

**EQUIPPING CHRISTIANS
BY IDENTIFYING THEIR CALLING:
AN EVALUATION OF RICK WARREN'S 'SHAPE'
ANALYSIS.**

BY

LORNE HARVEY SCOTT-WILSON

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER ARTIUM

**In the Faculty of Theology, University of Pretoria
The study was done through the Cape Town Baptist Seminary**

**SUPERVISOR: Prof. Julian Müller
CO-SUPERVISOR: Dr. Linzay Rinquist**

NOVEMBER 2008

Summary:

A Christian's calling is largely misunderstood among the Churches today by both the clergy and the laity. It is not just a call to believe the Gospel, nor is it merely a call to pastoral ministry or to the mission field, rather it is a call to do specific good works that God has prepared in advance for you to do (cf. Eph.2:10). Rick Warren contends that this especially focused ministry depends on the way God has 'shaped' you. SHAPE stands for **s**piritual gifts, **h**earth, **a**bilities, **p**ersonality and **e**xperience. Warren's SHAPE analysis is a useful tool to help equip Christians by identifying their callings. Church elders could incorporate elements of SHAPE analysis into their equipping process and thus bring great benefit and clarity to those who battle to discern their call to specific good works. While the plain reading and applying of the Bible (according to the literal, grammatical, historical hermeneutic) is the primary method of guidance and is sufficient for identifying a Christian's calling and equipping him to do it (cf. 2Tim. 3:16-17), this does not prevent the use of other helpful tools such as SHAPE analysis. Unfortunately many Christians do not devote themselves to a study of the Bible and so they lack general knowledge of it and therefore lack direction when it comes to their ministry calling. Christians therefore need all the help they can get, including SHAPE analysis. Care does need to be exercised when using SHAPE analysis for it can be understood as being highly introspective, which has dangers attached to it and even includes personality-analysis, which lacks Biblical precedent. The absence of thorough Bible study and godly character from the calling equation is also a cause for concern and makes SHAPE analysis deficient on its own to equip the believer effectively for ministry. Using SHAPE in addition to the general application of the Bible is however most beneficial.



Ten Key Terms:

- Shape
- Ministry
- Calling
- Good works
- Spiritual Gifts
- Heart
- Abilities
- Personality
- Experience
- Equipping

Outline:

<u>Chapter 1</u>	page 1-9
1.1 Background.....	page 1
1.2 Problem Statement.....	page 1-6
1.3 Hypothesis.....	page 6-7
1.4 Methodology.....	page 7-9
1.5 Conclusion.....	page 9
<u>Chapter 2</u>	page 9-78
2.1 Introduction.....	page 9-11
2.2 An Explanation of SHAPE.....	page 11-12
2.2.1 Spiritual Gifts.....	page 12-13
2.2.2 Heart... ..	page 14-15
2.2.3 Abilities	page 15-17
2.2.4 Personality	page 17-18
2.2.5 Experience	page 18-19
2.3 An Evaluation of SHAPE	page 19-78
2.3.1 Spiritual Gifts.....	page 19-42
2.3.2 Heart	page 42-48
2.3.3 Abilities	page 48-58
2.3.4 Personality	page 59-68
2.3.5 Experience	page 68-75
2.4 Conclusion	page 76-78

<u>Chapter 3</u>	page 78-87
3.1 Introduction.....	page 78-79
3.2 Practical Application of SHAPE Analysis at Saddleback Church....	page 79-85
3.3 Conclusion.....	page 86-87
<u>Chapter 4</u>	page 87-99
4.1 Introduction.....	page 87-88
4.2 An Evaluation of SHAPE Analysis.....	page 88-97
4.3 Conclusion.....	page 97-99
<u>Chapter 5</u>	page 99-102
5.1 Introduction.....	page 99
5.2 Conclusion.....	page 99-102
<u>Reference List</u>	page 103-105
<u>Addendum</u>	page 106-109

1.1 Background

Every Christian has been created and designed uniquely for a specific purpose, that is, each one has been created to do specific good works, which have been prepared in advance for them to do. Ephesians 2:10 reveals this truth: "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do*" (Eph. 2:10; www.onlinebible.org; NIV, *emphasis mine*). All Christians are different, with different Spiritual gifts, passions, abilities, personalities and experiences. It is both logical and Biblical to assume that we have different purposes (i.e. callings) on earth. Many Christians do not understand this specific ministry calling on their lives and therefore are not adequately equipped to do the good works specifically prepared in advance for them to do. The researcher has identified this as a weakness in many Churches that he has been involved in, which causes Christians to become passive and inactive instead of active members of many Churches. Little effort is made to mobilise many Christians to ministry. The researcher has noted few exceptions to this rule. The only exception noted are the constant attempts to mobilise Christians to serve tea and teach Sunday school in the Churches the researcher has attended!

1.2 Problem Statement

Many Christians are not properly equipped to do their good works? This is most especially a problem of identifying one's calling. The researcher has asked many Christians what their calling is and many cannot answer the question. The common reply is "I don't know", usually combined with a shrugging of their shoulders. This indicates to the researcher that such Christians believe that they have no specific purpose on earth in terms of serving God's Kingdom. When the researcher became aware of his calling to specific good works,

then he became energised in that role. The whole dark-ages mindset of 'clergy' (i.e. priest) and 'laity' (i.e. congregation) is still a prevailing view amongst Christians that the researcher has spoken to. Christians with this mindset do not consider themselves to be called to any form of Christian ministry, that role being reserved strictly for ministers and missionaries. This view leads to passivity and contravenes 1 Peter 2:9 which teaches that every Christian is a royal priest in God's service (and is thus called to be a priest serving God). There are only two parties that may be blamed for derailing God's priests: Church elders and individual Christians. The Bible may not be blamed for the ignorance and passivity of Christians with regards to their calling, for it has much to say about the good works God requires of every Christian priest. It is likely that *Church elders* are neglecting their equipping function for the following reasons:

- 1) Equipping is not properly understood or practised
- 2) Equipping is only really focused on future ministers and missionaries.
- 3) Equipping every member for ministry is seen as unimportant.
- 4) Elders see themselves as 'in the ministry' and the congregation as there to support them (i.e. the congregation are not 'in the ministry').
- 5) Discipleship is a misunderstood concept, making 'disciples' is often misunderstood as merely making 'converts' whereas a 'disciple' is an obedient follower of Christ who is taught to obey everything that Christ commanded Christians to do (cf. Matt. 28:18-20).
- 6) Discipleship is also understood in very general terms, if discipleship actually takes place each Christian is disciplined in the same general way, not in terms of their specific ministries, (i.e. according to their 'SHAPE'). Rick Warren uses the acrostic SHAPE as representing **s**piritual gifts, **h**eart, **a**bilities, **p**ersonality and **e**xperience.

