

“Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will act.

Psalm 37:3-5

OVERVIEW

In this session you will:

1. Define *Heart* and list its three key characteristics
2. Complete the *Heart Assessment*
3. Identify one or more possible areas in which to serve
4. Gain a clearer understanding of what moves you

Heart

The Bible uses the term “heart” to describe the bundle of desires, hopes, interests, ambitions, dreams, and affections you have. Your heart represents the source of your motivations—what you love to do and what you care about most. We use this word in the same way today when we say things like, “I love you with all my heart.”

The Bible says, “As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects the man.” (Proverbs 27:19) Your heart reveals the real you—what you truly are, not what others think you are or what circumstances often compel you to be. Your heart determines why you say the things you do, why you feel the way you do, and why you act the way you do.

When we give ourselves to Lord through obedient faith, we are to surrender ourselves completely to His will, to His purposes, to His plans, all for His honor and glory. This means leaving our self-centered, worldly or fleshly desires and passions behind to learn about and adopt, as much as possible, the very heart of God. There are many Bible passages that address this. Here are a couple.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12:1-2

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Colossians 3:1-3

Surely it's impossible for any person to have a heart exactly like God's. However, all who truly love Him will have a portion of His heart—taking pleasure in the things that please Him, burdened by the same things, moved to action by the same needs.

IMPORTANT: Often the “heart,” what moves people to act, are the “desires of the flesh,” not the fruit of God's Spirit. You must be very careful as you try to understand your heart in seeking your place in the Lord's service. To help discern between the flesh and Spirit, note this passage from Galatians 5:19-24.

Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

KEY POINT: The more completely you commit your heart to God, the more completely the desires of your heart mirror God's desire and plan for your life.

As God's Spirit fills your heart, you find that there are certain godly (holy) desires or purposes that bring you joy or motivate you. There are certain subjects you feel deeply about, while others, though important, just don't interest you very much. Some experiences will make your heart race or captivate you, while others turn you off or even bore you to tears. These reveal the nature of your heart.

Each must examine his/her heart with Scripture to ensure it is God-centered. Understanding your own heart better will help you narrow down where you can best serve the Lord.

- If you are passionate about something, it will motivate you to take action.
- Think of the church like a puzzle which is complete only when each piece is in its place serving whole-heartedly.

Heart = Motivation, Zeal, Spiritual Fervor

HEART

DEFINITION: For the purposes of this study, heart is the God-given desire that compels us to make a positive difference in a particular ministry.

CHARACTERISTICS

- Heart is what motivates from deep within.
- Heart answers the “Where should I serve” question.

The next step is to take the Heart Assessment. This assessment will help you think about and identify your unique motivations.

As you take this assessment please consider the three ways in which your heart is directed:

- A heart for a **role** (what you like to do)
- A heart for a specific **people** (whom you like to help)
- A heart for a **cause** (what you would like to see changed.)

PASSION ASSESSMENT

An important part of discovering your God-given SHAPE is understanding the part of God's Heart that is in you. When you have a heart for an area of ministry, you are more enthusiastic and motivated to serve.

DIRECTIONS

1. Prayerfully consider your answers to the questions.
2. Complete the assessment on your own.
3. There are no right or wrong responses.
4. Don't be concerned about "whether" you can do it or "how" it can be done.
5. Complete the assessment as if you have no obstacles to fulfilling your heart's desire in ways that honor God.

QUESTIONS

1. If I could snap my fingers and know that I couldn't fail, what would I do?
2. At the end of my life, I'd love to be able to look back and know that I'd done something about:
3. If my name were mentioned in a group of my friends, what would they say I am really interested in or passionate about?
4. What topic of conversation would keep me talking late into the night?
5. What I would most like to do for others is:

6. The people I would like to help most are:

Infants	Children	Youth
Teen moms	Single parents	College students
Divorced	Widowed	Singles
Career women	Young marrieds	Refugees
Parents	Empty nesters	Homeless
Unemployed	Elderly	Disabled
Prisoners	Poor	Hospitalized
Others: _____		

7. The issues or causes I feel strongly about are:

Discipleship	Child care	Sexual Identity
Finance	Mental health	Music
Violence	Injustice	Racism
Education/Training	Addictions	International
Environment	Reaching the lost	Technology
Health care	Poverty	Raising Children
Abortion	Hunger	Literacy
Church	Marriage/Divorce	Loneliness
Others: _____		

8. The following exercise may help you uncover a theme from your experience which will give you insight into your heart.

List the top five to seven positive experiences you've had in your life and briefly describe what you did and why it was meaningful to you. These experiences may have taken place at home, work, school, or during your free time. It may have been something you fixed or something you made. It may have been a puzzle you put together or an award you received. It may have been helping some friends move, building a house, a victory you had, or giving to someone in need. Remember, these are experiences that you enjoyed doing and in which you felt fulfilled.

Five to Seven Positive Experiences	Why this Experience Is Meaningful to Me
a.	
b.	
c.	
d.	
e.	
f.	
g.	

Next, read through what you have written and look for an underlying theme. If one or two come to mind, write them in the space below.

SUMMARY

9. I think the area where I could make the most significant contribution is:

If you need more help in identifying your heart, look for patterns in your answers. For example, can you see any themes? Does a particular age group keep coming up? Is there a need that keeps surfacing? Are you serving in a similar role in different areas? Can you prioritize your concerns?

CONCLUSION

10. Based on my answers to the above questions, I sense *I have a Heart for*:

Making a statement of Heart is not easy for everyone. Remember that this is just the beginning of the process of identifying and clarifying your Heart. As you think, pray, and gain more ministry experience, your heart will become clearer over time.

HEART CLARIFICATION

EXAMPLES -

SUE has a Heart for [children] young /single parent / problems

JOE has a Heart for [reaching the lost] all / family members / friends / neighbors
& coworkers – especially young people.

Now write your Heart...

I have a Heart for [_____] _____ / _____

GROUP – HELP CLARIFY YOUR HEART

DIRECTIONS

1. Quickly explain your Heart to each other. How does it reflect the heart of God?
2. Ask questions to help each other gain a clearer understanding of his or her Heart.
3. Use the worksheet above to note key words or phrases that clarify you Heart.

SUMMARY: consider the three ways in which your heart is directed:

A heart for a **role** (what you like to do)

A heart for a specific **people** (whom you like to help)

A heart for a **cause** (what you would like to see changed.)

WRAP-UP

If you haven't already, complete the HEART section in your **S.H.A.P.E. Profile**