

Resource List

Bible

This Leader's Guide

So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts? Student Booklet (one per child)

So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts? Parent Guide (included with this *Leader's Guide*. One per family)

Pens and pencils

Hand mirror

White board or poster board

Dry erase or regular markers

8½" by 11" (21.25 x 27.5 cm.)
letters S, H, A, P, E

Parent Letter (see the letter attached as a part of this guide)

Full sized or larger dark sheet or fabric

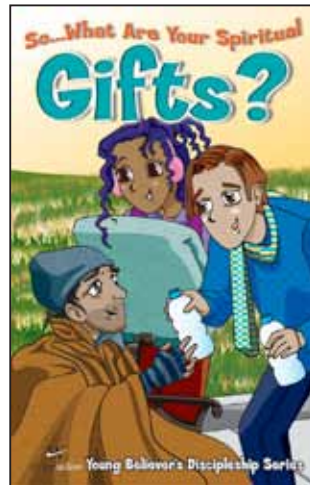
Scissors

Large roll paper (butcher, end newspaper, or bulletin board)

Container (bag, box, hat, or bowl)

The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren, opt.

So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts? Leader's Guide



Scripture: “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10).

Purpose: The purpose of this *Leader’s Guide* is to provide you with the basic resources to create a learning environment to help children discover their unique gifts and abilities that can be used for serving the Lord and others. It is designed to be used along with the student

booklet entitled, “*So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*” (order CD-3210 at www.wordaction.com).

What Are Spiritual Gifts and What Do They Mean to Christian Service?

A Note About Serving

Reading through Scripture do you find a passage regarding how old Christians have to be before they can serve? Of course not! What you do find is a passage that gives us purpose for teaching children about serving others and using the spiritual gifts that God provides: “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:52).

This Scripture verse clearly communicates that children are just as valued in the kingdom of God as their older family members. Children that become believers have an incredible opportunity to impact and transform their home, school, and world by serving others, and not just focusing on themselves.

How to use this guide:

Prepare by first praying about the direction of this spiritual gifts class, reading this leader's guide, and then doing the suggested activities. This will help prepare you for the teaching experience, and prepare for any questions that may arise as you lead children through this spiritual gifts class—helping each child to discover his or her unique S.H.A.P.E.

Make any copies that you will need (for children and families). Look up any definitions and answer any questions that you will be asking using your words and personal situation.

Create an open environment. Allow children to ask any questions they may have about the process and experience of using their spiritual gifts in service to God and others.

If you (teacher) are not the pastor, invite the pastor to participate, talking with children about spiritual gifts and service and the application within the community of believers.

Decide if you are going to teach this in one session or several. If you choose to do this in more than one session, we would recommend beginning with booklet pages 1-4, then doing a second session for pages 5-8 (discussing each child's S.H.A.P.E.), and concluding with a group service project.

Have fun! This should be something that you enjoy and are passionate about experiencing with children. You are part of an important spiritual event in the lives of the children in your spiritual gifts class.

This short study on spiritual gifts was carefully and prayerfully designed to inspire children to 1) know they are a unique creation of God, 2) understand that they have special gifts and abilities, and they were designed to serve God, and 3) be encouraged to find a ministry within the body of believers that they worship with.

It is the hope of this author that the leader will see this as an opportunity to raise awareness for children who are believers to get involved in ministry. This could be a doorway for children to explore the work of the Holy Spirit in their life. Plus, the experience of serving God and others creates powerful experiences that allow for faith to grow and mature.

This author began serving at age 12 and was called into ministry in that season of serving as a child. In other words, what you invest in this learning experience will have great and far-reaching dividends in years to come through the lives that commit to growing and serving in the kingdom of God. You are the living image of Christ and His servant leadership to the children whom you lead through this study.

Why Should Children Learn to Serve Jesus?

God, the Father, chose to send His Son to earth as the way of salvation for humanity. It was in this humanity that Jesus demonstrated service to God. Despite human frailties and physical limitations, Christ modeled service with His humanity for us so that we could see the value in serving. Children are constantly exposed to a culture that says “serve me” rather than “serve others.” If children capture this “service to others” concept while they are still young they will most likely be lifelong servants in the kingdom of God.

Another way to see this is that serving in ministry gives us a chance to gauge the spiritual development of our children. One way that we will see the fruit of their faith is through their works of service. By the time children reach upper elementary they are developmentally ready to interact with peers and older people. A tremendous amount of self-esteem can be derived from these early service opportunities as they uncover and discover the use of their spiritual gifts. The message that we hope you will share in your church community is . . . “let the children serve!”

Why Should the *So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?* Student Booklet and Other Resources Be Used?

If you expect children to “get it” then you have to use the right tools. This booklet was designed for elementary-age children to really think about who they are “in Christ” and how much fun it is to serve

Make sure you understand the doctrinal standing on the use of spiritual gifts for the church that you attend. Talk with your pastor. Ask any questions that you have and be prepared to answer the questions of the children that you will teach.

God and others through their unique spiritual gifts, their passions or heart desires, their abilities, personality, and experiences. These are all ways that God prepares His people for service.

So use the booklet and have fun with it. Be creative, and make this as much of an interactive time as you can. Teacher talk alone can get pretty boring. See the wide and narrow columns within this leader's guide for other fun resources, teaching aids, and activity suggestions to use.

A Word About Spiritual Gifts

In this study you will be introducing elementary children to the concept of spiritual gifts. We have included at the end of this guide a spiritual gifts quick quiz to use with children. Also, there are several spiritual gift inventories that are available from Christian publishers. Be careful not to use a long one that will frustrate children. Keep inventories simple and allow them to see that spiritual gifts are not rules or limitations to ministry . . . they are simply one of five things that make them unique.

So in other words, teach about spiritual gifts but do not get "hung up" about them. Help children understand that God has designed all parts of who they are in Him in order to serve Him and others through their spiritual gifts.

Remember that all believers have at least one spiritual gift, and that spiritual gifts are not the same as the Fruit of the Spirit identified in Galatians 5:22-23. Some spiritual gift listings will have up to 20 various gifts mentioned. Some will have lists of 8-9. We have included 12 that seem best suited to children. It would be a good idea for you to read 1 Corinthians 12, 1 Corinthians 14, and Romans 12:6-8 as you begin to prepare.

Biblical Passages about Serving Jesus:

Read these passages as you prepare. Then read them with the children too.

—Ephesians 2:10

—Psalm 139:14-16

—1 Corinthians 12:1

—1 Corinthians 12:4-7

—Romans 12:6-8

—Matthew 25:23

You will need a white board and dry erase markers or poster board sheets for your discussion on booklet pages 2 and 3. Collect Bibles for children to use and have letters cut out of cardboard or poster board that spell S.H.A.P.E.

Print and send home a copy of the parent letter at the end of this document.



Notes:

The Lesson

Introduction

If you have not done so, give each child that is participating a copy of the booklet, *So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*

Say, **Today we are going to work together to discover how to serve Jesus along with others. This is a special way that we can follow God's plan for our life. The cool part is that each of you will have a unique way of helping and serving others through the use of your spiritual gifts, the things that are important to you, the abilities, personality, and experiences that God has given to you.**

Do You Know Someone Like?

Page 2 in *So...What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*

Say, **Think about a recent sports event you attended, saw on TV, or listened to. What were some of the things the players had to do in order to win the game?** (Allow time for response. Answers will vary.) Encourage children to think about the role that each player has. If you receive no responses suggest that they think about what each player needs to focus on. (Possible answers: the position, the part, the job, or what the player is supposed to do to help the team succeed.)

On the white board or poster board, record the answers. Make a list of these answers for reference.

Say, **Now what do you think would happen if the players on that sports team did not do any of the things we listed?** (Answers will vary but should focus on things like lose the game, run into each other, get mad, quit, create a mess, etc.).

Now, refer children to booklet page 2. Invite children to take turns reading about the two people to meet (Amber and Grant). Ask, **Have you ever felt like Amber? What about Grant?** (Pause to listen to the children share. Then share a related example from your life as appropriate.)

Read the question at the bottom of page 2 out loud to the group, **What do you think both of these young believers want to do?** (Serve Jesus) **Let's find out some helpful information about serving Jesus.**



Notes:

The Download on Serving!

Page 3 in *So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*

Have the children turn their attention to the booklet page 3. Encourage them to check all the statements on the music player that apply to them. You may want to read the statements together as a group so that each child can follow along and choose with confidence:

- I am a believer in Jesus.
- I know that Jesus is my Lord and Savior.
- I have admitted my sins and asked for God's forgiveness.
- I want to serve Jesus.
- I want to make the world a better place.

