



NEXTSTEPS

Finding Your Place Here at First Denham

Session 2 Participant's Guide
(Updated 2024)

Welcome to Next Steps: Finding Your Place | Session Two

This class is a follow-up to **StepONE: Connect to Membership**.

Next Steps: Finding Your Place is led by Paul Keating, our Discipleship Pastor, along with a team of leaders who are passionate about helping individuals take the next steps in their faith journey. Feel free to contact Paul at (225) 664-4102 x205 if you have any questions about how to take the next steps in your faith journey. **Next Steps is a two-week course offered every other month.**

The Basics

“God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.” – 1 Peter 4:10 (NLT)

Key Truths

- God wants you to _____ in a personal relationship with Him.
- God has given you unique _____ to serve the church.
- God has a _____ and _____ for you here at First Denham.

The Goal

- That I will use my _____ and _____ to faithfully serve the body of Christ.

In this class, we'll explore...

1. Our Discipleship Pathway: The Real-Life Journey (**Session 1**)
2. How to Grow to Maturity in Your Walk with God (**Session 1**)
3. How to Determine & Utilize Your Spiritual Gifts that God has Given You (**Session 2**)
4. How to Take Actionable Steps to Serve and Lead Here at First Denham (**Session 2**)

Part 3: How to Determine & Utilize Your Spiritual Gifts that God has Given You

I. The Bible is clear that God has given every believer _____ to serve Him and His church.

*“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. **A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.**” -1 Corinthians 12:4-7 (NLT)*

*“God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. **Use them well to serve one another.** Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.” -1 Peter 4:10-11 (NLT)*

What is a Spiritual Gift?

Gene Wilkes, author of *Jesus on Leadership*, states, “A spiritual gift is an expression of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers which empowers them to serve the body of Christ, the church.”

Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; Ephesians 4:11; and 1 Peter 4:9-11 contain representative lists of gifts and roles God has given to the church. A definition of these gifts follows.

Leadership - Leadership aids the body by leading and directing members to accomplish the goals and purposes of the church. Leadership motivates people to work together in unity toward common goals (Rom. 12:8).

Administration - Persons with the gift of administration lead the body by steering others to remain on task. Administration enables the body to organize according to God-given purposes and long-term goals (1 Cor. 12:28).

Teaching - Teaching is instructing members in the truths and doctrines of God’s Word for the purposes of building up, unifying, and maturing the body (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7; Eph. 4:11).

Knowledge - The gift of knowledge manifests itself in teaching and training in discipleship. It is the God-given ability to learn, know, and explain the precious truths of God’s Word. A word of knowledge is a Spirit-revealed truth (1 Cor. 12:28).

Wisdom - Wisdom is the gift that discerns the work of the Holy Spirit in the body and applies His teachings and actions to the needs of the body (1 Cor. 12:28).

Prophecy - The gift of prophecy is proclaiming the Word of God boldly. This builds up the body and leads to conviction of sin. Prophecy manifests itself in preaching and teaching (1 Cor. 12:10; Rom. 12:6).

Discernment - Discernment aids the body by recognizing the true intentions of those within or related to the body. Discernment tests the message and actions of others for the protection and well-being of the body (1 Cor. 12:10).

Exhortation - Possessors of this gift encourage members to be involved in and enthusiastic about the work of the Lord. Members with this gift are good counselors and motivate others to service. Exhortation exhibits itself in preaching, teaching, and ministry (Rom. 12:8).

Shepherding - The gift of shepherding is manifested in persons who look out for the spiritual welfare of others. Although pastors, like shepherds, do care for members of the church, this gift is not limited to a pastor or staff member (Eph. 4:11).

Faith - Faith trusts God to work beyond the human capabilities of the people. Believers with this gift encourage others to trust in God in the face of apparently insurmountable odds (1 Cor. 12:9).

Evangelism - God gifts his church with evangelists to lead others to Christ effectively and enthusiastically. This gift builds up the body by adding new members to its fellowship (Eph. 4:11).

Apostleship - The church sends apostles from the body to plant churches or be missionaries. Apostles motivate the body to look beyond its walls in order to carry out the Great Commission (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11).

