and give us hope, doesn't remove the reality of living in a broken and painful world.
- It is easy to think; “If God's plans are so good then why is my life so painful and unfulfilling?”
- ANSWER: We live in a sinful broken world; with sinful broken people. We also choose to often live independently of God. We do our own thing. God's plans must be discovered. He doesn't force them on anyone.
- If we never submit our lives to follow Jesus we will never discover what His good plans are. Jesus will lead us into these purposes if we follow. If we don't follow, we will forfeit them.
- Here is a fact I want you all to accept: God has a plan for you to discover. Your life matters to Him. His plans for you are good.

- God's plans are unique to each person

*Heb. 12:1-2 “...And let us run with endurance **the race God has set before us.** <sup>2</sup> We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.” (NLT)*

*I Cor. 3:5-6 “After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God's servants through whom you believed the Good News. **Each of us did the work the Lord gave us.** <sup>6</sup> I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow.” (NLT)*

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- God's plan for your life is not a copy of anyone else. It is unique to you. Sure there may be some similarities, but it will be unique to each person. Notice Paul said that "each of us did the work the Lord gave us".
- I like to say that everyone has their own unique lane to run in. This is the imagery of Heb. 12... 'the race God set before us.' God sets a unique race / lane before each person to run on.
- God called me to start Foothills over 19 years ago. This is the unique lane God called me to run in. He didn't call you to do that. This is my lane. God called my brother to lead worship. God called my wife to oversee Guatemala ministry / God called Pastor Sam to do student ministry / Everyone has a unique lane to run in.
- One of the greatest areas of fulfillment we discover in this life will be running in the lane we were created to run in.
- This is true with individuals as well as churches. I believe every church has a lane to run in as well. This is why no other church needs to be like Foothills. This is the lane God set before us. He has called us to love and bless our city and do it in a big way. It's our lane.

- God's plan for your life was predetermined for this time in history

*Eph. 2:10 "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." (NLT)*

- This world needs you! I know this is hard to believe when you look in the mirror. I get it. BUT, God has ordained you for this moment in history. Your purpose is part of a larger plan for this world.
- Before the creation of the world God knew you would exist right now at this point in history. God designed you for this moment. Your purpose reflects His heart for something on planet earth that needs to happen right now.
- I know you feel insignificant, but God is the architect of your life. You are His masterpiece. He created you so you can DO the good things He planned.
- Your existence is no accident no matter how you came into this world. God knew you would exist right now. This world needs you and the purpose for which you were created.
- Please stop believing the lie that you don't matter. You have more inside of you than you can possibly imagine. WHY? Because you are God's masterpiece.
- Don't you want to discover who you really are and what you are created for? Aren't you a little bit curious?

HOW?

## **2. God's purpose for your life is according to your SHAPE**

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God designed you in a unique way. In fact, that process is ongoing. He is still developing you into the person He wants you to be. God's purposes for your life is according to your unique SHAPE. SHAPE is an acronym. Briefly explain.

- You have been given a spiritual gift

*I Cor. 12:7 "A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other." (NLT)*

- At the moment you trusted in Jesus, you were given a spiritual gift. A spiritual gift is given to us by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of serving the Kingdom of God. It is connected to the purpose God has for your life.
- Your spiritual gift gives you abilities to live out your pre-ordained purpose from God.
- For example, one of my spiritual gifts is what is commonly called the gift of exhortation. I love to exhort / motivate people to follow Jesus. It is a compulsion inside of me. It's what lights me up. It's one of the things that rolls me out of bed. It's how I serve the Kingdom of God.
- It doesn't matter if you know what it is or not. You have at least one spiritual gift. How can you discover this gift. Get involved serving. You will not discover what God put inside you by sitting. You discover it by serving.
- Get involved - explain

- You have been given a unique heart

*Rom. 15:20 "My ambition has always been to preach the Good News where the name of Christ has never been heard, rather than where a church has already been started by someone else." (NLT)* This verse is a description of the heart of the Apostle Paul. Paul's ambition / his passion / his drive was to go where no one else had gone.