Say, **Those people who believe in Jesus, know Him as Lord and Savior, and live to please God, want to serve Him and others, helping to make the world and others' lives better.**

Note to Leader: If there is a student in the session that does not identify as a believer, but demonstrates interest in accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior, you will want to offer a salvation prayer. Follow this A-B-C plan, do not be afraid to stop this lesson and share from your heart your relationship with Jesus Christ. Explain why He is your Savior. Encourage the entire group to share about how Jesus brings about change.

A—Admit you have sinned (this is knowingly doing what you know God does not want you to do, or not doing what you know God wants you to do). Tell God what you have done (or not), be sorry for it, and be willing to quit or to do what God wants you to do. (Read Romans 3:23)

B—Believe that God loves you and sent His Son, Jesus, to save you from your sins. Accept the forgiveness that God offers you. (Read John 3:16)

C—Claim Jesus as your Savior. Acknowledge God's forgiveness, respond with love, and follow Jesus. (Read Romans 10:13)



A good resource for this is the booklet *My Best Friend, Jesus*. You can order this online at www.wordaction.com. Order number JFSB-3000. Search for this under "Children," and then, "Resources."



Here is an example of a straightforward salvation prayer to pray with children:

Dear God,

Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to die on the Cross for the sins or wrong things I have done. I admit that I have disobeyed You. I want to choose to live as You teach me to live. I believe and accept that You have forgiven me. I love You, Lord, and ask that You would be my Savior and Best Friend. I promise to choose to love and follow You. Thank You, God, for Your love and forgiveness.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Explore God's Word

Page 4 in *So...What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*

Say, **The Bible is a good source of wisdom for us to understand what serving is all about. Let's open the Bible and take a look.**

Distribute Bibles as needed. Please note that all Scripture (unless otherwise stated) is from the New International Version (NIV). Have children turn to booklet page 4. They will need pens or pencils for writing, and markers for use on the poster board or white board.

Use the white board or a poster board and draw a triangle with the word "SERVE" in the center. Be ready to write those whom we serve on the triangles angled lines.

Say, **Let's read these three Bible verses. They can help us learn why we serve and who we serve.**

Verse 1: Acts 13:2.

Have a volunteer (or do so yourself) open the Bible, locate, and read Acts 13:2. Ask, **According to this verse what are we set apart to do?** (Work) Fill in the blanks on booklet page 4.

W O R K

Ask, **Who are we set apart to serve when we do this work?** (The Lord) Print the words, "To the Lord" beneath the triangle. Say, **Everything we do for God, we do with His strength and help. Let's pray and thank God for helping us live in service to Him through the spiritual gifts, the things we love to do, the things we are good at, and the experiences that He gives us.** Lead children in a short prayer, asking God to guide them in their serving opportunities and choices.

Notes:

Verse 2: Hebrews 6:10.

Have a volunteer (or do so yourself) open the Bible, locate, and read Hebrews 6:10. Ask, **According to this verse who will not forget the work that you do?** (God) Fill in the blanks on booklet page 4.

G O D

Ask, **Who are some of the people that you help when you serve God?** (His people) Fill in the blanks on booklet page 4.

H I S P E O P L E

Point to the triangle. Say, **Everything we do in serving as Christians to help others, we need to do prayerfully and with God's help.** Ask, **So, do you think that means God will support you and not forget the work that you do?** (Yes) Print the words, "To Other Believers" along the left-angled line of the triangle. Say, **So serving God and others includes serving the people of God—or other believers.** Lead children in a short prayer, asking God to guide them in their serving opportunities and choices for other believers. Ask, **What are some things that you can do to serve God and other believers?** (Allow responses. You or the children can write these ideas around the outside of the triangle.)

Verse 3: Matthew 5:16.

Have a volunteer (or do so yourself) open the Bible, locate, and read Matthew 5:16. Ask, **According to this verse who will see your good deeds?** (men) Fill in the blanks on booklet page 4.

M E N

Say, **This means people who see you and realize that you are a helpful, caring person. This is men and women, boys and girls. This is especially about a group of people that do not believe in God. Did you know that people form opinions about who God is and what He is like by watching your life and how you behave? How does that make you feel? What does that make you think about doing wrong or being mean?** (Allow children time to reflect and respond.)

Ask, **Who do you think should get the credit or the recognition or the praise and applause for the good and helpful things that you do to serve others?** (Allow children to respond.) Ask, **According to Matthew 5:16, who is given praise for what you do to serve God and others?** Fill in the blanks on booklet page 4.

F A T H E R I N H E A V E N

Point to the triangle. Say, **Everything we do in serving as Christians to help others, we need to do prayerfully and with God's**

Notes:

help. And we need to praise God for the gifts and opportunities that He gives us for serving others.

Print the words, "To Non-Believers" along the right-angled line of the triangle. Say, **So serving God and others includes serving the people that do not believe in or follow God and His Son, Jesus, right?** (Allow children to reflect and respond. Have them close their eyes and think of people they may know that do not know the Lord.) After a few minutes, have the children open their eyes. Say, **God cares about and loves all people. He wants all people to choose to love and serve Him. You can be a part of His plans for others. You can show people God's love by the things that you do.**

***Optional activity:** You will do this with children participating in teams. You will need a poster board and two markers for each team. Set a timer for two minutes. Have each team work together to write the names (or occupations) of as many people they know that share God's love with them through the service that they do. For example, a Sunday School teacher shares God's love with them by teaching them to know God and His Word.

When the two minutes are up, allow each team to share a few names from the list. Use this as a lead-in or follow-up to the booklet page 4 discussion.

Note: It will be important to include a strong writer on each team, or give help as needed.

Your Body . . . Body of Christ . . .

Step Up to the X-Ray

Page 5 in *So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*

Before the group time, grab an old dark sheet or scrap piece of cloth. Use the scissors to cut four 1½" (3.75 cm.) slits in the sheet or fabric.

During the group time, as an introductory activity to booklet page 5, have two volunteers hold up the sheet.

Invite four volunteers to go behind the sheet and move around, and then pick a location at one slit to stand still. Do not reveal which child is standing where. Explain to the four children that go behind the sheet to place one of the following through a slit in the sheet or fabric at your direction: nose, ear, thumb, or elbow.



Materials needed:

Full-sized dark sheet or fabric and scissors. This should be large enough to conceal four children when held vertical.

Notes:



Faith Word:

The **Church** is the family of believers who have received Jesus as Savior. The **Church** with a capital C is all believers, everywhere.

Say to the volunteers, **Can each of you show us one of these: a nose, ear, thumb, or elbow? Thank you.** Wait a moment. Say to those watching, **Can you guess which body part belongs to which person behind the sheet?** Give them two tries to guess.

Ask, **What was it like to try to guess which part belonged to which body?** (Answers will vary.) Explain that just like these body parts are unique, each one of us is a unique part of the Body of Christ. **Ask, What do you think unique means?** (Allow responses) **To be unique is to be special or one of a kind or even set apart in some way.**

Read **Romans 12:1-8** as the children follow along using their Bibles. Ask, **Is it more easy or difficult to walk with one leg or two? Why do you have a nose? What do you need a heart or lungs for?** (Allow answers) Say, **This Scripture explains that just as our physical bodies are made of many parts that work together; it is the same for the Church. God designed the Church, His Church, the people of God, to work together. We each have different jobs that He plans for or wants us to do.**

Ask, **What do you think happens when someone that is a part of the Church does not do his or her part?** (Allow responses) **The Church does not work the way God planned for it to work without everyone's own special, unique S.H.A.P.E. Let's find out more.**

Note: God has plans for His people, but if we do not fulfill those plans, that does not limit God. He accomplishes His purposes in other ways.

***Optional Activity:** Provide butcher paper or bulletin board paper. Have children lie on the floor and trace the outline of their bodies onto paper. Children can work in pairs to trace each other on the paper. These can be used later to decorate and have children identify their S.H.A.P.E. and draw lines next to their body shapes and label the five components of S.H.A.P.E. Be sure to have children write their names on their body outlines.

Hold up the letters you made before the session that spell S.H.A.P.E.

Say, **Now we are going to find out what word or words that each letter stands for so we can understand our God-given S.H.A.P.E.**

Poll the class to see if they think their S.H.A.P.E. will be the same or different from the others in the class.

Choose one of the children that said that they will be different, and have the child read **Psalm 139:14**. (This is printed on booklet page 5 in the New Living Translation or NLT version.)



Ask the children to write down what they believe the word “complex” means. You may want to bring a dictionary to class and look up and read the definition together.