7) The leadership of the Church may be too busy with the administrative functions of the local Church.

The above list represents the subjective observation and reflections of this researcher.

The researcher agrees with Stott that the role of Church elders according to Ephesians 4:11-13 is to equip Christians to do the work of ministry in the Church and in the world (Stott, 2004:166). Church leaders, particularly pastor-teachers, have not always effectively carried out this equipping function, and as a result Christians generally are not as mature as they should be, neither does each Christian do their work of ministry as effectively as they should.

Secondly, many *individual Christians* are not fulfilling their particular calling because:

- 1) They see pastors and missionaries as the only people called to ministry (i.e. the clergy are the 'professionals'), and they see themselves as uncalled laity (the 'amateurs'), a traditional Roman-Catholic mindset (Warren, 2005:317).
- 2) They have not taken the time to understand their own calling i.e. how their SHAPE should be used in the Church and in the world.
- 3) Many are even unwilling to identify and do their work of ministry, as it requires too much personal sacrifice.
- 4) It is just not a priority in their lives.

Again these four points represent the researchers own observations. It has taken the researcher a long time to fine-tune and determine his own particular SHAPE/calling, and he is still working on it! This personal struggle has given the researcher sensitivity to the problems mentioned above. The researcher therefore has a passion for profiling Christians (particularly in the light of their SHAPE), that they may understand their calling and may become focused, effective, fulfilled and rewarded in doing it. Each Christian needs to

understand that they too are called, not only to salvation by the Gospel (cf. Rom. 8:30; 2Thes. 2:14), but to a holy life of good works, (i.e. they have a God-given purpose and need equipping to fulfil this call effectively). An Online Bible concordance study of the word 'call', 'called' and 'calling' reveals many interesting and varied aspects to the question of 'What am I called to as a Christian?' The answers to this question are diverse; Christians' are called:

- To believe the Gospel (cf. Rom. 8:30; 2Thes. 2:14),
- To obey the Bible (cf. Rom. 1:5),
- To specific ministries (cf. 1Cor. 1:1),
- To live a holy life (cf. 1Cor. 1:2; 2Tim. 1:9; 1Pet. 1:15),
- To live in peace (cf. 1Cor. 7:15),
- To live specific lives that God has assigned to Christians (cf. 1Cor. 7:17),
- To live free from legalism (cf. Gal. 5:13),
- To one hope (cf. Eph. 4:4),
- To heaven (cf. Phil. 3:14),
- To eternal life (cf. 1Tim. 6:12),
- To an eternal inheritance (cf. Heb. 9:15),
- To suffer for Christ (cf. 1Pet. 2:21),
- To be a blessing to all people on earth (cf. 1Pet. 3:9),
- To an eternal glory (cf. 1Pet. 5:10).

The above list is a good general summary of various aspects of calling, but is not an exhaustive list. In the researcher's mind Ephesians 2:10 still sums up best the diverse callings we have received; we are called 'to do good works' that God has specifically

'prepared' before time for us to do, from the day of our salvation till the day we die. Many Christians don't really understand their own calling, most shrug their shoulders when you ask them-"What is your calling?" Grudem makes a helpful distinction between effectual calling and vocational calling, pointing out that all Christians receive an effectual call, and that this, not the 'vocational calling' is the main focus of 'calling' in the Bible. He contends that: "Calling in the Scriptures generally refers to the effective/effectual call not to the vocational call" (Grudem as quoted by Harvey, 2005:3). Grudem defines an effectual call as: "An act of God the Father, speaking through the human proclamation of the Gospel, in which he summons people to himself in such a way that they respond in saving faith" (Grudem as quoted by Harvey, 2005:3).

This effectual calling is not the focus of Warren's SHAPE analysis. Rather his focus is on the vocational/ministry calling (i.e. life purpose) of every saved Christian, i.e. the life of good works God has called us to do after we have received the Lord Jesus as Saviour and King (cf. Eph. 2:10). It would however be wrong to split an effectual calling completely from a ministry calling because we are saved for the purpose of good works (cf. Eph. 2:8-10). The effectual call leads directly to the ministry call. By 'ministry call' the researcher will not be referring only to the call to pastoral ministry or to missionary work, for that would be a denial of the priesthood of all Christians (cf. 1Pet. 2:9-10). Priests in the OT served God by acting as a mediator between God and the people (cf. Heb. 9:7). They taught His word, guided the people in the things of God, and brought sacrifices to God in order to reconcile men to God (cf. Ezra 10:10; Lev. 4:20; Neh. 7:65; Lev. 4:14). The believer's life also is a ministry of reconciliation (cf. 2Cor. 5:20) and a living sacrifice in terms of every aspect of their lives (cf. Rom. 12:1). Every Christian as a priest is to offer to God a life of obedience and good

service (i.e. good works), fulfilling the multi-faceted calling upon their lives. Many Christians do not fulfil this role effectively partly because they do not see themselves as called to be a priest of God. This problem leads to passivity among Christians, and is one of the major shortcomings of the Church in the area of calling. Trueblood speaks about the passivity of the Church: "Perhaps the greatest single weakness of the contemporary Christian Church is that millions of supposed members are not really involved at all and, what is worse, do not think it strange that they are not" (Harvey, 2005:10). This problem is exaggerated by the fact that people only see pastoral ministry or missionary work as the only legitimate forms of Christian service. Tozer corrects this misunderstanding: "It is not what a man does that determines whether his work is sacred or secular, it is why he does it" (as quoted by Harvey, 2005:9). In this research project any further reference to calling will henceforth refer to the Christians' ministry calling, not to the effectual calling of God. The scope of calling will henceforth refer to the whole life of the Christian (i.e. one's work, home life, Church life and leisure activities), and not just to one's Church ministry.

1.3 Hypothesis

The solution to the equipping problem mentioned above, the researcher contends, lies in the wider body of Christ being properly disciplined, especially by being equipped to identify their calling i.e. to recognise and do the good works that God has prepared in advance for them to do: "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Eph. 2:10; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). This calling will only be carried out effectively when each member understands his or her calling. Warren in his books 'The Purpose Driven Life' and 'The Purpose Driven Church' has come up with a possible solution to this problem, which the researcher believes, is most helpful.

