**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 SIX:** UNDERSTANDING MY EXPERIENCES -GOD USES OUR EXPERIENCES FOR HIS GLORY  
  
  
**KEY VERSE:** Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.   
  
  
 **2 Corinthians 1: 3-4 (NIV)**

**UNDERSTANDING MY EXPERIENCES:**  
  
There is purpose in your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
  
And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.   
  
 **Romans 8:28 (NLT)**  
  
God desires to take all of our experiences-the good and the bad-and use them for his glory.

**JOSEPH Genesis 37-50**

* Betrayed by his brothers • Rose to become the second most powerful man in Egypt
* Sold into slavery • Save the lives of millions
* Thrown into prison • Never forgot that God was in control   
    
    
  You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

2

**Genesis 50:20 (NIV)**  
  
  
As God lovingly crafts the masterpiece of our lives, he uses every \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to complete the finished product.   
  
  
**Consider the events of your life that have helped S.H.A.P.E. the person you are today:**   
  
•. Childhood joys and sorrows   
\* The pain and thrill of adolescence   
• The struggle and accomplishment of adulthood

**THE GALLERY OF YOUR LIFE:**  
The possibilities are almost limitless for your life achievements and experiences to become action steps for God.   
  
  
God's delight and pride in you is not based on what is celebrated by the world.  
  
  
**Think of your experiences in these five general areas:**  
**POSITIVE PORTRAITS:**  
  
1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ — An award   
  
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_— A pattern of achievement   
  
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_—A godly marriage or a   
friendship that comforts or challenges you   
  
  
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_— Academic degrees or training certificates, or ongoing development in areas of special interest   
  
  
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_— A history of success in sharing your faith or leading Christians to deeper insight; your own acceptance of Christ and spiritual growth

3

* **PAINFUL PORTRAIT:**  
    
  God wants to use your painful experiences to minister to others as well . . . times when your pain threshold was tested and your endurance was stretched to the breaking point.
* Divorce
* Abuse
* Death
* Alcoholism
* Cancer
* Depression
* Job loss
* Bankruptcy
* Eating disorders
* Miscarriages
* Suicide
* Abortion
* Affairs   
    
    
  Think about the good that can come from your suffering. How can your crisis become a catalyst for Christ?

**TAKE A TEST-DRIVE:**

Challenge everyone in your group to commit to taking a ninety-day \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. It’s during this trip you will start to define your S.H.A.P.E and begin to refine your Kingdom Purpose.   
  
  
Experiment with various ministry opportunities. Start slow and start small, but make sure you START! Don't wait for perfect conditions God blesses a moving target.   
  
  
**Four great places to use your S.H.A.P.E. and start serving during your test- drive:**  
1. Use your S.H.A.P.E. to make deposits of love in your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
  
  
2. Use your S.H.A.P.E. to serve others at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

4

3. Use your S.H.A.P.E. to volunteer at your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  
  
  
4. Express your S.H.A.P.E. within your \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ group.  
  
  
  
You now have the opportunity to continue what God has started as you run the next leg of your race with him. Live faithful to God and finish fulfilled by him.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**  
  
1. Share with your group where you will start your ninety- day test-drive-at home, work, church, or in your small group. Explain.

2. Share with your group a few positive portraits from your past and how they could provide a platform to serve others.

3. Discuss how your salvation experience could be a springboard for ministry. How might God want to use your testimony to reach others?   
  
  
  
4. Share a few of your painful portraits along with your thoughts on how they could become a catalyst for Christ. Think about who, in particular, these events might help you reach, either in ministry or evangelism.  
  
  
  
5. Share a few ideas about how your experiences can benefit others in your group.