Tape the letters for S, H, A, P, and E on the white board or to a wall. If you tape them to the wall, then tape another sheet of paper beneath each letter. Ask, **Want to know more about your unique S.H.A.P.E.? Let’s turn the page for a download on S.H.A.P.E.**

My Unique S.H.A.P.E.

Pages 6-7 in So . . . *What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*

Have the children turn to page 6 of the student booklet. Each child will need a pen or pencil.

In this section you can have children work in pairs to look up Scripture and write their answers in the blanks provided. (If needed, pair older and younger children so that stronger readers can help the readers with less experience and confidence.) You and other adult helpers (as available) can stroll throughout the room and give help and encouragement as needed. After the children have completed the pages, use the conversation in this leader’s guide to continue the discussion.

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Answer Key for Pages 6 and 7, and the top of page 8:

S is for

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- 1 LOOK DOWN (Read 1 Timothy 4:12)
- 2 NEGLECT (Read 1 Timothy 4:14)
- 3 GIVEN (and) FAITHFUL (Read 1 Corinthians 4:2)
- 4 BEAR (and) FRUIT (Read John 15:8)
- 5 DISCIPLES (Read John 15:8)

H is for

HEART

- GIVE (and) HEART (Read Psalm 37:4)

A is for

ABILITIES

- SERVICE (and) LORD (Read 1 Corinthians 12:5)

P is for

PERSONALITY

- (Read Ephesians 2:10)

(and on booklet page 8) **E is for**

- EXPERIENCE (Read Romans 8:28)

Circle Yes. Circle Yes. (Allow children to circle their answers as they choose.)

Booklet Page 6 Additional Activity Suggestions and Helps: Spiritual Gifts

Say, **Every believer has at least one spiritual gift and most Christians have more than one.** These gifts are activated or made available to us when we are saved. They are not something we can earn . . . they are gifts. This means that the Holy Spirit gives them to us, and He helps us to use them to serve God and others.

Ask, **How old do you think you need to be to know and use your spiritual gifts?** (Let children consider and respond.) Say, **There is no absolute set age. Anyone can learn to know their spiritual gifts and allow God to use them to help others. That means that you can too!**

Write the following list of words on a white board or poster board. Then copy and cut out the definitions that are separated by blue, broken lines. Place these inside a hat, box, bag, or bowl. Have one child at a time draw a definition slip and read it to the class. Talk about the words on the board. Help children match each definition to a word. Attach the definition next to the word.

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Administration/Organization: *The ability to organize for God's work.*

Fellowship: *The ability to include others in a community of believers.*

Shepherding/Guidance: *The ability to recognize and affirm the skills, talents, and spiritual gifts in other believers.*

Evangelism: *The ability and strong desire to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others.*

Discernment: *The ability to tell the difference between what is right and wrong in God's sight, and to do right with His help.*

Giving/Stewardship: *The ability to joyfully share the resources of time, talents, and money that God gives.*

Hospitality: *The ability to extend basic care and friendship to others (especially outside your circle of friends in order that they may know God).*

Knowledge: *The ability to understand the truth found in God's Word, and explain this truth so that others can understand.*

Leadership: *The ability to challenge and inspire others to follow you in order that they will be their very best for God.*

Mercy/Compassion: *The ability to feel deeply the pain of others and care for their hurts.*

Helps/Service: *The ability and great desire to provide concrete help for others by doing something.*

Teaching: *The ability to inspire other people to learn to know God through the things that you do.*
.....

Definitions to copy and cut out.

—The ability to organize for God’s work.

—The ability to include others in a community of believers.

—The ability to recognize and affirm the skills, talents, and spiritual gifts in other believers.

—The ability and strong desire to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others.

—The ability to tell the difference between what is right and wrong in God’s sight, and to do right with His help.

—The ability to joyfully share the resources of time, talents, and money that God gives.

—The ability to extend basic care and friendship to others (especially outside your circle of friends in order that they may know God).

—The ability to understand the truth found in God’s Word, and explain this truth so that others can understand.

—The ability to challenge and inspire others to follow you in order that they will be their very best for God.

—The ability to feel deeply the pain of others and care for their hurts.

—The ability and great desire to provide concrete help for others by doing something.

—The ability to inspire other people to learn to know God through the things that you do.

Photocopy the Spiritual Gifts Quick Quiz found at the end of this leader’s guide. Distribute to each child along with a pen or pencil. Have children go through and mark a check beside each statement that describes them best.

Notes:

Say, **Read each statement carefully. Put a checkmark ✓ beside each statement that makes you say, “That sounds just like me!”**

Read each statement aloud. Repeat one time. Give children time to mark the box. Re-read as needed or requested. You will want to take enough time for children to understand what they are doing.

When the quick quiz is completed, say, **Now look at each set of four questions. If a set of questions only has one or no checkmarks, place an X through that set. If a set of questions has two checkmarks, put one star next to that set. If a set of questions has three or four checkmarks, circle that set and put a star next to it.**

Say, **The spiritual gift that has two, three, or four questions with checkmarks could be an area where God wants you to serve Him and others. I want you to pray this week. Ask God to help you choose one area of service from what you have learned about spiritual gifts.**

Give one example of service that can be done for each spiritual gift. Allow children to share their spiritual gifts with two, three, or four checkmarks, and to ask any questions. Tell about one of your spiritual gifts and how God uses that gift to help you to serve Him and others.

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Administration/Organization:

Help your teacher make a class list of members and visitors. Organize a postcard, address list, and stamp box to use for contacting the people on the list.

Fellowship:

Volunteer to learn about and be a greeter at church.

Shepherding/Guidance:

Help someone you know with a project, assignment, or learn more about the church.

Evangelism:

Learn the ABC’s of Salvation. Practice sharing them with a friend or family member.

Discernment:

Make a list of an area where you know God wants you to obey, but maybe you struggle. Pray, asking for God’s help. Ask a trusted grownup to pray with you on this issue.

Giving/Stewardship:

Research to find a special service project that you can be involved with—then take part in this service project if possible.

Hospitality:

Make a special snack for your next Sunday School class session (with your teacher's permission). Deliver it for the class to enjoy together.

Knowledge:

Choose a new Bible passage. Read this passage, and then work on memorizing it. Talk about its' meaning with a trusted grownup such as your pastor.

Leadership:

Be a true leader—try to befriend someone at school or church who is somewhat of an outsider or not accepted by others.

Mercy/Compassion:

Start an E-mail or text message prayer chain with your friends. Choose one prayer request each week and share it with this group. Pray together for each prayer request that is sent and read.

Helps/Service:

Plan and do a service project with your Sunday School class or a group of friends such as collecting food for a homeless shelter, or cleaning the home of a shut-in.

Teaching:

Ask your Sunday School teacher and the teacher of a younger class (such as kindergartners) to help you plan and teach one Sunday School lesson activity for that younger class.

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Conclude this section on spiritual gifts with a prayer for the children. Pray that God will help the children begin to understand and use the spiritual gifts given to them by the Holy Spirit.

This was a heavy area. It may be a good time to take a break. Serve refreshments, play a game, and allow the children to relax. Then come back together to continue discussing the remaining letters of S.H.A.P.E. (H-A-P-and E).

Heart

Have children refer to their booklets and share the answers listed for heart. Ask a volunteer to read the verse from Colossians 3:23, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men." Print this verse on the white board or a poster board.

Draw a heart around the words of the verse. Say, **The Bible uses the word "heart" to represent your motivations and desires.**

Notes:

Share these two definitions with children:

Motivation: A motivating force, stimulus, or influence. Incentive or drive. In other words what drives you or makes you do what you do. Ask yourself, **“Does my heart or motivation for doing [fill in the blank] come from God? Is it because I want to obey, serve, and please God?”** If you can answer “yes” then you have the right heart or motivation for doing something. When you are choosing a spiritual gift, use this question to confirm that you are on the path that God wants you to be on.

Desire: To long or hope for with a strong intention or aim to act. In other words what is something that you really, really feel that you have to do? Ask yourself, **“Do I truly desire to do this. Is it a need that I have to be my very best as I obey, serve, and please God?”** If you can answer “yes” then you are on the right path, but keep checking in with God to make sure that the desires of your heart stay pure and centered on Him, not on yourself.

Have a volunteer read Psalm 37:4, “Delight yourselves in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.”