He has arranged his Church, Saddleback Valley Community Church (henceforth referred to as Saddleback) in such a way that each new member is disciplined according to his or her SHAPE. The five categories: spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality and experience, he says, will help guide Christians to their ministry calling (Warren, 2002:236 and 2005:299). Warren states: "If we can ever awaken and unleash the massive talent, resources, creativity and energy lying dormant in the typical local Church, Christianity will explode with growth at an unprecedented rate. The greatest need in evangelical Churches is the release of members for ministry" (Warren, 2005:295).

1.4 Methodology

This research project will evaluate Warren's SHAPE analysis to see whether it is Biblically accurate according to the literal, grammatical, historical method of hermeneutics. Fether defines the literal, grammatical, historical method of interpretation in the following way:

"Literal interpretation of the Bible simply means to explain the original sense of the Bible according to the normal and customary usages of its language. How is this done? It can only be accomplished through an interpretation of the written text which includes consideration of the grammatical (according to the rules of grammar), historical (consistent with the historical setting of the passage), contextual (in accord with its context) method of interpretation. This is what literalists mean by consistently literal interpretation". She continues: "By Grammatical, we refer to the process of seeking to determine [the Bible's] meaning by ascertaining four things: (a) the meanings of words (lexicology), (b) the form of words (morphology), (c) the function of words (parts of speech), and (d) the relationship of words (syntax). By Historical, we recognise that the proper concept of the historical in Bible interpretation is to view the Scriptures as written

during given ages and cultures. Applications may then be drawn which are relevant to our times. By Contextual, we mean that no interpretation of any passage may violate the clear context of that passage. That is, all passages have one and only one proper interpretation (unless clearly stated otherwise by other parts of Scripture), but possibly several applications. Therefore, when a passage is dealing with Israel, it is dealing with Israel, and not the Church; and vice-versa” (Fether, 2003:www.fether.net/literalhistoricalgrammatical-hermeneutic).

To the degree that SHAPE is Biblically accurate according to the above hermeneutic, the researcher believes it will be an effective tool to help Church leaders (and individual Christians) to mobilise the Church (and themselves) into action. Warren’s teachings on spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality and experience will be explained by summarising their main points using two of his popular works ‘The Purpose Driven Life’, and ‘The Purpose Driven Church’. Once a summary has been made of each SHAPE category then the summarised points will be verified according to relevant Bible passages interpreted according to the researchers hermeneutical framework.

Warren has been accused by critics such as Veith in his ‘Total Onslaught’ DVD series of being a pragmatist (i.e. if it works then God must be blessing it and it must be right)! Barna accuses Warren of pandering to *the needs* of the audience rather than following the Bible (Barna, 1988:145). Warren has been quoted as saying: “The audience, not the message is sovereign” (as quoted by Barna, 1988:145). Warren appears also to use the proof-text method of hermeneutics, often using less reliable paraphrase translations like the Living Bible (Warren, 2005:77) without reference to the original grammar when backing up his

points from the Bible. The researcher will have to investigate whether he violates the Bible's context in this way, as each category of SHAPE is investigated. By proof-texting the researcher means that Warren uses Bible verses out of context, distorts the original grammar and thus the original meanings of Bible texts.

1.5 Conclusion

Warren has indeed identified a problem in the Churches today. Discipleship is not being effectively carried out both corporately by Church elders and by individuals themselves. SHAPE may well prove to be a well-supported Biblical model that Churches should follow to overcome this problem. The next step in this research project will be to clarify what Warren means by SHAPE and then to evaluate his SHAPE paradigm using relevant Bible verses to see whether it is well supported by the Bible as interpreted by the literal, grammatical, historical method.

Chapter 2.

2.1 Introduction

Warren's has his own introductory explanation of SHAPE:

"The Bible says, 'We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works'". He continues, "You are not an assembly-line product, mass produced without a thought. You are a custom-designed, one-of-a-kind, original masterpiece. God deliberately shaped and formed you to serve him in a way that makes your ministry unique. He carefully mixed the DNA cocktail that created you...Not only did God shape you before your birth; he planned every day of your life to support his shaping process. David continues, 'Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out

before a single day had passed.' This means that nothing that happens in your life is insignificant. God uses all of it to mould you for your ministry to others and shape you for your service to Him. God never wastes anything. He would not give you abilities, interests, talents, gifts, personality, and life experiences unless he intended to use them for his glory. By identifying and understanding these factors you can discover God's will for your life" (Warren, 2002:235-236).

Significantly, Warren identifies an important aspect of the individuality of Christians. Christians may not be put into boxes (e.g. teacher, mercy-giver, etc) for there are many different kinds of teachers. One may have a passion for teaching small children and another teacher may be very good at teaching adults and may be useless with children. The discipleship process must therefore be tailor made individually for each Christian. Warren explains the meaning of SHAPE: "To help you remember five of these factors, I have created a simple acrostic: SHAPE". He continues, "Whenever God gives us an assignment, he always equips us with what we need to accomplish it. This custom combination of capabilities is called your SHAPE:

Spiritual gifts

Hear

Abilities

Personality

Experience" (Warren, 2002:236).

Warren explains the importance of SHAPE in this way:

"You will be most effective when you use your spiritual gifts and abilities in the area of your hearts desire, and in a way that best expresses your personality and experiences. The

better the fit, the more successful you will be" (Warren, 2002:248). There is a danger of not understanding your own SHAPE which Warren explains "If you don't understand your shape, you end up doing things that God never intended or designed you to do. When your gifts don't match the role you play in life, you feel like a square peg in a round hole. This is frustrating, both to you and to others. Not only does it produce limited results, but it is an enormous waste of your talents, time and energy" (Warren, 2005:299). Here too he raises an important point; many Christians believe that everyone can serve God in the same general ways (e.g. each Church member can fill in as a server by serving tea after the service and every mom with children can fill in and teach in the Sunday School). This leads to frustration and ineffectivity. Many factors must be considered when placing a Christian into the correct ministry.

2.2 An Explanation of SHAPE

It seems likely that Warren got the word 'shaped' from two Bible verses that he quotes (Warren, 2002:234): "Your hands shaped me and made me" (Job 10:8; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV).

"The people I have shaped for myself will broadcast my praises" (Is. 43:21; www.onlinebible.org.; NJB). The word 'shaped' which Warren gets from Job 10:8 is translated as 'made' in more literal Bible versions such as the King James Version (KJV). The word 'shaped' is not original but is quoted in the New International Version (NIV) which being a dynamic translation tries to get the idea across rather than religiously sticking to the original words, as does the KJV. This is a loose use of the Bible at this point and leaves one on shaky ground, especially if one wants to build a foundation for an idea like SHAPE upon a word which is not used in literal translations like the KJV. The literal, grammatical,

historical method requires that the Bible be used according to the literal meaning of the original grammar (i.e. the Hebrew OT). The same can be said for the reference to Isaiah 43:21, the more literal versions use the word 'formed' not shaped. This may be a minor point but it goes to show that Warren often resorts to dynamic and paraphrase translations to put his point across when the original words cannot support his point. Job 10:8 has nothing more to say than it is God who creates people and destroys people and only He can rescue them from ruin. Isaiah 43:21 teaches that God formed man to honour Him and bring Him praise. There is no link with Warren's SHAPE paradigm here!

