

# Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024

## Shaped for a Purpose 6: Using our SHAPE

### Welcome

Which would you prefer: Celebrations, Quality Street, Heroes or Roses?  
Which sweet would be your favourite in your favourite tin?

*Just like sweets are different – we are all different – we all have a unique SHAPE so that we can fulfil the unique purpose God has for us.*

### Word

Everyone just look at Exodus 20:1-17 (*don't read it out loud it's a bit long!*)

1. What do the first 4 commandments have in common/ what do the last 6 commandments have in common?

Read Matthew 22: 37-40

2. How is this passage similar to the 10 commandments?

As part of our Mission Statement, our intention is: “Love God, Love Others”. We can see both these things reflected in the Bible readings above. Throughout the Bible there is an emphasis on both these two things – they always go hand in hand.

When we use our SHAPE it has a twofold purpose – glorifying God and benefiting others.

3. How does using our SHAPE glorify God? Read 1 Peter 4:11
4. How does using our SHAPE benefit others? Read Ephesians 4:11-12

*Some states in America use convicts to pick up rubbish alongside the road. Picture you're driving along and you come across some of these prisoners picking up rubbish. You notice that the prisoners have the bags and little*

*pokers to pick up the rubbish. They are moving really slowly. Step, poke, rest, step, poke, rest. They're moving as slowly as they can get away with. It's hard to imagine a scene of greater unfulfillment or lack of excitement. Now picture a group of students. They have adopted a mile of road to look after. They want their stretch to look better than all the others, they have pride in what they're doing and they're doing it because they want to make a difference. This group moves along with energy, enthusiasm and purpose. Picture the contrast. Two groups, prisoners and students doing the same task. The prisoners are serving time doing a task they don't care about and are doing it with apathetic indifference. They have no place to go. They don't care if they get it done, how much they get done. After all, they are serving 'time'. The students on the other hand have a goal, they're motivated, and they work with a contagious enthusiasm. If you needed to join a team of people and do a task, would you rather join the prisoners or the students?*

These 2 groups give us a picture of Servility and Servanthood – have a look at this table:

	Servility	Servanthood
Serves out of:	Obligation 'I have to'	Obedience 'I want to'
Is motivated to serve by:	What others can see	What God sees
Serves with an attitude of:	It's not my job' Does the minimum	'Whatever it takes' willing to go the extra mile
Has a ministry mind-set that says:	'Me first' 'What's in it for me?'	'Father first' 'God what do you want me to do?'
Serves with a spirit of:	Pride 'I did that, aren't I good...'	Humility 'God has used me to make a difference'
The results are:	Self-seeking	God-glorifying

5. What parts of the servanthood column do you find difficult?
6. Which parts of the servility column do you think are easy to slip into?

Read Matthew 5:16

7. What parts of the servanthood/ servility table does this speak about?
8. How do we 'do a task' in such a way that people look at God and realise He is at work, rather than bringing the glory on ourselves?

Read John 13:35

9. Does anyone have practical examples of how we show love to one another in our corps?

Read 1 Corinthians 13: 1-3

10. Paul chooses 4 manifestations of the gifts to use as an example, why do you think he chooses these 4 in particular?

Read 1 Corinthians 13: 4-7

11. Which of these qualities do you find the hardest to maintain?
12. What is motivating you to serve at this time?
13. Describe a time in your life when you served out of love and a time when you did not. How did each make you feel?
14. How can you tell when you are serving out of servanthood or servility? What evidence do you look for?
15. 'If you loved him more, you would serve him better' Do you agree, discuss.
16. Describe the difference between a church that is loving but not using its spiritual gifts and a church that is using its spiritual gifts but not with love.

## Worship & Witness

Look at the Servanthood/Servility Table

In a time of quiet silently choose:

One aspect of servanthood that you would like to concentrate on as you serve.

One practical step you can take towards it.

Ask God to help you.

Prayer:

Lord

I've got a lot to learn about love.

I'm more self-centred than I'd like anyone to know,

And I'm often asking the silent question

'What's in it for me?'

Lord, forgive my selfishness,

And begin a new work of love in my heart,

Teach me the difference between servility and true Christian service.

Teach me to use my SHAPE for your glory

Teach me to love you more

So that I can serve you better

In Jesus name

Amen

*(A hint for question 10: maybe because these are quite spectacular – even the spectacular achieves nothing without love)*