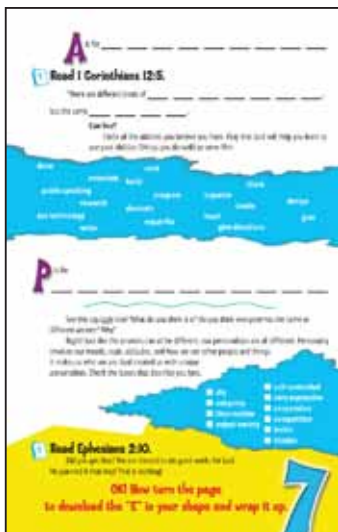
Say, **God wants what is the best for you. You can trust Him in this. That means the spiritual gifts that He gives are going to fulfill your “heart” or motivations and desires. You are going to enjoy serving Him and others in the ways that He has planned for you!**

***Optional Activity:** Give each child a ½ sheet of poster board. Instruct them to draw a large outline of a heart on the poster board. Have them print the verse from Colossians 3:23 along the top of the poster board. Challenge them to take this poster home and place it somewhere in their room. Say, **When you choose to do something to serve God, first pray about it. Ask God to help you know this fulfills the motivations and desires of the heart that He has given to you for service. When you know that it is something God wants you to do for Him . . . then write it inside the center of the heart, and go for it!**

Booklet Page 7 Additional Activity Suggestions and Helps: Abilities

Have children refer to booklet page 7. Ask a volunteer to read 1 Corinthians 12:5, “There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.”

If you have enough children to do so, divide into teams of two or three. If you have a small group, do this activity with the entire group.



Notes:

Say, **There are a list of abilities on page 7 of your booklet.**

Can someone tell me what an ability is? (Something that a person is naturally able to do well.) **I want you to think about something you do well. Are you able to draw? Are you good at sports? What about video games? Can you out play anyone on Wii? What about writing? Do you love telling stories? Do you enjoy cooking? Can you bake really tasty cookies?**

Now look at your friends. Do you know something they can do well? Let's take a few minutes to tell one another what we recognize they can do really well.

Allow time for the teams (or group) to share with each other. Make sure that everyone has something shared about his or her abilities. Share the abilities that you have observed in the children.

Then, have the children find separate quiet places in the room to sit alone. Say, **I want you to pray quietly and ask God to help you recognize the abilities that He has given to you. Then circle the abilities that you see in yourself on page 7 of your booklet. If an ability that you know you have is not listed, that is OK. Write it somewhere on the booklet page.**

This week I have a challenge for you. Take this home. Consider your spiritual gifts, your heart's motivations and desires, and your abilities. Ask God to help you discover a way to serve Him using these things.

Personality

Say, **Find a place that you can stand and not touch another person in the group. Now I want you to use your body to create a letter "P."** (Give a few minutes for children to get into position.) Say, **Look around. There are some interesting letters showing us the shape of the letter "P." Some are similar. Some are quite different.**

Have everyone sit. Say, **P is for personality. Have the children look at the squiggly line on booklet page 7. Ask, What do you think this line represents?** (Let children respond.) **You have different ideas about this, just as you have different personalities.**

Share this definition with the children:

Personality: The God-given traits and emotional characteristics that help to make you the person that you are.

Notes:

Say, **Some of use are shy. Some are outgoing. We might enjoy variety or when things change in our lives. Or, we might really like routine or when things stay the same. We can be self-controlled or very expressive. We might like to compete with others and try to win! Or, maybe competition annoys us, and we just wish everyone could work together. What is your personality? Think about the things that best describe you.**

Give children time to look at the list on booklet page 7. Have them place a checkmark in the box (or boxes) that best describe them. If there are traits or characteristics that are not listed, encourage the children to write them somewhere on booklet page 6 or 7.

Have a volunteer read Ephesians 2:10, “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Say, **God created each of us. When we are saved, He gives us spiritual gifts to enrich His Church. He has given us each a heart for serving Him in a way that will fit what we want to do. He gives us abilities for service. He has given us each a unique personality. Nobody can serve God like you can! God planned it that way! That is awesome!**

***Optional activity:** Have children find a way to praise God. This can be physical—such as jumping up or pumping a fist in the air, verbal—such as shouting “Go, God!” Or, it can be silent—such as bowing and offering a one sentence thanksgiving prayer to God.

Booklet Page 8 Additional Activity Suggestions and Helps:

Refer children to the top of booklet page 8. Ask, **What word did you find?** (Experience)

Read Romans 8:28 as children do the motions along with you. You may want to practice the motions first.

“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).

Verse Motions:

- We (Cross arms on chest, and then spread arms outward)
- know (Tap forehead with pointer finger)
- that in all things (Move hands, flattened with palms down, in a varied pattern in front of body)
- God (Point up)



Notes:

works for the good (Hug self)
of those who love (Cross arms over chest)
him, (Point up)
who have been called (Cup ear)
according to his purpose” (Pump fist in air as if in victory).

Have children share what this verse means, and what they think it can mean for them. Encourage them to answer the questions (silently) at the top of booklet page 8.

Pray with the children that God will use the situations in their lives to serve Him and help others.

Invite children to share about what they learned about themselves in one of the areas of S.H.A.P.E. Children can return to their body outline drawings to label what they learned about their S.H.A.P.E.

This would be a good time to take another break. Upon coming back together, show all the children in the group a list of ministries that your local church offers through your children’s ministry and/or the entire church.

Review this list with the group and invite them to select a ministry to contact to offer their participation. You may need to coach them a little on selection based upon their S.H.A.P.E. Use the parent’s letter to communicate this choice so that the parents can be a part of this process. (This is very important as it will be up to parents to confirm and follow-up).

Remember to follow up with each child about ministry involvement. Keep a record of the choices that the students made.

As time permits review the five elements of S.H.A.P.E. (see booklet page 8) and encourage them to add details to their booklet and/or body outline art. Encourage words like unique, created by God, and Serve Jesus.

Have fun! For additional helps and suggestions, you can search “Spiritual Gifts” online for resources, lists, and inventories.

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Spiritual Gifts Quick Quiz

✓ Read each statement. Checkmark the statements that best describe you.

1. If you have just 1 ✓ in a spiritual gift category, then this is probably not something that best fits you.
2. If you have 2 ✓ in a spiritual gift category, then this may be something you should check out to see if it fits you.
3. If you have 3 or 4 ✓ in a spiritual gift category, then this is most likely a spiritual gift for you. Talk to a trusted grown-up to help you pray for God's guidance in using this spiritual gift.

Administration/Organization

- I like to make lists and organize things for myself and others
- I am good at setting and meeting goals
- I enjoy planning a job and seeing it completed
- I can be counted on to get things done

Fellowship

- I welcome others wherever I am
- I motivate others to get involved as a part of the Church
- I like to be around others, it gives me energy, I especially enjoy worshiping God with other people
- I introduce people to one another, encouraging strong friendships in the Lord

Shepherding/Guidance

- I can sense how God wants to use another person and let that person know
- I challenge my friends to give their very best to Jesus
- I am bold and encourage others to serve Jesus
- I recognize how God can use different people to advance His kingdom

Evangelism

- I have a strong desire for everyone to know and love Jesus as Savior
- I enjoy telling other people about Jesus
- I am able to share my faith with courage wherever I am
- I eagerly share my salvation story with others

Discernment

- I truly want to obey God with the choices that I make
- I pray, regularly asking God to help me make right choices
- I enjoy reading my Bible to help me know what God wants for me
- I recognize, with God's help, the difference between right and wrong

Giving/Stewardship

- I care about those in need and try to find ways to help
- I cheerfully give to God and others what I have
- I think it is important to give to God
- I am known for my generosity in giving of my time, my abilities, and my money for the Church

Hospitality

- I almost never meet someone that I cannot talk with
- I see people as potential friends and want to make them comfortable
- I like to find ways to help others feel God's love
- I enjoy visiting the sick or shut-ins or those in need to give help and comfort

Knowledge

- I readily remember and learn from Scripture
- I like to study the Bible
- I am not afraid to ask questions in order to understand God's teachings
- I like to talk about what God teaches with others

Leadership

- People often turn to me for help
- My friends look up to me and want to do as I do
- I am respected by others and listened to when I speak
- If I am in a group without a leader, I will most likely take the lead

Mercy/Compassion

- I quickly recognize when someone else is hurting
- I encourage people who are discouraged
- It makes me hurt to see someone else hurting or in pain
- I strongly feel compelled to help when others are hurting

Helps/Service

- I like to pitch in on service projects and do my part
- I think helping others is a great way to spend free time
- I would give up something that I want in order to help someone else
- I am almost always the first to volunteer to help at church, home, or school

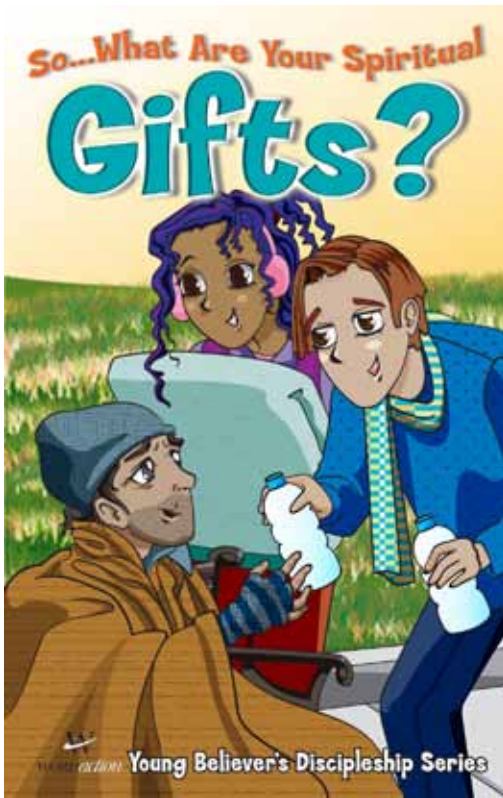
Teaching

- I really want others to learn from God's Word
- I like to find ways to communicate the truth of the Bible so others can understand it
- People sometimes tell me I am a good teacher, especially with younger sisters and brothers
- I think a great time is teaching a Bible story to or doing a puppet show for younger children

.....