Chapter two will seek to summarise SHAPE and what Warren means by each category. Once each category is summarised into point form then a comparison will be made with the Bible using a literal, grammatical, historical method of interpretation. Relevant Bible texts will be considered, especially those which Warren uses to support his SHAPE paradigm. Where the source of Warren's SHAPE categories have no clear Biblical base then the researcher will attempt to find a Biblical precedent in the Bible that supports Warren's presupposition. If this cannot be found then that category of SHAPE will be questioned as a valid category, for it then lacks any Biblical support and must be rejected according to the researcher's paradigm.

2.2.1 Spiritual Gifts.

Concerning spiritual gifts, the researcher has summarised Warren's teachings:

1. Every Christian is given a spiritual gift or gifts that must be used in ministry. This is clear; he says from 1Corinthians 12; Romans 12 and Ephesians 4 (Warren, 2005:300).

2. They are given to all as an undeserved gift of God's grace (Warren, 2002:236).
3. We do not choose them, but the Holy Spirit chooses them individually for us (cf. 1Cor. 12:11) (Warren, 2002:236).
4. No one Christian has them all, but there are a variety distributed among many, otherwise we would not need each other, nor depend on each other (Warren, 2002:236).
5. The gifts were given for the benefit of the entire Church, not for our personal benefit. When the gifts are used everyone benefits, if they are not used everyone else in the Church is cheated (Warren, 2002:236-237).
6. All Christians are commanded to discover and develop their spiritual gift(s) (Warren, 2002:237).
7. Two common faults are gift envy (where Christians envy others gifts that they don't have, instead of developing their own) and gift projection (where everybody else is expected to have the same gift as yourself, which stifles the use of various other gifts) (Warren, 2002:237).
8. Spiritual gifts do not give the complete picture of our ministry (calling), but only one-fifth of the total picture. He says that these are often overemphasized to the neglect of the other equally important factors (i.e. heart, abilities, personality and experience) (Warren, 2005:300).
9. Gifts are discovered through practical serving, rather than through reading through 'spiritual gift inventories' or 'spiritual gift tests', because the Bible doesn't define the gifts, and tests are speculative and often have a denominational bias. Confirmation from the Church while the gift is in use practically is the best test (Warren, 2005:300-301).

2.2.2 Heart

Concerning heart, Warren teaches:

1. It may be defined as: desires, hopes, interests, ambitions, dreams and affections (in a word-passion). Your heart is the centre of your motivations, what you love to do, and what you most care about (Warren, 2002:237; 2005:301).
2. It reveals the real you, not what others necessarily observe, nor what circumstances force you to be (cf. Prov. 27:19). Your heart determines why you say the things you do (cf. Matt. 12:34), why you feel the way you do (cf. Ps. 37:4), and why you act the way you do (cf. Prov. 4:23) (Warren, 2002:237-238).
3. In the same way that each person has a unique heartbeat, so too we all have a unique emotional heartbeat. Instinctively we care about certain things and not others. Our emotional heartbeat races when we encounter activities that interest us (Warren, 2002:238; 2005:301).
4. Oftentimes our interests have no logical explanation, other than that they were given to us by God. They therefore act as clues to our own particular callings. "Your God-given motivational bent serves as an internal guidance system for your life. It determines what interests you and what will bring you the most satisfaction and fulfilment. It also motivates you to pursue certain activities, subjects and environments" (Warren, 2005:301).
5. God had a purpose in giving us our interests; we should therefore consider how we might use them to glorify God. We must serve God not merely dutifully, but passionately, for people rarely excel at tasks that they don't enjoy doing (Warren, 2002:238-239; 2005:301).

6. When you serve God from your heart (cf. Deut.11:13), the telltale sign of enthusiasm will be evident, (perfectionism and success will usually accompany enthusiasm). Conversely, if you do works that are not your passion, you will become easily discouraged. High achievers are most often those who enjoy what they do (Warren, 2002:238-239; 2005:301).
7. Warren states, "Don't settle for just achieving 'the good life', because the good life is not good enough...Aim instead for 'the better life'-serving God in a way that expresses your heart. Figure out what you love to do-What God gave you a heart to do-and then do it for his glory" (Warren, 2002:239).
8. The question to consider: "In what way can I see myself passionately serving others and loving it" (Warren, 2002:240).
9. The danger is that we can use our passions for good or evil, for selfish reasons, or to serve God and others (Warren, 2005:301).

2.2.3 Abilities

Concerning Abilities, Warren teaches:

1. They are natural talents you have from birth (e.g. speaking ability, musical ability, etc) (Warren, 2002:241-242; 2005:301-302).
2. The best Scriptural example where natural abilities are linked to serving God is found in Exodus 31:3-5, where God gifted craftsmen with special abilities to make the Tabernacle and its furnishings (Warren, 2002:242; 2005:302).
3. "God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well" (Warren, 2002:242). Since abilities come from God they must be just as important as spiritual gifts, the

- only difference being that abilities are given at birth and spiritual gifts are given at conversion (Warren, 2002:242).
4. Studies reveal that an average person possesses from 500-700 different skills and abilities (Warren, 2005:302).
 5. "Part of the Churches responsibility is to identify and release your abilities for serving God" (Warren, 2002:242). "The real problem is twofold: First, people need some process of skill identification. Most people are using abilities that they are unaware that they have. Secondly, they need a process to help them to match their abilities with the right ministry" (Warren, 2005:302). Each and every ability should be used to honour God (cf. 1Cor. 10:31). Surprisingly, even the ability to make money comes from God (cf. Deut. 8:18) (Warren, 2002:242-243; 2005:302).
 6. Attention should be focused on what each person is good at (which God has gifted you at); the things we are not good at we should downplay (Warren, 2002:243-244).
 7. "God will never ask you to dedicate your life to a task you have no talent for. On the other hand, the abilities you do have are a strong indication of what God wants you to do with your life. They are clues to knowing God's will for you...God doesn't waste abilities; He matches our calling and our capabilities. Your abilities were not just given to make a living; God gave them to you for your ministry. Peter said, 'God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God's many kinds of blessings' " (Warren, 2002:243-244).
 8. At Saddleback their ministries include: repairing donated cars for the needy; landscaping; providing health care; composing songs; doing research for sermons; translating sermons; coaching sport teams; teaching music. New members are told,

"Whatever you are good at, you should be doing for your Church"! (Warren, 2002:244).