- This has to do with what really lights you up. This has to do with passion. Your purpose is designed around the unique passion of your heart. This is why God's purposes are enjoyable. It's designed around who you are.
- I can spend 5 minutes with each of you and find out where your passion lies. It's really easy. When someone talks about what motivates their heart their face literally lights up.
- Sometimes we think too spiritual about this. God wants to use the passion of our hearts. Some of you light up over the outdoors / hunting / fishing / you light up over a hobby you enjoy / your passion has to do with people / you love food and to entertain / you love to decorate / your love creativity / you love music / you light up over animals / you love adventure...this is one of my passions - explain
- Everyone's heart has a unique heartbeat...a unique way it feels alive and fulfilled. This is not wrong...it's God!

- You have been given specific abilities

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*Acts 18:3-4 “And he went to see them,<sup>3</sup> and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.<sup>4</sup> And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks.” (ESV)*

- Paul was a tentmaker by trade. It was a skill he acquired when he was younger. He also had a natural ability as a communicator and a debater. He would reason with the religious leaders.
- God uses the abilities we have for the Kingdom of God. Some of these abilities are simply part of our unique DNA. We’ve been able to do some things well from birth. Other skills we learned along the way. God uses them all.
- Some of you were naturally good at athletics / math / writing / computers / languages / music / working with your hands / building things. It was just in you.
- There are abilities you learned along the way. Just think about all the things you have learned to do over the years? (Through education / jobs / careers / training) As time goes by we simply pick up more and more abilities.
- You have far more abilities than you give yourself credit for. God uses these abilities for His Kingdom. Your abilities are not just for you. They are to be used for the Kingdom.
- Please do not simply think these abilities were given to you so you could make money. This is missing your purpose entirely. Let God redeem your abilities for something eternal.

- You have been given a unique personality

*Gal. 1:13-14 “You know what I was like when I followed the Jewish religion—how I violently persecuted God’s church. I did my best to destroy it.<sup>14</sup> I was far ahead of my fellow Jews in my zeal for the traditions of my ancestors.” (NLT)*

Paul was no doubt a type A, highly driven extrovert. That was his personality. It was in his DNA from birth. When He gave his life to Jesus, God didn’t alter his DNA and his personality. Instead, He used it for His purposes.

- Knowing what your personality is very important to discovering God’s purpose for your life. WHY? Because God’s purpose will fit the personality you were born with. God is not going to make you an extrovert and then give you a purpose designed for an introvert.
  - He’s not going to make you to love people and then put you in isolation
  - He’s not going to make you to hate the spotlight and then put you in a place to be the center of attention.
  - He’s not going to make you highly creative and then put you in a place that doesn’t require creativity.
- Understanding your personality better is one of the most helpful discoveries you can pursue. It will impact you, your relationships / your marriage / your parenting / your friendships / and what ministry you pursue.

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- There are so many good tools out there today to gain more insight into how you're designed. I have recommended this book many times here at Foothills. It is called "Strength Finder" 2.0 - explain

- You have had unique and specific experiences

*II Cor. 11:23-27 "... (I have) been put in prison more often, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. <sup>24</sup> Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. <sup>25</sup> Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. <sup>26</sup> I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. <sup>27</sup> I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm."* (NLT)

This is quite a list of some of Paul's experiences. The truth is our experiences are part of who we are. The good the bad and the ugly. God uses it all. Let me finish by sharing a few things about our experiences.

- Please do not dismiss how God can use your experiences to help others. The truth is the older we get the more experiences we have and more we have to offer others. It is the multitude of life experiences that allows us to connect authentically with others.
- What connects the best are the painful experiences not our victories. Everyone can relate to pain. It has been my experience that God uses our painful life stories much more than the pleasant ones.
- Many of you think that dark pieces of your life needs to be hidden when in reality it's just the opposite. God will redeem all the painful pieces of your life if you let Him. He will use these experiences to help others.
- God can take what this world meant for harm and God can use it for good. Your experiences are part of your SHAPE anyway. We might as well allow Him to use it all.

You are designed for purpose. Maybe it is time to start the discovery process. HOW? I want to give you a tool. It is called a SHAPE profile. It is a series of questions to help you begin working through your shape. There is a very brief, simple handout in your bulletin to begin this journey. There is an entire class we teach that will go in to much more detail – This Fall – BUT, you can begin the journey now.

Prayer time. Lord, help me understand how you designed me so I can live the purpose I was created for.

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