Service/Helps - Those with the gift of service/helps recognize practical needs in the body and joyfully give assistance to meeting those needs. Christians with this gift do not mind working behind the scenes (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7).

Mercy - Cheerful acts of compassion characterize those with the gift of mercy. Persons with this gift aid the body by empathizing with hurting members. They keep the body healthy and unified by keeping others aware of the needs within the church (Rom. 12:8).

Giving - Members with the gift of giving give freely and joyfully to the work and mission of the body. Cheerfulness and liberality are characteristics of individuals with this gift (Rom. 12:8).

Hospitality - Those with this gift have the ability to make visitors, guests, and strangers feel at ease. They often use their home to entertain guests. Persons with this gift integrate new members into the body (1 Pet. 4:9).

*This content of this section was taken from Lifeway's Spiritual Gifts List and adapted from Gene Wilkes book *Jesus on Leadership*.

God has gifted you with an expression of His Holy Spirit to support His vision and mission of the church. **It's not a superpower**, rather, it is a way the Holy Spirit has empowered you to share the Gospel and serve others.

2. Spiritual gifts are not the same as _____.

Natural Talents/Skills	Spiritual Gifts
genetically	upon salvation/Spirit's working
Non-believers & believers alike possess	Only followers of Jesus possess
Developed and	Already matured and often
Both talents and spiritual gifts come from God (Romans 12:3-8)	

Spiritual gifts are supernatural. When God gives a spiritual gift to someone, the gift is already matured. This is not to say that a believer should not hone their skills (like practice sharing one's faith if they have the gift of evangelism), but often the spiritual gift empowers the individual's natural talent to be effective for the work of Christ. After all, everything we have comes from the Lord is to be used for His glory.

"It is God himself who has made us what we are and given us new lives from Christ Jesus; and long ages ago he planned that we should spend these lives in helping others." -Ephesians 2:10 (LB)

3. Spiritual gifts _____ our ministry but do not _____ us from Kingdom work.

God in His perfect wisdom gifts believers to serve His church and others in different ways; however, whether or not we are "gifted" in a particular area does not exclude us from following Jesus' commands of being a witness for Him, making disciples, and serving the needs of others.

In fact, you may not be gifted with teaching, but God can use you to teach in a way that is just as powerful, if not more, than one who is gifted in teaching. You may not be gifted in evangelism, but God can use you to reach many for Him. You may not be gifted in leadership, but God can use you to lead others in ways you did not think possible.

NOTE. Just because you are not spiritually gifted to do a certain task does not mean that God will not gift you there as needs arise. **Spiritual gifts are gifted at salvation but also cultivated through spiritual growth.** The Apostle Paul encourages us to "seek the greater gifts" and those that will "strengthen the whole church," but this includes any gift that we may need to do the Lord's work.

*"Are we all apostles? Are we all prophets? Are we all teachers? Do we all have the power to do miracles? Do we all have the gift of healing? Do we all have the ability to speak in unknown languages? Do we all have the ability to interpret unknown languages? Of course not! **So you should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts.**" -1 Corinthians 12:29-31 (NLT)*

*"And the same is true for you. Since you are so eager to have the special abilities the Spirit gives, **seek those that will strengthen the whole church.**" -1 Corinthians 14:12 (NLT)*

IN CONCLUSION,

God has given you spiritual gifts to serve His church and others. He has a purpose in the gift(s) He has given you but that does not exclude you from your calling to follow Jesus' commands to be a witness for Him and make disciples. And even in areas where you are not gifted, God often uses you to demonstrate His glory.

"Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me." -2 Corinthians 12:9 (NLT)

Spiritual Gift Assessment

Attached to this booklet is a **Spiritual Gift Assessment**. This will help you to identify areas in your life where God has gifted you to serve Him and His church. This assessment is only a guide. As you serve in the church and allow God to use you, it will become apparent through prayer, God's word, and volunteering to help where God has specifically gifted you.

As you discover your spiritual gifts, the next step is to use them to encourage, edify, and equip the church for the work of Christ. Our next section will help you take **actionable steps** to help serve and lead here at First Baptist Church of Denham Springs.

4. How to Take Actionable Steps to Serve and Lead Here at First Denham

We concluded part 2 with some actionable ways to grow in your walk with God here at First Denham. In this last part, we will discuss how you can take actionable steps to use your gifts and talents to serve and lead here in our church and community.