Did you know that the Holy Spirit can gift us in different ways at different times in our lives? That's right . . . always listen to Him . . . He just might want you to do something new!

.....



Dear Parent,

Today your child participated in a discipling class where we learned about our spiritual gifts, abilities, and how we use our unique S.H.A.P.E. to serve Jesus. Each child in the class completed a booklet that they have brought home for you to look over with them. Encourage your child to read it with you and share with you what they learned about themselves.

Based on the information your child discovered and the ministry opportunities of our Church _____, the following is a ministry that your child would like to connect with and join their team:

Ministry	Contact person and info.
----------	--------------------------

We would like for you to contact this ministry leader with your child because we believe that as the spiritual director of your child you need to initiate this communication. If you need any assistance please feel free to contact me at _____.

I hope that this will be the start of a lifetime of great service to our Lord as your child uses spiritual gifts, motivations and desires, abilities, personality, and experiences to build the Kingdom. Thank you for allowing your child to be a part of this time of discipling.

Sincerely,

Resource

List

Bible

This Parent Guide

So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?
Student Booklet (one per child or family member)

Pens and pencils

Hand mirror

White board or poster board

Dry erase or regular markers

8 ½" by 11" (21.25 x 27.5 cm.) letters S, H, A, P, E

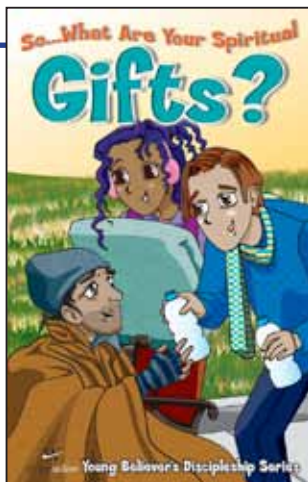
Full sized or larger dark sheet or fabric

Scissors

Large roll paper (butcher, end newspaper, or bulletin board)

Container (bag, box, hat, or bowl)

The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren, opt.



So...What Are Your Spiritual Gifts? Parent Guide

Scripture: “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10).

Purpose: The purpose of this *Parent Guide* is to create a learning environment to help your child, children, or family discover their unique gifts and abilities that can be used for serving the Lord and others. It is designed to be used along with the student booklet entitled, “*So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*” (order CD-3210 at www.wordaction.com).

Welcome Parent!

A Note About Serving

Reading through Scripture do you find a passage regarding how old Christians have to be before they can serve? Of course not! What you do find is a passage that gives us purpose for teaching children about serving others and using the spiritual gifts that God provides: “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:52).

This Scripture verse clearly communicates that children are just as valued in the kingdom of God as their older family members. Children that become believers have an incredible opportunity to impact and transform their home, school, and world by serving others, and not just focusing on themselves.

This short study on spiritual gifts was carefully and prayerfully designed to inspire children to **1)** know they are a unique creation of God, **2)** understand that they have special gifts and abilities, and they were designed to serve God, and **3)** be encouraged to find a ministry within the body of believers that they worship with.

How to use this guide:

Prepare by first praying about the direction of this time with your child, reading this parent guide, and then doing the suggested activities. This will help prepare you for the experience, and prepare for any questions that may arise as you lead your child and family through this spiritual gifts study—helping each of you to discover and better understand your unique S.H.A.P.E.

Create an open family environment. Allow your child and other family members to ask any questions they may have about the process and experience of using their spiritual gifts in service to God and others.

You may want to invite the pastor to your home to participate, talking with your family about spiritual gifts, service, and its application in family life.

Decide as a family a service project to do together.

Have fun! This should be something that you enjoy and are passionate about experiencing with your child and family. You are the spiritual leader for your family. Help your child develop and use the spiritual gifts that God has given.

It is the hope of this author that you, as parent, will see this as an opportunity to raise awareness for your child, as a believer, to get involved in ministry. This could be a doorway for your child and family to explore the work of the Holy Spirit in all aspects of life. Plus, the experience of serving God and others creates powerful experiences that allow for faith to grow and mature.

This author began serving at age 12 and was called into ministry in that season of serving as a child. In other words, what you invest in this learning experience will have great and far-reaching dividends in years to come through the lives that commit to growing and serving in the kingdom of God. You are the living image of Christ and His servant leadership to the children whom you parent. This study and others like it can guide as you help your child grow in the Lord.

So, What Are Spiritual Gifts and What Do They Mean to Christian Service?

God, the Father, chose to send His Son to earth as the way of salvation for humanity. It was in this humanity that Jesus demonstrated service to God. Despite human frailties and physical limitations, Christ modeled service with His humanity for us so that we could see the value in serving. Children are constantly exposed to a culture that says “serve me” rather than “serve others.” If children capture this “service to others” concept while they are still young they will most likely be lifelong servants in the kingdom of God.

Another way to see this is that serving in ministry as a family gives us a chance to gauge the spiritual development of our children. One way that we will see the fruit of their faith is through their works of service. By the time children reach upper elementary they are developmentally ready to interact with peers and older people. A tremendous amount of self-esteem can be derived from these early service opportunities as they uncover and discover the use of their spiritual gifts. The message that we hope you will share as a family is . . . “let the children serve!”

Why Should the So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts? Student Booklet and Other Resources Be Used?

If you expect children to “get it” then you have to use the right tools. This booklet was designed for elementary-age children to really think about who they are “in Christ” and how much fun it is to serve

Make sure you understand the doctrinal standing on the use of spiritual gifts for the church that you attend. Talk with your pastor. Ask any questions that you have and be prepared to answer the questions of your child or family members.

Biblical Passages about Serving Jesus:

Read these passages as you prepare. Then read them with your child and family too.

—Ephesians 2:10

—Psalm 139:14-16

—1 Corinthians 12:1

—1 Corinthians 12:4-7

—Romans 12:6-8

—Matthew 25:23

You will need a white board and dry erase markers or poster board sheets (or use paper that you have around the house) for your discussion on booklet pages 2 and 3. Be sure to have a Bible to use and have letters cut out of cardboard or poster board that spell S.H.A.P.E.

God and others through their unique spiritual gifts, their passions or heart desires, their abilities, personality, and experiences. These are all ways that God prepares His people for service.

So use the booklet and have fun with it. Be creative, and make this as much of an interactive time as you can. See the suggestions within this parent guide for fun activity suggestions to experience this study as a family.

A Word About Spiritual Gifts

In this study you will be introducing elementary children to the concept of spiritual gifts. We have included a spiritual gifts quick quiz at the end of this guide. Also, there are several spiritual gift inventories that are available from Christian publishers. Be careful not to use a long one that will frustrate children. Keep inventories simple and allow them to see that spiritual gifts are not rules or limitations to ministry . . . they are simply one of five things that make them unique. They help us to understand and serve.

So in other words, teach about spiritual gifts but do not get “hung up” about them. Help children understand that God has designed all parts of who they are in Him in order to serve Him and others through their spiritual gifts.

Remember that all believers have at least one spiritual gift, and that spiritual gifts are not the same as the Fruit of the Spirit identified in Galatians 5:22-23. Some spiritual gift listings will have up to 20 various gifts mentioned. Some will have lists of 8-9. We have included 12 that seem best suited for children. It would be a good idea for you to read 1 Corinthians 12, 1 Corinthians 14, and Romans 12:6-8 as you begin to prepare.

The Lesson

Introduction

If you have not done so, give your child a copy of the booklet, *So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*

Say, **Today we are going to work together to discover how to serve Jesus along with others. This is a special way that we can follow God’s plan for our life. The cool part is that we each have a unique way of helping and serving others through the use of spiritual gifts, the things that are important to us, the abilities, personality, and experiences that God has given to each person.**

Notes:



Do You Know Someone Like?

