

## Overview

Who am I, what are my gifts, what am I passionate about and when do I feel most alive? These, and other such questions, are all important when exploring the issue of our own calling. God has made us uniquely and has planted in us particular gifts and purposes that he wants us to use as partners with him in his work. This topic helps us to explore and name our purpose and what we feel we are able to offer to others. Being clearer about that helps us to work with other more creatively.

***This is your worksheet; for notes, ideas and questions***

## Bible Perspective

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

*Romans 12:3-8*

Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?

*Luke 9:23-25*

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared for us in advance.

*Ephesians 2:10*

## Question

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**How do these readings suggest we should approach the task of looking inward?**

## Perspective

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### **Gifts and Grace**

Our gifts are not necessarily our talents, they are not the 'things that we are good at'. They are the attributes, the characteristics, the uniqueness of each one of us.

Grace is the means by which each one of us becomes wholly and fully alive, where these gifts are brought to fullness, where some gifts will be exceptional and take centre stage of who we are, and where other gifts will form part of the background of who we are.

God's grace enables each one of us to become the person he made us to be, and we are all on a journey towards becoming this person.

## Activity

Explore your responses and ideas to one or more of the accompanying exercises

Exercise 1 Party Time

Exercise 2 Who am I?

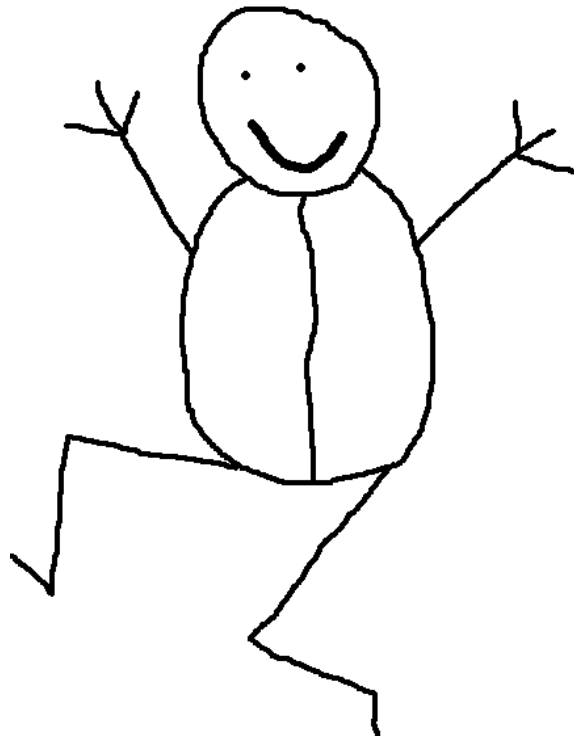
Exercise 3 Know your Gifts

## Activity

Summarising your Purpose

Words that describe the  
core of who I am

Words that describe what I  
want to give or offer



## Activity

### Naming our Purpose

Now, using words or phrases from each side, try to come up with a statement of your purpose (eg. I am the kind of person who is..... and wants to offer.....). Pair up with someone else in the group and share your statement with them out loud. Does the statement make sense to you and to them?

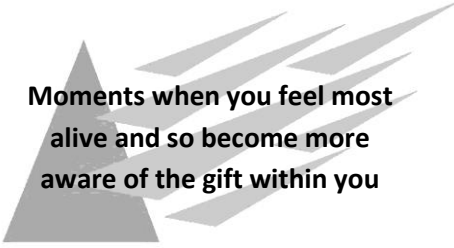
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### Some features of your purpose

- When all other parts of you are stripped away, this is left and is distinctively you
- You can't stop yourself being this
- It is life giving to you and others
- It is not specific to any one situation and applies to all the contexts you find yourself in
- It's not something that you have learned – you may have polished and refined it but it is part of who you are
- Those who are close to you will affirm it in you and encourage you to exercise it
- It's going with the grain of who we are and is much more effortless than other things we do
- It's not always what we want or wish for ourselves but it is who we are

**During the week, you might like to reflect on :**



**Moments when you feel most  
alive and so become more  
aware of the gift within you**

“That is why I now remind you to stir into flame the gift of God which is within you through the laying on of my hands”

*2 Timothy 1:6 (NRSV)*

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**Ponder**

**What did you learn from this session?**

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**Reflection**

Listen to 'O God you search me and you know me' together, thinking about the person God made you to be, the living flame that God put inside *you*.

The song can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKsB9NcYSBg>

O God, you search me and you know me.  
All my ways lie open to your gaze.  
When I walk or lie down, you go before me:  
Ever the maker and keeper of my days.

You know my resting and my rising.  
You discern my purpose from afar,  
You are with me beyond my understanding:  
In ev'ry moment of life and death, you are.

For you created me and shaped me,  
gave me life within my mother's womb.  
For the wonder of who I am, I praise you:  
God of my present, my past and future too.

Although I feel your hand upon me,  
still I search for shelter from your light.  
There is nowhere on earth I can escape you:  
Even the darkness is radiant in your sight.

O God, you search me and you know me.  
All my ways lie open to your gaze.  
When I walk or lie down, you go before me:  
Ever the maker and keeper of my days.

©Bernadette Farrell, based on Psalm 139