Creating Your S.E.R.V.E Profile

Gene Wilkes developed an acrostic to help believers understand how God has prepared them for His purposes.

S.E.R.V.E. STANDS FOR:	
S	...those gifts God gives through His Holy Spirit to empower you for service
E	...those events God allows which mold you into a servant leader
R	...behavioral traits God uses to give you a leadership style
V	...those abilities you have gained through training and experience which you can use in service to God
E	...that passion God has put in your heart for a certain ministry to others

Using the S.E.R.V.E acrostic to help you find your place here at First Denham.

1. What **spiritual gifts** has God gifted me with to serve His church?

After taking the spiritual gifts assessment, what were the top 3 areas you feel God has gifted you to serve Him and His church?

A. _____ B. _____ C. _____

2. How has God shaped my life through **my experiences** to be effective in serving and leading here at First Denham?

God allowed me to... _____

God has carried me through... _____

God has empowered me through... _____

God provided for me through... _____

Your story is unique and yet ongoing. God has a purpose and a plan for each of us and is not finished until He calls us home. In the meantime, God wants us to use our story and experiences to help others in their needs. Even when we feel our past prohibits us from being used by God, that's when the grace of God is most beautifully and clearly displayed.

3. What is your **relational style**?

Our culture is full of personality assessments to help us understand ourselves. Popular tools include the **DISC Personality Assessment** and the **Myers-Briggs Personality Test**.

You can also take these tests by visiting:

- discpersonalitytesting.com/
- 16personalities.com

These tools can help you find out things about yourself that you may not know or thought through that are helpful to understanding how you're best able to be used in a ministry area.

Asking questions of yourself such as "Am I introverted or extroverted?" "Am I task oriented or relaxed?" "Am I cautious or impulsive?" "Am I intuitive or observant?" "Am I flexible or rigid?"

There is no right or wrong to your personality traits. It's how God created you. However, some personalities work better in certain areas than others do.

Personality Assessment

Attached to this booklet is a brief **DISC Personality Assessment**. We will use this here in this class but feel free to take the more complete online assessments at a later time.

What is your DISC profile? _____ What is your Myers-Briggs personality type? _____

Based on your personality traits, how has God created you to relate most often to others?

A WORD OF CAUTION ABOUT RELATIONAL STYLES.

God uses anyone He chooses to show His glory. Just because you are not an extrovert does not mean God will not use you to reach people for Jesus. Moses was called by God to lead Israel out of captivity; however, Moses was not a good speaker or an assertive personality type—yet God did amazing things through him.