Page 2 in *So...What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*

Turn to page 2 of the student booklet.

Say, **Think about a recent sports event you attended, saw on TV, or listened to. What were some of the things the players had to do in order to win the game?** (Allow time for response. Answers will vary.) Encourage family members to think about the role that each player has. If you receive no responses suggest that they think about what each player needs to focus on. (Possible answers: the position, the part, the job, or what the player is supposed to do to help the team succeed.)

On the white board or poster board, record the answers. Make a list of these answers for reference.

Say, **Now what do you think would happen if the players on that sports team did not do any of the things we listed?** (Answers will vary but should focus on things like lose the game, run into each other, get mad, quit, create, etc.).

Refer to booklet page 2. Read about the two people to meet (Amber and Grant). Ask, **Have you ever felt like Amber? What about Grant?** (Pause to listen to family members share. Then share a related example from your childhood.)

Read the question at the bottom of page 2 to your family, **What do you think both of these young believers want to do?** (Serve Jesus) **Let's find out some helpful information about serving Jesus.**

The Download on Serving!

Page 3 in *So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*

Turn to booklet page 3. Check all the statements on the music player that apply. You may want to read the statements together as a family and answer:

- I am a believer in Jesus.
- I know that Jesus is my Lord and Savior.
- I have admitted my sins and asked for God's forgiveness.
- I want to serve Jesus.
- I want to make the world a better place.



A good resource for this is the booklet *My Best Friend, Jesus*. You can order this online at www.wordaction.com. Order number JFSB-3000. Search for this under "Children," and then, "Resources."

Say, **Those people who believe in Jesus, know Him as Lord and Savior, and live to please God, want to serve Him and others, helping to make the world and others' lives better.**

Note to Parent: If you have a family member that expresses interest in salvation, you can offer a salvation prayer. Follow this A-B-C plan, do not be afraid to stop this lesson and share from your heart your relationship with Jesus Christ. Explain why He is your Savior. Leading your child to Christ is one of the greatest privileges you have as a parent.

A—Admit you have sinned (this is knowingly doing what you know God does not want you to do, or not doing what you know God wants you to do). Tell God what you have done (or not), be sorry for it, and be willing to quit or to do what God wants you to do. (Read Romans 3:23)

B—Believe that God loves you and sent His Son, Jesus, to save you from your sins. Accept the forgiveness that God offers you. (Read John 3:16)

C—Claim Jesus as your Savior. Acknowledge God's forgiveness, respond with love, and follow Jesus. (Read Romans 10:13)

Here is an example of a straightforward salvation prayer to pray with children:

Dear God,

Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to die on the Cross for the sins or wrong things I have done. I admit that I have disobeyed You. I want to choose to live as You teach me to live. I believe and accept that You have forgiven me. I love You, Lord, and ask that You would be my Savior and Best Friend. I promise to choose to love and follow You. Thank You, God, for Your love and forgiveness.

In Jesus' name, Amen.



Explore God's Word

Understanding Service and Spiritual Gifts from God's Word
Page 4 in So...*What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*

Say, **The Bible is a good source of wisdom for us to understand what serving is all about. Let's open the Bible and take a look.**

Turn to booklet page 4. You will need pens or pencils for writing, and markers for use on the poster board or white board.

Use the white board or a poster board and draw a triangle with the word "SERVE" in the center. Be ready to write those whom we serve on the triangles angled lines.

Say, **Let's read these three Bible verses. They can help us learn why we serve and who we serve.**

Verse 1: Acts 13:2.

Open the Bible, locate, and read Acts 13:2. Ask, **According to this verse what are we set apart to do?** (Work) Fill in the blanks on booklet page 4.

W O R K

Ask, **Who are we set apart to serve when we do this work?** (The Lord) Print the words, "To the Lord" beneath the triangle. Say, **Everything we do for God, we do with His strength and help. Let's pray and thank God for helping us live in service to Him through the spiritual gifts, the things we love to do, the things we are good at, and the experiences that He gives us.** Lead your family in a short prayer, asking God to guide you in serving opportunities and choices.

Verse 2: Hebrews 6:10.

Open the Bible, locate, and read Hebrews 6:10. Ask, **According to this verse who will not forget the work that you do?** (God) Fill in the blanks on booklet page 4.

G O D

Ask, **Who are some of the people that you help when you serve God?** (His people) Fill in the blanks on booklet page 4.

H I S P E O P L E

Point to the triangle. Say, **Everything we do in serving as Christians to help others, we need to do prayerfully and with God's help.** Ask, **So, do you think that means God will support you and not forget the work that you do?** (Yes) Print the words, "To Other Believers" along the left-angled line of the triangle. Say, **So serving God**

Notes:

and others includes serving the people of God—or other believers.

Lead your family in a short prayer, asking God to guide in serving opportunities and choices for other believers. Ask, **What are some things that you can do to serve God and other believers?** (Allow responses. You or a family member can write these ideas around the outside of the triangle.)

Verse 3: Matthew 5:16.

Open the Bible, locate, and read Matthew 5:16. Ask, **According to this verse who will see your good deeds?** (men) Fill in the blanks on booklet page 4.

M E N

Say, **This means people who see you and realize that you are a helpful, caring person. This is men and women, boys and girls. This is especially about a group of people that do not believe in God. Did you know that people form opinions about who God is and what He is like by watching your life and how you behave? How does that make you feel? What does that make you think about doing wrong or being mean?** (Allow your family time to reflect and respond.)

Ask, **Who do you think should get the credit or the recognition or the praise and applause for the good and helpful things that you do to serve others?** (Allow your family to respond.) Ask, **According to Matthew 5:16, who is given praise for what you do to serve God and others?** Fill in the blanks on booklet page 4.

F A T H E R I N H E A V E N

Point to the triangle. Say, **Everything we do in serving as Christians to help others, we need to do prayerfully and with God's help. And we need to praise God for the gifts and opportunities that He gives us for serving others.**

Print the words, "To Non-Believers" along the right-angled line of the triangle. Say, **So serving God and others includes serving the people that do not believe in or follow God and His Son, Jesus, right?** (Allow family members to reflect and respond. Have them close their eyes and think of people they may know that do not know the Lord.) After a few minutes, have everyone open their eyes. Say, **God cares about and loves all people. He wants all people to choose to love and serve Him. You can be a part of His plans for others. You can show people God's love by the things that you do.**

***Optional activity:** You will need a poster board and a marker for each family member. Set a timer for two minutes. Have your

Notes:

**Faith Word:**

The **Church** is the family of believers who have received Jesus as Savior. The **Church** with a capital C is all believers, everywhere.

family write the names (or occupations) of as many people they know that share God's love with them through the service that they do. For example, a Sunday School teacher shares God's love with them by teaching them to know God and His Word.

When the two minutes are up have family members share, and then, use this as a lead-in or follow-up to the booklet page 4 discussion.

Your Body . . . Body of Christ . . .

Step Up to the X-Ray

Page 5 in So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?

Grab an old dark sheet or scrap piece of cloth. Use the scissors to cut as many 1½" (3.75 cm.) slits in the sheet or fabric for all but one member of your family.

As an introductory activity to booklet page 5, hang the sheet in an area of your home.

Invite all but one family member to go behind the sheet and move around, and then pick a location at one slit to stand still. Do not reveal who is standing where. Explain to the family members that go behind the sheet to place one of the following through a slit in the sheet or fabric at your direction: nose, ear, thumb, or elbow.

Say to the family members behind the sheet, **Can each of you show us one of these: a nose, ear, thumb, or elbow? Thank you.** Wait a moment. Say to the family member watching on the other side of the sheet, **Can you guess which body part belongs to which person in our family standing behind the sheet?** Give the person two tries to guess.

Ask, **What was it like to try to guess which part belonged to which body?** (Answers will vary.) Explain that just like these body parts are unique, each one of us is a unique part of the Body of Christ. **Ask, What do you think unique means?** (Allow responses) **To be unique is to be special or one of a kind or even set apart in some way.**

Read **Romans 12:1-8** as your family members follow along using their Bibles. Ask, **Is it more easy or difficult to walk with one leg or two? Why do you have a nose? What do you need a heart or lungs for?** (Allow answers) Say, **This Scripture explains that just as our physical bodies are made of many parts that work together; it is the same for the Church. God designed the Church, His Church, the people of God, to work together. We each have different jobs that He plans for or wants us to do.**

Notes:

Ask, **What do you think happens when someone that is a part of the Church does not do his or her part?** (Allow responses) **The Church does not work the way God planned for it to work without everyone's own special, unique S.H.A.P.E. Let's find out more.**

Note: God has plans for His people, but if we do not fulfill those plans, that does not limit God. He accomplishes His purposes in other ways.