2.2.4 Personality

Concerning personality, Warren teaches:

1. There are an almost infinite number of genetic possibilities when it comes to human DNA (i.e. 10 to the power of 2.4 billion) that makes each human unique (Warren, 2002:244-245)
2. God loves variety as can be seen in the varied personalities (e.g. introverts and extroverts; task people and people people; thinkers and feelers; individuals and team players) (Warren, 2002:245; 2005:302).
3. Warren uses Hippocrates personality model (i.e. distinguishing between Choleric, Sanguines, Phlegmatics and Melancholics). He identifies Peter the Sanguine, Paul the Choleric and Jeremiah the Melancholic. (Abraham would be the classic example of a Phlegmatic, but he does not go this far) (Warren, 2002:245; 2005:302-303).
4. There are no wrong personalities for ministry. The different personalities rather provide balance and flavour in the Church. Your personality affects how and where you use spiritual gifts (e.g. extrovert evangelists and an introvert evangelists will apply their gifts differently). Ministering 'out of character' is foolish and creates tension and discomfort, requiring extra energy. It produces poor results. Ministries therefore cannot be mimicked exactly because we are all different personalities (Warren, 2002:245-246; 2005:303).
5. Warren recommends using personality books and tools to aid in determining your personality (Warren, 2002:246).

6. The different personalities bless the family of God with depth and variety (Warren, 2002:246; 2005:302-303).
7. "When you minister in a manner consistent with the personality God gave you, you experience fulfilment, satisfaction, and fruitfulness" (Warren, 2002:246).

2.2.5 Experience

Concerning experience, Warren teaches:

1. Five main kinds of experiences shape our lives:
 - Educational (i.e. you had favourite subjects at school).
 - Vocational (i.e. some jobs you were more effective in than others).
 - Spiritual (i.e. significant times you spent with God).
 - Ministry (i.e. how you served God in the past).
 - Painful (i.e. the problems, hurts, thorns and trials you learned from). (Warren, 2002:246; 2005:303)
2. God intentionally uses painful experiences the most to prepare you for ministry. "God never wastes a hurt!...In fact, your greatest ministry will most likely come out of your greatest hurt" (Warren, 2002:246). The example he gives here is of parents of a Down syndrome child, being able to minister to other parents with Down syndrome children (cf. 2Cor.1:4) (Warren, 2002:246-247; 2005:303-304).
3. "If you really desire to be used by God, you must understand a powerful truth: the very experiences that you have resented or regretted most in life-the ones you wanted to hide and forget are the experiences God wants to use to help others. They are your ministry!...People are always more encouraged when we share how God's

grace helped us in our weakness than when we brag about our strengths". Only shared experiences can help others (Warren, 2002:247).

2.3 An Evaluation of SHAPE

2.3.1 Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual gifts are commonly referred to when determining a Christian's calling to ministry. Clowney puts it like this: "We can trust the giver of the gifts to place us according to our gifts...Your sphere of action, your ministry in the service of Christ, is marked out by the gifts Christ has given you" (Clowney as quoted by Harvey, 2005:12). From a Biblical perspective we need to whether Warren has made valid points about spiritual gifts. To do this it will be necessary to analyse Warren's ten points in the light of the five New Testament (NT) passages that refer to gifts and relate these passages with Warren's ten points according to the literal, grammatical, historical method of Bible hermeneutics. Warren's nine points will be dealt with one by one analysing them with reference to Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, Ephesians 4:7-16, Hebrews 2:4, and 1 Peter 4:10-11.

Firstly, Warren teaches that every Christian is given a spiritual gift or gifts that must be used in ministry. This is clear; he says from 1Corinthians 12; Romans 12 and Ephesians 4 (Warren, 2005:300). Romans 12 makes this abundantly clear; each Christian has been given a 'measure of faith' (cf. Rom.12:3) and none has the 'same office' (cf. Rom. 12:4).

Ephesians 4:7-16 focuses on the so called 'fivefold ministry gifts', viz. apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. These five gifts are the essential teaching gifts, which are used to build up the Church indirectly by firstly equipping each Christian. Each Christian

in turn once built up is able to speak the truth in love and assists in building up the whole body (cf. Eph. 4:16). Without the use of the five-fold ministry gifts the whole body will not reach maturity but will fall prey to false doctrines (cf. Eph. 4:14).

Secondly, Warren teaches that they are given to all as an undeserved gift of God's grace (Warren, 2002:236). Romans 12:6 confirms this for each one has gifts "according to the grace that is given to us" (Rom. 12:6; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). What is in mind here is the diversity in respect of the endowment, grace, function, office and faith (Murray, 1980:116-117). The 'measure of faith' does not refer to saving faith that is focused on Christ, but it refers to the sphere of activity that each particular gift assigns to its possessor (Murray, 1980:119). Gifts are therefore applied with faith in God to enable the performance of that gift. Gifts are supernatural and dependant on the activity of the Holy Spirit through each Christian, and faith in Christ to enable the gift is thus also required. Paul's verse, Philippians 4:13 is particularly relevant here; "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). Jesus could be said to have had a full measure of faith, because he could perform all the gifts of the Spirit. He obviously practised and possessed all the gifts. He is indeed 'full of grace and truth' (cf. John 1:14), and in him 'all the fullness' of the Father dwells (cf. Col. 1:19). In the body of Christ there is a distribution of gifts, and each member of the body possesses his own measure of that grace; each Christian then has to apply a measure of faith to exercise their gift(s). The diversity of the gifts is implied by Paul's reference to the Church as a human body for 'we who are many form one body', and 'each member belongs to all the others' (cf. Rom.12:5). The diversity of the gifts within the whole body of Christians enriches every member

because they have in common all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which God has dispensed according to his will.

1 Peter 4:10-11 also confirms Warren's second point: "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen" (1Pet. 4:10-11; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV). This passage touches bases with Warren's ten points in at least three places. Warren's second point is clearly seen in verse 10; Christians 'administer God's grace' when they use their gifts.

