

'THE REST OF THE STORY'
('Rightly dividing the Word' about Christ's Life)
Applying the Life of Christ to Our Lives Today

A Prophetic Christian Profile

(John the Baptist: Man on a Mission)

Born with Purpose

Key passage: Luke 3:2-20

"...when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD will lift up a standard against him. The Redeemer will come to Zion..." (Isaiah 59:19)

Special reason to be born:

Luke 1:14-17

*Awaken the wayward
(Malachi 3:1, 4:5)*

Special way to be raised:

Luke 1:80

*Abide in the wilderness
(Matthew 3:1-3, Mark 1:4-5)*

Special kind of ministry:

Luke 3:7-9

*Avert the wrath of God
(John 1:6-7, 15, 26-28, 35-37)*

Special type of testimony:

An unorthodox lifestyle!

Matthew 3:4-12, John 3:22-30

Normal human weakness:

An occasional faith-lapse

Matthew 11:1-6, Luke 7:17-22

Special divine commendation:

A divine recommendation

Matthew 11:7-15, Luke 7:24-30

Abnormal Way to Die:

A cause 'to die for'

Matthew 14:3-12, Mark 6:17-29, Luke 9:7-9

The Abundant (sometimes brief) Life

John the Baptist only lived to age 31 or 32. He only got to carry out his ministry from God for one or two years. Then he was unjustly imprisoned and was brutally decapitated by a drunken politician to appease his illegitimate wife and her seductive, sleazy daughter. What a terrible way to end a seemingly all too brief life of a faithful servant of God! Why would God let John the Baptist's brief ministry and godly life be snuffed out like that? (*Philippians 1:29, Revelation 2:10*)

- **Do you think John's cause was worth the price he paid for it? (Luke 9:23-24)**
- **Would you be willing to lay down your life for the cause of your Friend, Christ, if necessary? (John 15:13)**
- **Looking back on his whole life and purpose for being born, how did John's preparation help him endure suffering for 'the Cause' and the martyrdom that finally came?**
- **When you meet John one day in heaven and ask him 'Was it worth it?' what do you think he will say?**
- **In what ways does his life inspire you to be somewhat like him with your life in these last days before Christ comes?**

"I seek not a long life, but a full one like you, Lord Jesus."

"He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep, to gain that which he cannot lose"

-Jim Elliot, Missionary

(Jim Elliot was martyred at age 28 while trying to reach the Auca Indians in Ecuador for Christ.)

What Kind of S.H.A.P.E. Are You?

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.” (God to Jeremiah/ Jeremiah 1:5)

“Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed and in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.” (David / Psalm 139:16)

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain...” (Jesus to His disciples / John 15:16)

“In Him (Christ) also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him Who works all things according to the counsel of His will...” (Ephesians 1:11)

- S** = **Spiritual gift(s)** *1 Corinthians 12:1-6 & Romans 12:3-8/* What are your gifts? How do you know? Are you using and developing your God-given abilities for future ministry?
- H** = **Heart passions** *2 Corinthians 5:13-15/* What kinds of activities inspire and excite you that can be venues of serving God with your spiritual gifts and abilities?
- A** = **Aptitude(s)** *Acts 18:24-26/* What are some aptitudes you have that you naturally have (athletics, music, business, etc.) that will give you future ministry opportunity?
- P** = **Personality** Are you more of an extrovert (*gregarious*) or an introvert (*shy, private*)? This helps determine if your ministry roles will tend to be ‘out front’ or ‘back up’.
- E** = **Experiences** What are your most memorable personal experiences (*good and bad, but especially hard experiences*)? This helps determine the kind of people you will tend to understand best and God will draw to Himself through you (*2 Corinthians 1:3-7*).

God is ‘*shaping*’ you for some special mission in this life that will bring both glory to Him and also great fulfillment and fruitfulness to you. The above things taken together are things God has done or is allowing in your life to make you who He wants you to be, to do what He wants to do with your life on earth.

1. Prayerfully determine your spiritual profile from the 5 SHAPE factors above.
2. Maximize activities, opportunities and fellowship with those of similar SHAPE
3. Minimize activities, opportunities and fellowship with those not of similar SHAPE
4. Volunteer for ministry opportunities that concur with your SHAPE profile above
5. Ask God to confirm your abilities, effectiveness and life purpose for assurance
6. Don’t try to be somebody you aren’t to please anybody else other than God alone
7. Regard distractions from who God is making you to be of the enemy and avoided

Look forward to hearing Christ say:

“Well done, good and faithful servant, you were faithful over a few things... enter into the joy of the Lord” (Matthew 25:21, 23)