

Discover Your Design: Find Your Sweet Spot

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms” 1 Peter 4:10

Imagine if everybody was just like you; or like me. Would you like that? Same personality, likes and dislikes, ambitions, talents, sins, weakness, shortcomings, etc... How boring! What if the church was like that?

“If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 1 Corinthians 12:17

Q: What makes us different, or unique? And why; what is the purpose behind it?

“But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.” 1 Corinthians 12:18.

- God’s word clearly tells us that He has designed each one of us just as He wanted us to be for a reason.
- He has given you and me certain spiritual gifts, talents and abilities, a unique personality, desires, passions, and dreams in our hearts, and even experiences in our lives, both good and bad; all with a specific purpose.
- We are to use all of these to bring Him glory, to build up the church, and help others come to know Christ.

Q: Do you believe God has a very clear and unique plan just for you?

Q: If you’ve been a Christian for some time now; have you given up on your dreams and settled for something less than what you hoped for when you were baptized?

Q: Do you sometimes feel that you are not really as gifted as others are and therefore not as valuable or useful to God and his church? That the church would be no different with our without you?

- That is a lie of Satan. He is called the deceiver and the father of lies.
- The truth is that God chose you *“before the creation of the world...and predestined us to be adopted as his sons and daughters.” Ephesians 1:4-5*
- And God does not make mistakes. So stop believing Satan’s lies.
- You and I were created to do things that are so amazing that if God were to reveal them all to us at one time, we would either laugh in disbelief like Sara (Abraham’s wife, who at almost 100 yrs old and barren, was told she would have a son) or be completely overwhelmed.
- We all have a role to play in God’s church. The Gifts Based Ministry is designed to help each and every member to discover what that role is.
- As a church leadership, we are committed to help you discover and fulfill God’s plans for you as a member of his family.
- We also see the great benefit in learning not only from those in our brotherhood of churches, but also from those outside who have excelled and set an example in any particular area. Because of that conviction, in preparing and developing this ministry I’ve

read a few books which were recommended to me on this topic and have spoken to and gotten input from brothers in our churches that have started similar ministries. This presentation is a combination of those sources.

There are a 5 areas that we believe can help us identify our design or “sweet spot”.

- 1) **S**-See your gifts.
 - A) Spiritual Gifts
 - B) God given talents and abilities
- 2) **W**-What do you love? Your passions, dreams, and desires.
- 3) **E**-Evaluate your personality
- 4) **E**-Experiences in life, including skills you’ve developed over time.
- 5) **T**-Target the needs in the Church

1) See your gifts:

A) Spiritual Gifts:

“We have different gifts, according to the grace given us...prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing to needs of others, leadership, showing mercy.”
Romans 12:6-8

“Too often I see people carrying heavy loads of frustration because they are trying to serve in areas for which they have little or no ability” Erik Reece

Q: Can you relate to that?

- When considering spiritual gifts, we must understand that God values all of them, not just some which appear “more important” because they might be more easily seen by a lot of people, like preaching, teaching, leadership etc...

- We can also be a little deceived. “If you think you’re a leader and no one is following you – you’re just taking a walk” John Maxwell.

- Think about some people on American Idol. Don’t you wish someone had been honest with them before? That is where those closest to us can help. But its ok, you have other gifts.

NOTE: There are basic expectations that God has for every single Christian (worship, evangelism, helping the poor, financial giving, hospitality, encouraging others, etc...) even though it might not be our “gift”.

Those who *are* gifted in these areas can be a source of inspiration and leadership.

“Spiritual greatness has nothing to do with being greater than others. It has everything to do with being as great as each of us can be.” – Henry J.M. Nouwen, spiritual writer and theologian.

- You do have a spiritual gift and it is now time to find it and use it for God’s glory.

B) God given talents and abilities:

Your natural abilities are an indication of what God wants to do with your life. He doesn’t waste abilities.

Q: Where do you normally excel?

Q: What comes naturally to you?

2) What do you love? Passions, Dreams, and Desires in our Hearts:

If you had a choice in how to serve God and others, money and/or time not being an issue, what would that be?

Q: What drives you?

Q: What makes you come alive?

Q: Who do you care about?

Q: What needs would you meet?

Q: What are your dreams, both old and new?

“The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it.” *Michelangelo*

Caution: Not every dream or desire that might be in your heart reflects God’s will for you.

•Consider David. He had it on his heart to build a temple for God, but it was not God’s will. (1 Chronicles 17:1-4) Even Nathan the prophet thought it was a great idea.

•Ultimately, we must commit and surrender our dreams to God.

3) Evaluate your personality:

1. Relating to Others: (outgoing or reserved; cooperative or competitive etc...)

2. Response to Opportunities: (high risk or low; follower or leader, routine or variety, etc...)

NOTE: When it comes to our personality, it should not become an excuse for us not growing or striving to be more like Jesus. It is important to allow God to stretch us beyond our “comfort zone” sometimes and see what He can do through us. There is much more potential in you than you realize.

REMEMBER: You have the Holy Spirit of God inside of you.

4) Experiences in life and skills developed:

“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

•In your life, you have had many experiences, both good and bad. God wants to use them all for the good in your life and as you help others. (Divorce Care)

•You’ve also developed skills through education, work experience, and service in Church which can be used to glorify God and serve others.

5) Target the needs in the Church:

“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” Ephesians 4:16

•There are certain needs in the Church that must be met in order for “the whole body” to “grow and build itself up in love”. Let’s each do our part to accomplish that worthy goal.

“Sweet Spot”: Our sweet spot then, is where all these 5 areas meet. When we find it, we will maximize our impact for God on each other and this lost world.

NOW I want you to imagine our church, where every single member as uniquely designed by God, as we all are: teens, campus, singles, marrieds, single parents, both young and old, is wholeheartedly engaged in serving God, his church, and this world using his/her unique spiritual make up. Wouldn't you want to be a part of that? What would that teen ministry be like? Campus? EDGE? Marrieds?