Thirdly, Warren notes that we do not choose our gifts, but the Holy Spirit (cf. 1Cor. 12:11) chooses them individually for us (Warren, 2002:236). In Ephesians 4:7 Jesus is credited as the One who assigns spiritual gifts to Christians, both the number of them and the degree of giftedness. He is also the One who baptises with the Holy Spirit and thus is the ultimately the giver of the gifts (cf. Acts 2:33; 1Cor. 12:13). This does not contradict Warren's third point for Jesus pours out the Holy Spirit, Who gives us the serving grace to perform a spiritual gift. The pouring out of the Holy Spirit on Jesus during His Baptism empowered Jesus with supernatural gifts in order that He might do the works of Messiah (cf. Matt. 3:16). In Luke 4:18 Jesus attributed His works to the fact that the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon Him. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are the most crucial means by which we may fulfil our God-given calling, for the Holy Spirit gives us power to do his work (cf. Acts 1:8). Our individual callings are really God's calling on our lives. Even the general calling on the

Church in Matthew 28:18-20, to 'make disciples of all nations' requires supernatural empowerment. Just using our abilities on their own will not be sufficient to fulfil the task set before us. Zechariah 4:6 puts it like this: "'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit', says the LORD of hosts" (Zech. 4:6; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). The context of the above verse is that Zerubbabel needed the special empowerment of the Holy Spirit to fulfil the calling on his life, that is, to rebuild the temple of God, which was destroyed by the Babylonians. A God-sized task requires more than human ability and strength.

It is interesting to note that there is no command in the Bible to seek a spiritual gift.

1Corinthians 14:39 seems to command this, but it actually commands Christians to promote the practise of prophecy in the Church. The verse could be translated: 'When you come together as a Church seek to have the gift of prophecy used'. The command is not to individual Christians to covet the gift of prophecy, but to groups of Christians to promote prophecy.

Hebrews 2:4 states: "God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will". This passage is very short and sweet and really serves to confirm Warren's third point. The Holy Spirit is the one who decides who gets what gift.

Fourthly, Warren points out that no one Christian has all the gifts, but there is a variety distributed among many, otherwise we would not need each other, or depend on each other (Warren, 2002:236). Warren's point four is made clear in Romans 12:6; we don't have all the same gifts, or all the gifts. One may have the gift of prophecy (cf. Rom. 12:6), another

has the gift of serving (cf. Rom. 12:7), another has the gift of teaching (cf. Rom. 12:7), another has the gift of encouraging (cf. Rom. 12:8), another the gift of giving (cf. Rom. 12:8), another leadership (cf. Rom.12:8), and yet another the gift of mercy (cf. Rom. 12:8). Summarising the message of Romans 12:3-8: the governing thought of the whole passage, is that the diversity of gift and office must be exercised according to the measure of grace given us (i.e. according to what gift one is given), and practised with our specific measure of faith. This must be done in the harmony that only mutual esteem and the spirit of interdependence can bring. The above factors determine the sphere in which the gift is to be exercised, i.e. how gifts should operate in the body of Christ (1980:120, 127).

Enlarging further on this idea Paul focuses on the correct sphere for the application of each gift. He instructs each Christian to use whatever gift they have received in a way that is appropriate to that gift:

- Prophets must prophesy according to the measure of 'the Faith' passed down to the Church, i.e. prophets must speak according to the clear message of the Bible that we already possess (cf. Rom. 12:6) (Murray, 1980:122-123).
- Servers (i.e. most likely referring to the gift of helps, or perhaps even the office of deacon), these must serve (cf. Rom. 12:7) (Murray, 1980:124-125).
- Teachers must teach (cf. Rom. 12:7).
- Encouragers must encourage (i.e. the heart, the conscience and the will) (cf. Rom. 12:8) (Murray, 1980:125).
- Givers who contribute to the needs of others, must do so generously (cf. Rom. 12:8).

- Leaders (i.e. most likely the gift of leadership or administration, but perhaps the office of eldership, for they rule the flock-cf. 1Tim. 5:17), they must govern diligently (cf. Rom.12:8) (Murray, 1980:126).
- Lastly those with the gift of mercy must use their gift cheerfully (cf. Rom. 12:8).

In 1Corinthians 12 Paul had to make the point that there are many different kinds of gifts (cf. 1Cor. 12:4), many different kinds of service (cf. 1Cor. 12:5), and many different kinds of working of God through Christians (cf. 1Cor. 12:6). The 'oneness' that exists positionally by virtue of the fact that 'all Christians have been baptised into one body' (cf. 1Cor. 12:13) and needs to exist practically as well (Macarthur, 1995:211). To enable this unity the Holy Spirit manifests different gifts through each Christian for the common good (cf. 1Cor. 12:7). This means that the gifts are empowered by the Holy Spirit and are thus supernatural, operating to the degree that Christians submit to God's Spirit, according to whether they are filled by the Spirit or not (cf. Eph. 5:18). Obviously while Christians are submitting to their sinful desires and grieving the Holy Spirit, they also hinder His ability to work through them. In Ephesians 5:18 being 'filled with the Spirit' is paralleled to being filled with wine; it means that one is 'under the influence' of the Holy Spirit Who works spiritual gifts through Christians. Through the working of the Spirit the 'very lifeblood of Christ Himself' flows through Christians (Macarthur, 1995:212). There is no command in the Bible to be baptised with the Holy Spirit, but only the command to be filled with the Spirit (cf. Eph. 5:18). The only way to be filled with the Spirit is to obey the word of God (cf. John 15:5). As Christians submit themselves to God and obey His word, so He empowers their service. To put this in John's words, we abide in Christ when His word abides in us, and then our lives become very fruitful, and God even answers our prayers (cf. John 15:7). To illustrate the diversity of

spiritual gifts, while at the same time highlighting the unity of the body, Paul uses a metaphor of the Church as a human body. He focuses on four great truths: unity, diversity, sovereignty and the resultant harmony (Macarthur, 1995:234). Although a human body is one, it is made up of many different parts, some of which are prominent (e.g. the hands), others are less prominent (e.g. the feet), and other parts are less honourable and we tend to cover them up (e.g. our buttocks). The fact that people cover up certain parts means that they treat those parts with special modesty, they do not actually look down on them but treat them with special care for they are important, just not too pretty! It is impossible to sit, stand or walk without buttocks! Unfortunately the Corinthians were not functioning as a body; they were crippled and out of control. You could say that the Corinthian body had rogue agents, who acted like cancer cells; the body had cancer and was in danger of judgement (cf. 1Cor. 11:30-31)! They were worldly and were not operating in the gifts, as they should have, because they all wanted the prominent gifts and did not make room for the less showy gifts. In fact Paul tells us that their meetings 'did more harm than good' (cf. 1Cor. 11:17). They were immature, selfish, proud and immoral (cf. 1Cor. 5:1) and were thus not portraying the proper image of Christ in the world. The very point of being the body of Christ is to portray Christ to the world and to bring each Christian to maturity in Christ (cf. Eph. 4:16). There was a lot of division in the body, with factions (cf. 1Cor. 11:18); one group followed Paul, and another group followed Apollos (cf. 1Cor. 3:5). There was a lack of unity in the Corinthian Church. Some of the Christians even went as far as suing each other in court (cf. 1Cor. 6:6). They had corrupted the Lord's Supper and had turned it into a pagan drunken feast (cf. 1Cor. 11:21). Those without the prominent gifts (i.e. the speaking gifts or power gifts) felt inferior, and those who did have them thought they were superior. In seeking after the prominent gifts, they denied the sovereign right of God to determine their