4. What are your **vocational skills**?

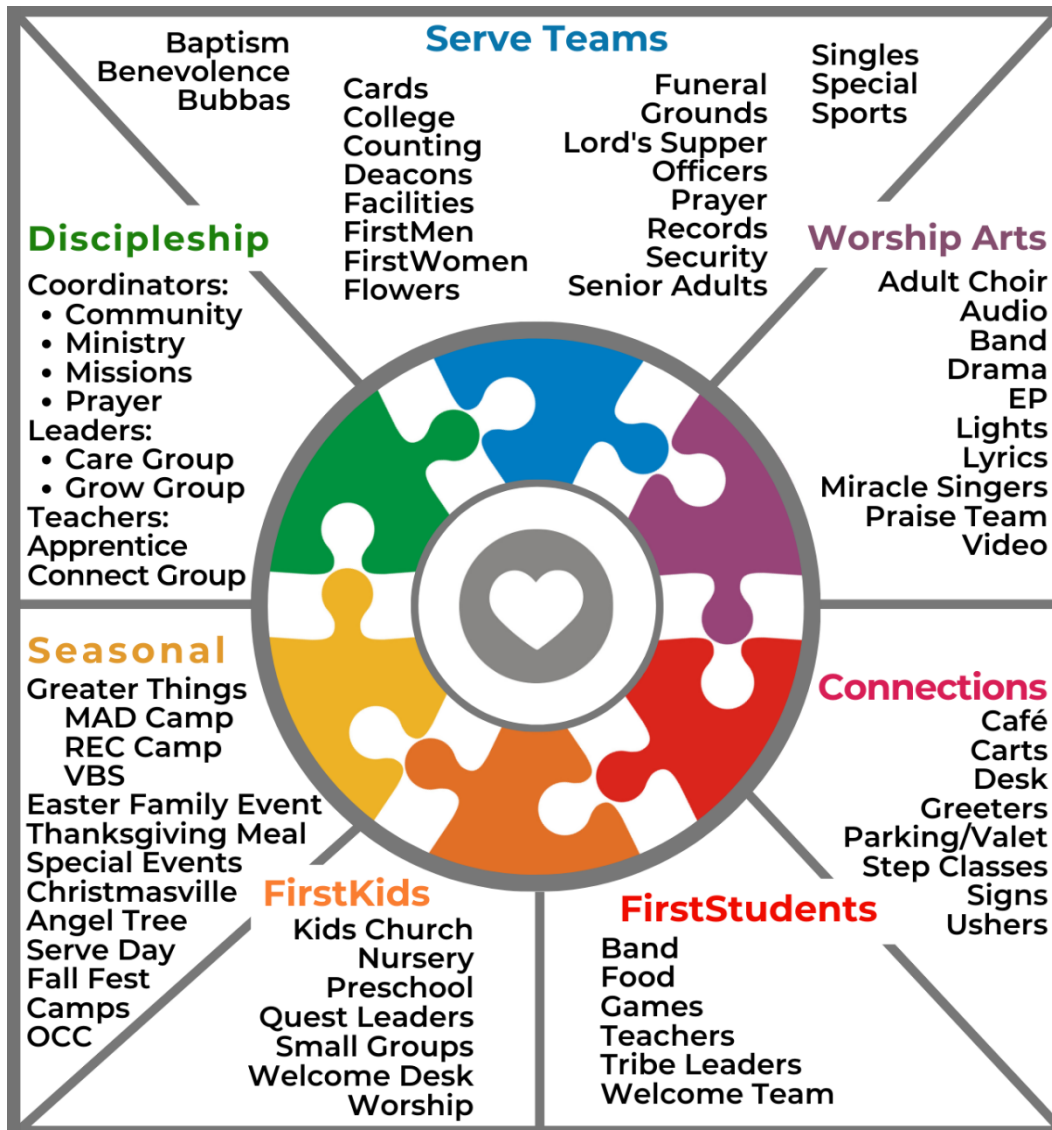
The skills and talents that you developed over your lifetime are a major asset to how God uses you in serving His church and others. These could even be hobbies that you have developed that can be used in service of others for the Kingdom of God.

God has given me the opportunities to develop these vocational skills that can be used in His service...

5. What are you **enthusiastic** about?

What are you passionate about? There's a lot of ways God can use you and many areas in which He has equipped you, but where has God given you a desire to serve? List below.

At First Denham, we have many ministry areas that include working with adults, students, children, connections, discipleship, worship arts, various teams, and seasonal events. Below is a helpful graphic showing the major areas one can serve alongside with in our church.



Where might God directing your heart to serve? Is there a place you are enthusiastic about?

Circle some of the areas above you would be interested in being a part of.

Now that you have created your S.E.R.V.E. Profile...

It's time to take those next steps in using your gifts and talents to serve here at First Denham.

(See included "My S.E.R.V.E. Profile" card.)

Over the next week, prayerfully consider how God has created you and gifted you to serve here. As God gives you direction, prayerfully fill out this card and drop it off to the church office or in one of the block deposit boxes.

Already Found Your Place?

If you are already serving here at First Denham, we rejoice with how God is using you for His Kingdom. Please, still fill out the card as a record of your attendance and for us to add to our **S.E.R.V.E. Profile Database**.

Remember...

Sometimes God sends us to serve for a time in some capacity and then He transitions us to other places to serve. The place you find yourself now may be very different than the place you'll find yourself a year or two from now. Always be open to God using you in new and exciting ways.

"For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him."
– Philippians 2:13 (NLT)

A SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR EACH FAMILY

We have three hours of programming every Sunday, which sets up a wonderful opportunity for the whole family. Every individual and family have the opportunity for spiritual growth in three vital areas: serving others, participating in a Connect Group, and worshipping together.



SERVE



SMALL GROUPS



WORSHIP

