

# **Discovering Your SHAPE**

## **Session 8: Your Calling**

### **Living out our shape through our general and unique calling**

Today hopes to bring together all we've learnt about ourselves and each other's SHAPE to encourage us to live it out through our calling.

#### **What the Bible says about Our Calling**

When the bible uses the word "calling" or "call" it speaks to the general calling of every follower of Jesus.

We are all called to:

1. Faith in Christ (Rom 8:28-30; 1 Cor 1:9; 2 Thess 2:10-12).
2. The kingdom of God (1 Thess 2:10-12)
3. Eternal life (1 Tim 6:12; Heb 9:15)
4. Holy living (1 Cor 1:2; 1 Pet 1:15)

#### **Living out our calling in our context**

Whatever stage of life or wherever we might be, everyone and every situation is an opportunity to live out our SHAPE for God's glory.

#### **Our unique calling**

We believe every Christian has a unique call that God has for us in this generation through which we live out our general calling as believers.

Think of your general calling as the wide part of a funnel, and the journey of discerning our unique calling as the process of narrowing the focus to become more specific to our lives and context.

A great example of unique calling is Acts 6. The Apostles had clarity on their call to pray and preach the gospel, but this was being compromised by the logistical coordination of a ministry for widows. As a result, seven others were identified to provide leadership to this critical ministry so that both parties could focus on what God was directing them to do. As the narrative unfolds, we see each of their unique callings continue to take different shape and form (E.g. Peter, John, Stephen and Philip).

#### **Four things that help bring clarity to our unique calling:**

- Discovering your shape.
- Serving God and others or participating in ministry.
- Discerning together with God in prayer.
- The input and encouragement of other believers.

#### **Distortions of calling:**

- Spiritual over the secular (The Perfect life vs Permitted life). Elevating vocation choices that are ministry oriented.
- Secular over spiritual (Elevating secular work over general calling)
- The danger of work or ministry becoming an idol.
- There is no calling greater than another as each unique calling is of great value in the eyes of God.

#### **The posture of being Spirit-led:**

Whether we have clarity on our unique calling or not, growing a posture of being Spirit-led will ensure we will be more ready to use our SHAPE to live out our calling wherever we are.

Romans 8:14 encourages us that those who are led by the Spirit are the children of God.

Romans 12:1-2 inspires us to surrender our whole being to as worship to God in light of the mercies of Jesus. It challenges us to not be conformed to the pattern of this worlds thinking, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

As this process of surrendered worship and transformed thinking occurs, we are much better placed to: “Test and approve the good, pleasing and perfect will of God”. God wants us to grow a culture of discerning and testing His will so that we can live out His plan for our lives.

## **Group Exercise**

### **Discuss & Discern**

1. What aspects of our general call most inspire, encourage or challenge you?
  - Faith in Christ (Rom 8:28-30; 1 Cor 1:9; 1 Thess 2:10-12).
  - The kingdom of God (1 Thess 2:10-12).
  - Eternal life (1 Tim 6:12; Heb 9:15).
  - Holy living (1 Cor 1:2; 1 Pet 1:15).
  
2. Are there some Biblical examples of unique callings that you can relate to?
  
3. Do you have any reflections on the four ways that help us discern our calling or on the distortions of calling?
  
4. Take unhurried time to pray and ask God for fresh clarity on your unique calling. Write down what you sense in this time of prayer.
  
5. How would you express what your unique calling might be? OR  
What do you believe God wants to do through your life in this season?

6. Reflect on your SHAPE journey/notes over the previous weeks.  
How does your SHAPE inform or add clarity to your unique calling?
  
7. Read Romans 8:14 and Romans 12:1-2. What do you think is the relationship between being Spirit-led and living out our calling? How would you like to enhance this in your life?
  
8. What are one or two steps you can take to express your SHAPE through living out your calling? Is there someone who can help you move forwards?

**Pray-** Spend time praying together to commit your SHAPE and calling to God. Ask God for wisdom, love and power to serve out your SHAPE with renewed energy. Invite the Holy Spirit to bring a word of encouragement to spur each other on.