place in the body. They also neglected the diversity that was needed because they didn't even practice the necessary gifts that the Holy Spirit had given them (cf. 1Cor. 12:11). To straighten their thinking Paul extended his analogy of the human body and began to focus upon the individual parts, such as feet and hands (cf. 1Cor. 12:15). Feet seem less important than hands, because hands have an exalted position in the body. However, it is impossible to remove the foot because it plays an essential role. How could the body walk without feet? Next he focuses on ears and eyes (cf. 1Cor. 12:16). Likewise ears, which are higher up in the body, perhaps more exalted than hands, are still less exalted than eyes. That still does not detract from the essential role an ear plays, i.e. hearing. The principal of 1 Corinthians 12:15-16 is that one cannot remove oneself from a God-given responsibility simply because one is not happy with who one is, that is just disobedience (MacArthur, 1995:254-255). Taking this illustration yet further, Paul imagines that the whole body were an exalted eye; then where would the sense of hearing be? If the body were just made up of ears then what would happen to the sense of smell?

1 Peter 4:10-11 confirms Warren's point about the diversity of the gifts, for Peter states that God's grace comes in 'various forms', some have speaking gifts and others have serving gifts.

Fifthly, Warren says that the gifts were given for the benefit of the entire Church, not for our personal benefit. When the gifts are used everyone benefits, if they are not used everyone else in the Church is cheated (Warren, 2002:236-237). In 1 Corinthians 12 the body of Christ is compared to a human body with different parts (i.e. hands, eyes, feet, etc). We belong to one body, and like a physical human body each part is dependent upon each

other for the healthy functioning of the Church. Each Christian has a distinct function, due to the fact that different gifts are diversely distributed among many Christians. The application of the gifts themselves by each member assists the equipping function of the five-fold ministry according to Ephesians 4:16: “From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work” (Eph. 4:16; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). Once ordinary Christians do their work of ministry, then, and only then, will the body of Christ be fully built up. It is logical that every Christian is in need of evangelism (initially), teaching, encouragement, mercy, help, giving, etc in order to reach maturity in Christ.

The work of every Christian in applying their gifts has been neglected in many Churches and Stott identifies a textual reason from Ephesians 4:12 why this great divide exists between the clergy (who normally exhibit at least one of the five-fold giftings) and the laity (who may have different non-five-fold giftings):

"The RSV first edition (1946) reads: for the equipment of the saints, 'for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ'. It will be noted that according to this translation, Christ had three distinct purposes in mind. I think Armitage Robinson was the first commentator to insist that this was a mistake. 'The second of these clauses', he wrote, 'must be taken as dependent on the first, and not...as co-ordinate with it'. In other words the first comma ('the fatal comma')-which is without linguistic authority but with undoubted ecclesiological bias-must be erased. If it is allowed to stand, we are faced with 'a saddening result', for the verse then means that only special ministers, not all the saints, are called 'to do the work of ministry' and to cooperate in the 'building of the body'. This interpretation has an aristocratic, that is, a clerical and ecclesiastical flavour, it

distinguishes the (mass of the) "saints" from the (superior class of the) officers of the Church. If the comma is erased, however, we are left with two purposes—one immediate and the other ultimate—for, which Christ gave, gifts to the Church. His immediate purpose was 'to equip the saints for the work of ministry' (RSV second edition 1971) or better 'to equip God's people for work in his service' (NEB), and his ultimate purpose 'for building up the body of Christ' " (Stott, 2004:166).

The researcher therefore believes in the priesthood of all Christians (cf. 1Pet. 2:9) and that the body cannot be properly built up until the laity do their work of service. By the priesthood of all Christians the researcher is referring to each Christian having a ministry to perform in the context of the Church. A priest serves both God (cf. Ex. 28:41) and man (cf. Lev. 13:2), just as the OT priests worked in the Temple and served the people. Ministry then is not just five-fold, but at least eighteen-fold. Where would the ministry of mercy to the suffering be, if only the pastor-teacher does ministry in Church? Many Churches use this wrong paradigm today; they see pastors, as in the ministry, and everyone else is there to listen to, enjoy, and pay the pastor his salary. The laity then become spectators to the pastor. This picture can be allied to a soccer match where the pastor tries to play the game alone against the opposition, while his entire congregation watch on the sidelines, clapping at appropriate times. A better paradigm is where the pastor trains up his congregation to do their own work of ministry, using all their eighteen gifts. In this paradigm the clergy are like soccer coaches, coaching the laity to play the game of soccer, and cheering them on, once they are sufficiently trained. The goal is every-member ministry. A further step is however here implied, for the laity does not understand their calling specifically. They cannot act properly if they are not specifically and individually equipped for their own task of ministry.

Passive congregation-loads of Churches prove this point to be true. Many, many Christians have just become Church spectators, like moviegoers, who have come for entertainment, or perhaps for the personal upbuilding of their self-images! Returning to the soccer analogy, a goalkeeper and a striker have very different purposes and thus need specialist training in order to equip them for their respective positions. It would be ludicrous to use the same non-specific approach to training them both, and yet this is how the Church treats Christians with different gifts.

Warren's fifth point is also clearly seen in 1 Peter 4:10 where Peter states that the gifts are to be used to serve others.

Sixthly, Warren states that all Christians are commanded to discover and develop their spiritual gift(s) (Warren, 2002:237). There is no such direct command in the Bible that the researcher can find to discover one's spiritual gift(s), but the principle of developing one's gift is Biblical. Peter urges Christians to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ (cf. 2Pet. 3:18). Since gifts are 'graces' from God (cf. Rom.12:6) Warren's sixth point may be a reasonable statement to make. 2Timothy 1:6 affirms Warren's sixth point: "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands" (2Tim. 1:6; www.onlinebible.org; NKJV). Here Paul encourages Timothy his timid son in the faith to develop his gifts of teacher and evangelist (cf. 2Tim. 4:2,5). In Romans 12, 1Corinthians 12-14, and 1Peter 4:10-11; it is especially clear that Paul and Peter want Christians to practice their gifts appropriately; giving instruction on how to use (and thus develop) their gifts (e.g. the givers are encouraged to develop their gifts by giving generously: (cf. Rom. 12:8).

