

Week : 5

**S.H.A.P.E.D. - Deficiencies (Needs):**

How should we think about the needs of the church?

*Our gifts are not primarily about us. They are about how we can build up others, with attention to how God has gifted us and created us and carried us to the point we are today.*

What are some current ministry opportunities that you know need filling here at Neighborhood Church?

**The Fallacy of Fairytale Ministry:**

Is building up the body of Christ easy or hard in your experience? Explain.

Will serving according to my SHAPE make ministry (building one another up) easy?

Four Biblical Truths to Consider:

1. The corrupting impact of sin in our world makes work difficult.

Genesis 3:16–19

[16] To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you."

[17] And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; [18] thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. [19] By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (ESV)

2. We have a spiritual enemy.

Ephesians 6:12–13

[12] For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. [13] Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. (ESV)

1 Peter 5:8–11

[8] Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. [9] Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. [10] And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. [11] To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. (ESV)

3. We have many examples in Scripture of toil and suffering being a normal experience when building Christ's Church.

Jesus - Matthew 26:36–39

[36] Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." [37] And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. [38] Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me." [39] And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

Paul - 2 Corinthians 11:23–28

[23] Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. [24] Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. [25] Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; [26] on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; [27] in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. [28] And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.

Paul to Timothy - 2 Timothy 4:5–8

[5] As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

[6] For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. [7] I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. [8] Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing. (ESV)

#### 4. Yet, we have good reason for great hope!

##### 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

[9] But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. [10] For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (ESV)

##### John 14:12-17

[12] "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. [13] Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. [14] If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

[15] "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. [16] And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, [17] even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. (ESV)

##### Ephesians 2:8-10, 19-22

[8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast. [10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

...[19] So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, [20] built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, [21] in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. [22] In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (ESV)

##### Ephesians 3:20-21

[20] Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, [21] to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (ESV)

### **How do I get started?**

1. Have a clear biblical understanding of the why. Talk to God.
2. Reflect on your God-given SHAPE, as we have been. Talk to God.
3. Seek counsel from other believers who know you. Talk to God.
4. Test the waters. Talk to God.
5. Fill holes that you can fill. Talk to God.
6. Learn as you go. Talk to God.
7. Continually seek God's enabling power to both see opportunities and respond in ways that are helpful to his people.

*We cannot be a strong church if we ignore God's design for our place within the church family. We cannot be a strong church and be filled with spectators. For the health of the church, our own obedience to God and the satisfaction that comes from being a part of what God is doing in this world, let's get building.*

Presently, do you feel adequately confident that God is using you to build up his church in ways that align with your SHAPE? If not, what would be next steps for you?

What's the danger in filling every ministry hole that we learn about? Can our commitment level become unhealthy? How do we know/avoid that?

### **Praying Together for a Stronger Church Family**