

## **Development Phase Selected: Beginning**

You selected the statement, "I know Christ invites me to join him serving others, and I'm discovering how God has gifted me to do this."

Congratulations! You have begun a journey of self-discovery into how God has 'wired' you to be involved effectively in mission to the world. This is a significant first step. You have moved from acknowledging a desire to make a difference to knowing that Jesus has invited you to be engaged in ministry.

This is the working of the Holy Spirit in your life. It is the Spirit that bestows gifts and abilities and develops our awareness of those gifts.

We suggest that you start slowly. Don't jump in and volunteer to lead a mission team to Africa! Every congregation has a multitude of ways for people to serve within the life of the congregation. Getting involved in a small way gives you the opportunity to discover what brings a sense of satisfaction to you and has the added benefit of connecting you with other believers and opening you up to new friendships.

## **What's Next?**

Many people begin this journey by observing other disciples using their gifts as they are engaged in mission. Certainly you are encouraged to continue this process.

If you have not yet participated in a spiritual gifts survey or other process for helping you bring clarity to your gifts and calling, this may be a good next step for you. For example, many congregations offer classes like SHAPE or PLACE which look beyond a spiritual gifts survey with a more holistic view of how God has 'wired' you for service. For example, the SHAPE materials include:

- S: Spiritual gifts
- H: Heart (your passions)
- A: Abilities (talents)
- P: Personality type
- E: Life experiences

However, gifts inventories and discovery processes are just tools pointing us in the right direction. The real discovery process happens as we begin to 'try on' a variety of ministries. We suggest that you not get locked onto a specific ministry at this point but try your hand at several different ways of serving. For many people this process helps them identify just the right calling.

You might also have conversations with several friends and ask them what they see in you in terms of ways you might be called to serve.

## **Suggested Resources**

If you like to read or study for personal development, we suggest the following resources:

- SHAPE, by Eric Rees
- PLACE, by Jay McSwain
- Foundations, by Phil Maynard