**FAMILY LIFE CHURCH OF THE VALLEY**

**LIFE GROUP- RIVERSIDE COUNTY**

**TITLE:** S. H. A. P.E- FINDING AND FULFILLING YOUR UNIQUE PURPOSE FOR LIFE

**SESSION FOUR:** DISCOVERING MY NATURAL ABILITIES — CLARIFYING YOUR GOD-GIVEN STRENGTHS

**KEY VERSE:** “His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”

 **Matthew 25:23 (NIV)**

**DISCOVERING MY NATURAL ABILITIES:**

If we don’t clearly identify our natural abilities, we can have a major problem down the road.

Natural abilities: a collection of strengths God wants us to use to fulfill our unique kingdom purpose in life.

All we need is to be available and aware.

God delights in willing\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

 **Colossians 3:17 (NIV)**

**WHERE DO YOU NATURALLY EXCEL?**

God is exceedingly qualified to put into action anything he has created.

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Remember: Our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_are there to show off his greatness and magnitude.

The LORD has given them special skills as jewelers, designers, weavers. . .They excel in all the crafts needed for the work.

 **Exodus 35:35 (NLT)**

God has also given you special \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to excel in certain areas for him.

Re-evaluate the abilities God has given you in light of his eternal purposes and the life situation in which he has placed you. It could open the door to a ministry more fulfilling than you ever imagined possible.

One day each of us will have to give an account to God for what we did with the talents he gave us, so make the most of them now!

So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

 **Romans 14:12 (NIV)**

**PARABLE OF THE TALENTS**:

Jesus told the story about a man who gave money to three of his servants before leaving on a journey. The first two put his money to work and gained a profit. But a third, fearing his master, buried the money. When the master returned, he rewarded the two who had increased his estate, praising them for being good and faithful. But the third wasn't as fortunate. His master shouted:

“Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.

 **Matthew 25:28-29 (NIV)**

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Life is too short to settle for doing less than our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_for God.

If we hold back the natural abilities God gave us at birth, or if we use those abilities for purposes that don't include God, they will not be used to their full capacity.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:**

1.What characterizes an activity you love to do? Offer one or two top qualifications.

2. Talk about ways each of us can make deposits of love throughout a typical day, no matter what are specializing in at the moment.

3. Think about the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30. Why does it matter that we make the most of our abilities now? What could be the harm in putting them off or neglecting them?

4. Share with the group something you know you do well, but that you no longer do at all. Why did you stop doing it? Is there a way you could include it again in your lifestyle? Ask the group to pray for you to find that answer.

5. How could your natural abilities benefit your group? Share one way you think God could use something you know you do well.