***Optional Activity:** Provide butcher paper or bulletin board paper. Have your child lie on the floor and trace the outline of his or her body onto paper. This outline can be used later to decorate and have your child identify his or her S.H.A.P.E. and draw lines next to the body shape and label the five components of S.H.A.P.E.

Hold up the letters you made that spell S.H.A.P.E.

Say, **Now we are going to find out what word or words that each letter stands for so we can understand our God-given S.H.A.P.E.**

Poll your family to see if they think their S.H.A.P.E. will be the same or different from the others in the family.

Read **Psalm 139:14**. (This is printed on booklet page 5 in the New Living Translation.)

Look up and read the definition of complex from a dictionary.

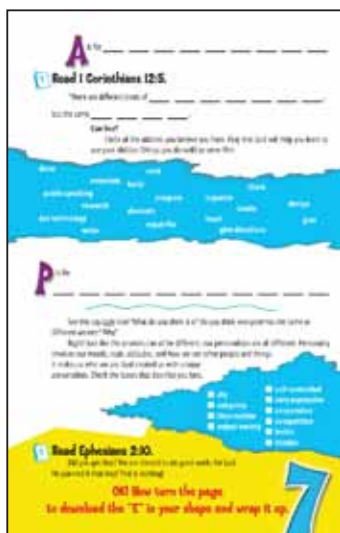
Tape the letters for S, H, A, P, and E on the wall. Then tape another sheet of paper beneath each letter. Ask, **Want to know more about your unique S.H.A.P.E.? Let's turn the page for a download on S.H.A.P.E.**

My Unique S.H.A.P.E.

Pages 6-7 in *So . . . What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?*

Turn to page 6 of the student booklet. Your child will need a pen or pencil.

Look up Scripture and write the answers in the blanks provided. After this is completed, use the conversation in this parent guide to continue the discussion.



Notes:

Definitions to copy and cut out are separated by the blue, broken lines.

.....
Answer Key for Pages 6 and 7, and the top of page 8:

S is for

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1 LOOK DOWN (Read 1 Timothy 4:12)

2 NEGLECT (Read 1 Timothy 4:14)

3 GIVEN (and) FAITHFUL (Read 1 Corinthians 4:2)

4 BEAR (and) FRUIT (Read John 15:8)

5 DISCIPLES (Read John 15:8)

H is for

HEART

GIVE (and) HEART (Read Psalm 37:4)

A is for

ABILITIES

SERVICE (and) LORD (Read 1 Corinthians 12:5)

P is for

PERSONALITY

(Read Ephesians 2:10)

(and on booklet page 8) **E is for**

EXPERIENCE (Read Romans 8:28)

Circle Yes. Circle Yes. (Allow children to circle their answers as they choose.)

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Booklet Page 6 Additional Activity Suggestions and Helps:
Spiritual Gifts

Say, **Every believer has at least one spiritual gift and most Christians have more than one. These gifts are activated or made available to us when we are saved. They are not something we can earn . . . they are gifts. This means that the Holy Spirit gives them to us, and He helps us to use them to serve God and others.**

Ask, **How old do you think you need to be to know and use your spiritual gifts?** (Let your family consider and respond.) Say, **There is no absolute set age. Anyone can learn to know his or her spiritual gifts, and then allow God to use them to help others.**

Write the following list of words on a white board or poster board. Then copy and cut out the definitions. Place these inside a hat, box, bag, or bowl. Have one family member at a time draw a definition slip and read it to the class. Talk about the words on the board. Help your family match each definition to a word. Attach the definition next to the word.

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Administration/Organization: *The ability to organize for God's work.*

Fellowship: *The ability to include others in a community of believers.*

Notes:

Definitions to copy and cut out are separated by the blue, broken lines.

Shepherding/Guidance: *The ability to recognize and affirm the skills, talents, and spiritual gifts in other believers.*

Evangelism: *The ability and strong desire to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others.*

Discernment: *The ability to tell the difference between what is right and wrong in God's sight, and to do right with His help.*

Giving/Stewardship: *The ability to joyfully share the resources of time, talents, and money that God gives.*

Hospitality: *The ability to extend basic care and friendship to others (especially outside your circle of friends in order that they may know God).*

Knowledge: *The ability to understand the truth found in God's Word, and explain this truth so that others can understand.*

Leadership: *The ability to challenge and inspire others to follow you in order that they will be their very best for God.*

Mercy/Compassion: *The ability to feel deeply the pain of others and care for their hurts.*

Helps/Service: *The ability and great desire to provide concrete help for others by doing something.*

Teaching: *The ability to inspire other people to learn to know God through the things that you do.*



- The ability to organize for God's work.
- The ability to include others in a community of believers.
- The ability to recognize and affirm the skills, talents, and spiritual gifts in other believers.
- The ability and strong desire to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others.
- The ability to tell the difference between what is right and wrong in God's sight, and to do right with His help.
- The ability to joyfully share the resources of time, talents, and money that God gives.
- The ability to extend basic care and friendship to others (especially outside your circle of friends in order that they may know God).

Notes:

—The ability to understand the truth found in God’s Word, and explain this truth so that others can understand.

—The ability to challenge and inspire others to follow you in order that they will be their very best for God.

—The ability to feel deeply the pain of others and care for their hurts.

—The ability and great desire to provide concrete help for others by doing something.

—The ability to inspire other people to learn to know God through the things that you do.

Photocopy the Spiritual Gifts Quick Quiz found at the end of this leader’s guide. Distribute to each family member along with a pen or pencil. Have everyone go through and mark a check beside each statement that describes them best.

Say, **Read each statement carefully. Put a checkmark ✓ beside each statement that makes you say, “That sounds just like me!”**

Read each statement aloud. Repeat one time. Give your family time to mark the box. Re-read as needed or requested. You will want to take enough time for everyone in the family to understand what they are doing.

When the quick quiz is completed, say, **Now look at each set of four questions. If a set of questions only has one or no checkmarks, place an X through that set. If a set of questions has two checkmarks, put one star next to that set. If a set of questions has three or four checkmarks, circle that set and put a star next to it.**

Say, **The spiritual gift that has two, three, or four questions with checkmarks could be an area where God wants you to serve Him and others. I want you to pray this week. Ask God to help you choose one area of service from what you have learned about spiritual gifts. I will help you, then we can do the service project together.**

Give one example of service that can be done for each spiritual gift. Allow each family member to share their spiritual gifts with two, three, or four checkmarks, and to ask any questions. Tell about one of your spiritual gifts and how God uses that gift to help you to serve Him and others.

Notes:

Administration/Organization:

Help your teacher make a class list of members and visitors. Organize a postcard, address list, and stamp box to use for contacting the people on the list.

Fellowship:

Volunteer to learn about and be a greeter at church.

Shepherding/Guidance:

Help someone you know with a project, assignment, or learn more about the church.

Evangelism:

Learn the ABC's of Salvation. Practice sharing them with a friend or family member.

Discernment:

Make a list of an area where you know God wants you to obey, but maybe you struggle. Pray, asking for God's help. Ask a trusted parent or other family member to pray with you on this issue.

Giving/Stewardship:

Research to find a special service project that you can be involved with—then take part in this service project as a family.

Hospitality:

Make a special snack for your next Sunday School class session (with your teacher's permission). Deliver it for the class to enjoy together.

Knowledge:

Choose a new Bible passage. Read this passage, and then work on memorizing it. Talk about its' meaning with a trusted grownup such as your pastor.

Leadership:

Be a true leader—try to befriend someone at school or church that is somewhat of an outsider or not accepted by others.

Mercy/Compassion:

Start an E-mail or text message prayer chain with your friends. Choose one prayer request each week and share it with this group. Pray together for each prayer request that is sent and read.

Helps/Service:

Plan and do a service project with your Sunday School class or a group of friends such as collecting food for a homeless shelter, or cleaning the home of a shut-in. This can also be done as a family service project.

Notes:

Teaching:

Ask your Sunday School teacher and the teacher of a younger class (such as kindergartners) to help you plan and teach one Sunday School lesson activity for that younger class.

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Conclude this section on spiritual gifts with a prayer for your family. Pray that God will help your family begin to understand and use (or continue to use) the spiritual gifts given to them by the Holy Spirit.

This was a heavy area. It may be a good time to take a family break. Serve refreshments, play a game, and allow relaxation. Then come back together to continue discussing the remaining letters of S.H.A.P.E. (H-A-P-and E).

