

CREATED TO LOVE, SHAPED TO SERVE August 30, 2020 am 4<sup>TH</sup> purpose.

1. Loving God and loving people.
2. Second one like loving God – saturated with the love of God – disciplined lovers - Great Commission
3. Becoming like Jesus – being transformed into His image – having the mindset Christ had. Philippians 2 – magnificent chapter revealing who Jesus is.

**Key passage:** Philippians 2. *“<sup>5</sup>In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; <sup>7</sup>rather, he made himself nothing by taking the **very nature of a servant**, being made in human likeness.’*

He made Himself into our likeness so we could be re-made into His. Very nature God, is very nature love, is very nature servant. CS Lewis said “the Son of God became a man so men could become the sons of God” 1 Corinthians 6:20 states God paid a great price for us; therefore, we are to honour God with our bodies. Brings us to a fourth purpose:

4. Shaped to love – God and people – and practically how we do that is by serving, blessing.

**Servant** is a beautiful word – Jesus demonstrated it, in the Greek – Philippians 2:7 means He subjected Himself (made Himself nothing) willingly to take on the shape, the nature of ‘doulos’ – the word means slave; and the **shape, the nature** He allowed Himself to be made in to do this, was as a man; not saved by works, but we are saved for good works. Eph 2:8-10. His handiwork – His masterpiece – created intricately – intentionally – shaped – formed – wired to love God and people, and to serve/bleed.

**Ephesians 4:7-13** / esp. v12 ‘works of service/ministry’ v13: as we love and serve, we are shaped into the full measure (likeness) of Jesus. Noting: service/ministry is defined as waiting on, attending to, running errands, bringing relief, bringing aid, *offering service*. Two-pronged benefit: the church is built up and by service, we are transformed into Jesus’ image. Eph 4 & Romans 12:1-2

**Very clear we are called to serve; full time missionaries / ministers.** Matt West song ‘do something’ – if not me, then who? If not now, then when? **Paul:** Philippians 2:17

**Jesus’ mission is become our mission. This has eternal significance and brings ultimate meaning to our lives.**

**John Wesley’s life motto: “Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can”**

We know our ultimate shape; knowing what specific things God would have us do is not always obvious. **David** – looking after sheep and serving cheese boards to his brothers; **Joseph** – thrown in a hole by his jealous brothers – years of journey before he realised that God had brought him to the place of being able to save many souls; **Moses** – called to deliver a nation – realised at 80 – and delivered on it; **Gideon** – mighty man of valour in God’s eyes – hiding in a winepress in his own – became a great judge for the nation; **Saul** – became Paul – transformed from someone creating havoc in the church to one of the greatest authors used in the New Testament; **Peter** – appeared to react so many times but penned some of the most beautiful new testament writings too... Job knew ... *“Your hands shaped me and made me.”* Isaiah 43:21... God spoke *“these people I have shaped for Myself – will broadcast My praise”*

Each one custom made – it’s not always what you can do that qualifies you; and it’s not always what you can’t do that disqualifies you... need both; gifts and call. It’s not always your strengths that He uses. And it’s not always your weaknesses He avoids. It’s not always what you want to do, and it doesn’t always make you happy. But the powerful impact of obedience is more broad than we can imagine.

Ephesians 4:7 *“But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.”*

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 explains also though that:

<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. <sup>7</sup> **Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.** <sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> **All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.**"

Gifts we don't deserve or earn or even choose – these are God determined because He sees the whole picture – He sees where we fit; He sees where the gift is received; He knows the common good; we have the privilege of surrender; else it's not service or servanthood at all.

Jesus said "If you want to be great, you must become the servant of all" Matthew 10:43

The world defines greatness by prestige and position – this approach demands service from others. The word servant, in particular at the moment you could never use the word slave – is not popular now; it wasn't when Jesus walked on the planet either. Disciples argued about who would be the greatest and where they would sit; Pharisees loved the pre-eminence and other lorded it over people.

Were we to study leadership; we would do well to study the model we have which is the person of Jesus Christ. The One with ultimate power led with a towel. There is a world of difference between the person who is a servant first and leads, than a leader who is leader first and serves.

When we serve others; we empower them to do what they've been asked to do; we do what we can to facilitate *their* success; not talking about doing things for people but facilitating people. Not talking up front or behind-the-scenes; God doesn't view it that way. When we serve, every task receives the best dedication – nothing too small; nothing too big but whatever we do, we make it our aim to please God. Colossians 3:23. Paul acknowledge: "**If I was trying to please men I would not be a servant of Christ**" Galatians 1:10. Jesus carried out all level of tasks – many of things He did would be considered by many as menial – washed feet, our resurrected Jesus, cooked breakfast, served lepers, helped children. If in our heart, we *consider* any task 'menial' we may avoid it.

**'If serving is beneath you, leadership is beyond you'** Anonymous

Jesus was good. He is good. He walked about doing good and He still does. Big things, little things – with an excellent spirit (attitude) toward each task. Big heart. Matthew 20:28: "<sup>28</sup> **just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.**"

You know you have served when you leave someone in a better position; you have considered others' need before your own and you have attended to the purposes of Jesus.

**You have been created by God to love and shaped by God to serve.** Sometimes we hold back: Abraham / old; Jacob / insecure; Leah / unattractive to some; Moses / speech impediment; Gideon / considered himself the least (probably attracted God); Samson / co-dependent; Rahab / prostitute; David / adulterer at one point; Elijah / suicidal at times; Jeremiah / depressed; Jonah / reluctant; Naomi / widow; John the Baptist / would definitely be considered eccentric; Peter / impulsive; Martha / could be distracted; Samaritan woman, doubting Thomas, timid Timothy, Paul with a thorn in his side .... Each one could have persisted in their excuses but every one of those mentioned accomplished the purposes of God that He wanted us to see.

It's not dependent on your ability, but your availability; not dependent on your strengths unless they are born out of your gifts; not dependent on your preferences. It is dependent on God who calls and gifts. It is dependent on God who equips and strengthens us for the task. It is dependent on the need and what He asks us to do. It is entirely dependent upon the Kingdom purposes of God.

Service ... is a beautiful word. Serving is ministry. Clip: 'When Love Sees You'  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7BASR3dgrio>