

Week 6 Sunday 12th Feb Experience and What next?

(Cell Material can be followed up this week or week of 19th Feb because of half term)

Before starting place markers in a bible at all the following references and ask someone to read them as we go through. Give time for people to think about the readings. (Remind people to keep the notes from each week in a file and to bring them to each session).

Welcome

What part do your experiences play in making you the person you are?

Worship

Offer yourselves to God in an attitude of Worship- We are called to be 'a living Sacrifice'.

How can we be 'living Sacrifice'?

Pray for strength to look to the future.

Offer St Mary's to God in your worship. Pray for all involved in servant-ministry here. Ask for guidance as we look to the future.

Word

Briefly reflect upon the following verses of scripture

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.

Rom 8:28

Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel.

Phil 1:12

One of the most overlooked factors in determining the servant-ministry God has for me is my past experience, particular my hurts and problems I've overcome with God's help.

Since our greatest life message come out of our weaknesses, not our strengths, we should pay close attention to what we've learned in the 'school of hard knocks'.

We tend to feel that these things **disqualify** us from service, but just the opposite can be true.

Rick Warren wrote 'God never wastes a hurt!'

God wonderfully comforts and strengthens us in our hardships and trials. And why does he do this? So when others are troubled, needing our sympathy and encouragement, we can pass on to them the same help and comfort God has given us.

2 Cor 1:3-4

He wants you to serve people who are going through what you've been through yourself.

Have you ever felt disqualified?

Witness

Exercise 7: My Experiences – Throughout my life

List and describe the highlights and lowlights throughout the different stages of your life

My Junior School years

1

2

My teenage years

1

2

3

My student years/20,s

1

2

3

4

My 30's

1

2

3

4

My 40's

My 50's

My 60's

My 70's To the present

Exercise 8: My Experiences – Specific Experiences

List and describe your other experiences.

Your spiritual experiences

What has been your most meaningful decisions/experiences/times with God

Your painful experiences

What are the painful problems and hurts and trials that have taught you?

Your educational experiences

What were your favourite subjects?

Your servant-ministry Experiences

How have you served in the past?

Discuss your findings

What next?

We now need to think about what you have learned about yourself over the past 6 weeks.

Is your SHAPE profile pointing to a specific servant-ministry?

You may have one or more areas of servant-ministry to exercise alongside this.

WE ARE NOT READY FOR SERVANT-MINISTRY UNTIL WE ARE READY FOR SERVANT-MINISTRY ANYWHERE!

This means we can have long term servant-ministry and exercise a more short term servant-ministry

Remember: You are HUMAN

- Leave yourself time and energy for extras
- Don't burn yourself out
- You are part of a team

"You are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 1 Cor 12:27

Think!

- How much time do I give to serving the body of Christ?
- Should I stop some of my servant-ministry? What?
- Should I keep doing what I am doing as my main servant-ministry or search for another servant-ministry that is more fulfilling?
- How much contact do I have with people outside the church family? Should I do something outward-looking to benefit them?
- Should I support an existing servant-ministry or is there other area where I need to develop a new servant-ministry?

'New ministries start when God sends the leader'

Bill Hybels

'Every fruitful ministry is birthed in prayer'

John Mulinde

We want Jesus to Shape his church so, pray as you fill in your Shape Profile

If you have a bright idea.

Discuss with Cell group leaders or let clergy know.

Ideas may be linked with existing servant-ministries; given a go; delayed as this is not the right time.

Remember.

Creativity and diversity are good.

So is, consistency; teamwork; excellence.

God does start new things and if you are a pioneer then have a go!

We don't have failures only experiments that didn't work!

Servant-ministries have life cycles and sometime need to end. We can then rest and respond to a new call from God.

How to be a 'good and faithful servant'.

Train; be accountable; commit; see the bigger picture; see what needs to be done.

"It is easier to discover your gifts through ministry, than to discover your ministry through your gifts" Rick Warren.

Serving takes commitment. But how can a long term commitment be made to anything without trying it first? We are not asking you to commit to a specific servant ministry for the rest of your life! This course is about helping you to think about trying an area of service. We are encouraging you to start serving in a specific area and then to evaluate what you do so you are not trapped where you might not fit. This approach is a way of opening doors before you become too committed. Once you feel you are in the right servant-ministry for now, you can then make a decision about your commitment. Now, if you have completed the SHAPE exercises transfer them to the SHAPE profile. Talk about what you have discovered with members of your Cell. Try to identify areas of servant-ministry you would like to explore. Make a note and Cell leaders should return results to Martin and Judith.

Shape Profile. *My personal SHAPE for servant-ministry .*

Fill in this form using a pencil so you can change it as your self-understanding grows. Refer back to the exercises in order to complete this profile.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (How God has equipped me)

I believe these are my main spiritual gifts:

I believe these are possible embryonic gifts:

HEART (What I have a heart for, what motivates me most)

What I love to do

Who I love to work with most, and the age and type of person

Issues, servant-ministries or needs that excite or concern me most

What I would do for God if I knew I couldn't fail

ABILITIES (Natural talents, skills and abilities that can be used by God in church life)

My current vocation

Skills I use day by day

Other jobs and skills I am experienced in

Specialised abilities

Abilities I would be happy to use to help others

PERSONALITY

This is how I see myself now

EXPERIENCE

My spiritual journey

How and when I became a Christian and what this means to me

Other special times when God has shown me his will for my life

My Painful experiences

These are the kind of trials and problems I can relate to and could encourage others to get through

My educational experiences

My favourite subjects at school or college

Training or seminars that could be useful for Christian service

My servant-ministry Experiences

Servant-ministry

Where

Time involved

Church Life

Now you have looked at different aspects of yourself and your life it is time to turn your own mind to what kind of servant-ministry God has SHAPED you for now. He wants us to offer our whole selves to him so that he can use us for his service.

I feel these are the servant-ministries I could be best SHAPED for (include servant-ministries that may not yet exist at St Mary's)