Heart

Refer to the booklet and share the answers listed for heart. Read the verse from Colossians 3:23, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.” You may want to print this verse on the white board or a poster board.

Draw a heart around the words of the verse if printed. Say, **The Bible uses the word “heart” to represent your motivations and desires.**

Share these two definitions with your family:

Motivation: A motivating force, stimulus, or influence. Incentive or drive. In other words what drives you or makes you do what you do. Ask yourself, **“Does my heart or motivation for doing [fill in the blank] come from God? Is it because I want to obey, serve, and please God?” If you can answer “yes” then you have the right heart or motivation for doing something. When you are choosing a spiritual gift, use this question to confirm that you are on the path that God wants you to be on.**

Desire: To long or hope for with a strong intention or aim to act. In other words what is something that you really, really feel that you have to do? Ask yourself, **“Do I truly desire to do this. Is it a need that I have to be my very best as I obey, serve, and please God?” If you can answer “yes” then you are on the right path, but keep checking in with God to make sure that the desires of your heart stay pure and centered on Him, not on yourself.**

Read Psalm 37:4, “Delight yourselves in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.”

Notes:



Say, **God wants what is the best for you. You can trust Him in this. That means the spiritual gifts that He gives are going to fulfill your “heart” or motivations and desires. You are going to enjoy serving Him and others in the ways that He has planned for you!**

***Optional Activity:** Give each family member a ½ sheet of poster board. Instruct them to draw a large outline of a heart on the poster board. Have them print the verse from Colossians 3:23 along the top of the poster board. Challenge them to place it somewhere in their room. Say, **When you choose to do something to serve God, first pray about it. Ask God to help you know this fulfills the motivations and desires of the heart that He has given to you for service. When you know that it is something God wants you to do for Him . . . then write it inside the center of the heart, and go for it!**

Booklet Page 7 Additional Activity Suggestions and Helps: Abilities

Refer to booklet page 7. Ask a volunteer to read 1 Corinthians 12:5, “There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.”

Do this activity as a family.

Say, **There are a list of abilities on page 7 of your booklet.**

Can someone tell me what an ability is? (Something that a person is naturally able to do well.) **I want you to think about something you do well. Are you able to draw? Are you good at sports? What about video games? Can you out play anyone on Wii? What about writing? Do you love telling stories? Do you enjoy cooking? Can you bake really tasty cookies?**

Now look at each person here. Do you know something each one can do well? Let’s take a few minutes to tell one another what we recognize about each other that we can do really well.

Make sure that every family member has something shared about his or her abilities. Share the abilities that you have observed in the members of your family, especially your child.

Then, have your family find separate quiet places in the home to sit alone. Say, **I want you to pray quietly and ask God to help you recognize the abilities that He has given to you. Then circle the abilities that you see in yourself on page 7 of your booklet. If an ability that you know you have is not listed, that is OK. Write it somewhere on the booklet page.**

Notes:

This week I have a challenge for you. Consider your spiritual gifts, your heart's motivations and desires, and your abilities. Ask God to help you discover a way to serve Him using these things.

Personality

Say, **Find a place that you can stand and not touch another family member. Now I want you to use your body to create a letter "P."** (Give a few minutes for children to get into position.) Say, **Look around. There are some interesting letters showing us the shape of the letter "P." Some are similar. Some are quite different.**

Have everyone sit. Say, **P is for personality.** Look at the squiggly line on booklet page 7. Ask, **What do you think this line represents? You have different ideas about this, just as you have different personalities.**

Share this definition with the family:

Personality: The God-given traits and emotional characteristics that help to make you the person that you are.

Ask, **What is your personality? Think about the things that best describe you.**

Give time to look at the list on booklet page 7. Place a checkmark in the box (or boxes) that best describe each family member. If there are traits or characteristics that are not listed, encourage each person to share those traits.

Read Ephesians 2:10, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Say, **God created each of us. When we are saved, He gives us spiritual gifts to enrich His Church. He has given us each a heart for serving Him in a way that will fit what we want to do. He gives us abilities for service. He has given us each a unique personality. Nobody can serve God like you can! God planned it that way! That is awesome!**

***Optional activity:** Have your family find a way to praise God. This can be physical—such as jumping up or pumping a fist in the air, verbal—such as shouting "Go, God!" Or, it can be silent—such as bowing and offering a one sentence thanksgiving prayer to God.



Booklet Page 8 Additional Activity Suggestions and Helps:

Refer to the top of booklet page 8. Ask, **What word did you find?** (Experience)

Read Romans 8:28 and do the motions. You may want to practice the motions first. It is OK to laugh together as you do these as a family.

“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).

Verse Motions:

We (Cross arms on chest, and then spread arms outward)

know (Tap forehead with pointer finger)

that in all things (Move hands, flattened with palms down, in a varied pattern in front of body)

God (Point up)

works for the good (Hug self)

of those who love (Cross arms over chest)

him, (Point up)

who have been called (Cup ear)

according to his purpose” (Pump fist in air as if in victory).

Have each family member share what this verse means. Answer the questions at the top of booklet page 8.

Pray with your family that God will use the situations in your lives to serve Him and help others.

Invite each family member to share about what has been learned in one of the areas of S.H.A.P.E. Your child can return to the body outline drawing to label what has been learned about S.H.A.P.E.

Get and review a list of ministries available in your local church. Choose one to do together as a family. Make plans to participate, contacting the leader of the ministry.

As time permits review the five elements of S.H.A.P.E. (see booklet page 8) and encourage your child to add details to their booklet and/ or body outline art. Encourage words like unique, created by God, and Serve Jesus.

Have fun doing this study as a family!

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Spiritual Gifts Quick Quiz

✓ Read each statement. Checkmark the statements that best describe you.

1. If you have just 1 ✓ in a spiritual gift category, then this is probably not something that best fits you.
2. If you have 2 ✓ in a spiritual gift category, then this may be something you should check out to see if it fits you.
3. If you have 3 or 4 ✓ in a spiritual gift category, then this is most likely a spiritual gift for you. Talk to a trusted grown-up to help you pray for God's guidance in using this spiritual gift.

Administration/Organization

- I like to make lists and organize things for myself and others
- I am good at setting and meeting goals
- I enjoy planning a job and seeing it completed
- I can be counted on to get things done

Fellowship

- I welcome others wherever I am
- I motivate others to get involved as a part of the Church
- I like to be around others, it gives me energy, I especially enjoy worshipping God with other people
- I introduce people to one another, encouraging strong friendships in the Lord

Shepherding/Guidance

- I can sense how God wants to use another person and let that person know
- I challenge my friends to give their very best to Jesus
- I am bold and encourage others to serve Jesus
- I recognize how God can use different people to advance His kingdom

Evangelism

- I have a strong desire for everyone to know and love Jesus as Savior
- I enjoy telling other people about Jesus
- I am able to share my faith with courage wherever I am
- I eagerly share my salvation story with others

Discernment

- I truly want to obey God with the choices that I make
- I pray, regularly asking God to help me make right choices
- I enjoy reading my Bible to help me know what God wants for me
- I recognize, with God's help, the difference between right and wrong

Giving/Stewardship

- I care about those in need and try to find ways to help
- I cheerfully give to God and others what I have
- I think it is important to give to God
- I am known for my generosity in giving of my time, my abilities, and my money for the Church

Hospitality

- I almost never meet someone that I cannot talk with
- I see people as potential friends and want to make them comfortable
- I like to find ways to help others feel God's love
- I enjoy visiting the sick or shut-ins or those in need to give help and comfort

Knowledge

- I readily remember and learn from Scripture
- I like to study the Bible
- I am not afraid to ask questions in order to understand God's teachings
- I like to talk about what God teaches with others

Leadership

- People often turn to me for help
- My friends look up to me and want to do as I do
- I am respected by others and listened to when I speak
- If I am in a group without a leader, I will most likely take the lead

Mercy/Compassion

- I quickly recognize when someone else is hurting
- I encourage people who are discouraged
- It makes me hurt to see someone else hurting or in pain
- I strongly feel compelled to help when others are hurting

Helps/Service

- I like to pitch in on service projects and do my part
- I think helping others is a great way to spend free time
- I would give up something that I want in order to help someone else
- I am almost always the first to volunteer to help at church, home, or school

Teaching

- I really want others to learn from God's Word
- I like to find ways to communicate the truth of the Bible so others can understand it
- People sometimes tell me I am a good teacher, especially with younger sisters and brothers
- I think a great time is teaching a Bible story to or doing a puppet show for younger children

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Did you know that the Holy Spirit can gift us in different ways at different times in our lives? That's right . . . always listen to Him . . . He just might want you to do something new!

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