Seventhly, Warren identifies two common faults: gift envy (where Christians envy others gifts that they don't have, instead of developing their own) and gift projection (where everybody else is expected to have the same gift as yourself, which stifles the use of various other gifts) (Warren, 2002:237). Murray comments on these two sins in his commentary on Romans 12:

"If we consider ourselves to possess gifts we do not have, then we have an inflated notion of our place and function; we sin by esteeming ourselves beyond what we are. But if we underestimate, then we are refusing to acknowledge God's grace and we fail to exercise that which God has dispensed for our own sanctification and that of others. The positive injunction is the reproof of a false humility which equally with over self-esteem fails to access the grace of God and the vocation which distinguishing distribution of grace assigns to each" (Murray, 1980:117).

Indeed both overestimation of giftedness and underestimation of giftedness are evils that rob others of the opportunity to use a genuine gift of the Spirit (while we pretend to use that gift) and rob the Church of the genuine gift which we prefer not to acknowledge or use respectively.

The Corinthians, although lacking none of the spiritual gifts (cf. 1Cor. 1:7), were classic examples of those who were ignorant about spiritual gifts (cf. 1Cor. 12:1). This was evident in that they suffered from gift envy, gift projection, and even gift apathy (i.e. some Corinthians believed they were insignificant and unimportant and thus thought they had no place in the body (cf. 1Cor. 12:21). They were suffering from gift envy as they were all desiring to have the prominent gifts: i.e. apostleship, prophecy, teaching, miracles, healing,

tongues and interpretation of tongues (cf. 1Cor. 12:29-31). It is also probable that they suffered from gift projection for they looked down on others with less honourable gifts, perhaps expecting them to 'shape up' and start exhibiting the greater gifts: "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!' On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable" (cf. 1Cor. 12:21-22; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). Today gift envy and projection are alive and well in the Church. A popular example of this is 'second blessing' theology, which is present in many Pentecostal Churches today. In such Churches every Christian is expected to speak in tongues, at least as a sign that they have received the 'baptism of the Spirit'. This is gift projection of the worst sort for it is thrust upon whole congregations. Of course the Spirit never baptises anyone, only Jesus baptises with his Spirit (cf. Matt. 3:11), and this is a free gift to all who respond to Him in repentance and faith (cf. Acts 2:38). The Corinthians were attempting to reorganise the body of Christ. Despite their perversion of God's plan to unite them as one body, with many diverse parts; the Holy Spirit had given each of them gifts as He sovereignly determined (cf. 1Cor. 12:11). These were to be used for the good of the whole body. These Corinthians had all been given gifts, as an act of God's grace, despite their worldliness! 1Corinthians 12:11 makes it clear that the Holy Spirit sovereignly determines what gift(s) we receive. Christians do not determine the gifts they receive. The Corinthians did not understand this basic truth. Paul's response to the Corinthian situation was not to reorganise the 'core group' of Christians to do the work of the disobedient 'crowd' (as so often happens today), but rather to deal with the worldliness of the Christians there. How often doesn't this situation occur in Churches today? Normally Churches try to reorganise the core group to do the work of the disobedient (i.e. they try to get hands to do the work of feet as well). This doesn't work but just leads to pastors and other core

members get frustrated and burnt out. MacArthur states: "A Christian who doesn't have a ministry is a contradiction-denying God the right to use him in the way He has gifted and prepared him to be used" (Macarthur, 1995:239). There is another side to the sovereignty of God in delegating out gifts to the Corinthians. He gives all the relevant gifts to the body so that it may function in a balanced way (cf. 1Cor. 12:18). Verse 24 states that God has even combined the members of the body together. He mixes the Christians in each body in such a way that individual Churches may function effectively. No Christian may underestimate his or her importance and exhibit false humility and gift apathy (cf. 1Cor. 12:20). Again Paul addresses the disharmony of superiority which had developed in the Corinthian Church (cf. 1Cor. 12:21-26). He addresses this by using the pictures of the eye and the hand, and the head and the feet (cf. 1Cor. 12:21). The eye may not look down on the hand and say there is no need for you. Nor may the head say to the feet that there is no need for you (cf. 1Cor. 12:21). No Christian may think of himself as superior and exhibit pride. The weaker parts are still vital for the bodies functioning (cf. 1Cor. 12:22). Think of a lung; it is not a visibly prominent part, but is absolutely essential in order to oxygenate the blood. Without lungs a human body will suffocate! Next Paul speaks of less honourable parts (cf. 1Cor. 12:23a) such as an abdomen; such parts get special attention (we clothe these parts). Lastly, Paul speaks of our unrepresentable parts (cf. 1Cor. 12:23b); this probably refers to private parts; even they receive special care (e.g. their have their own under garments). All the parts of the body play an important role, none may be looked down upon; the body needs them all working together. God will equalise the body parts by giving special honour to those parts that seem to lack honour. This will happen at the judgement seat of Christ (cf. 1Cor. 4:5; Mark 10:44). The solution on earth lies in every member of the body caring having an equal

concern for each other, rejoicing with those who rejoice and mourning with those who mourn (cf. 1Cor. 12:25-26).

Paul closes this passage off with some application (cf. 1Cor. 12:27-30). Firstly, the Corinthians were to remember their unity (cf. 1Cor. 12:27)! The right approach is to view each Christian as just as much a part of the body as any other. Secondly, they were to remember their diversity (cf. 1Cor. 12:28)! God uses diversely gifted Christians to lead and direct the Church. There is an order here: "And in the Church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues" (1Cor. 12:28; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). Equality of Christians does not cancel out the importance of the roles of each gift. The so-called greater gifts have to lead and sometimes work harder than the so-called lesser gifts. Thirdly, they were to remember God's sovereignty (cf. 1Cor. 12:29-30)! The rhetorical question in 1Corinthians 12:29-30 begs the answer 'no'. Obviously, not all will prophesy or speak in tongues. God sovereignly gives the gifts Christians have been given. Not all will be eyes or ears or noses or feet! There is nothing to be envious of, and nothing to seek for. Be the nose or ear or eye, or whatever you are to the best of your ability. Fourthly the Appeal (cf. 1Cor. 12:31): the Greek does not have to be translated in the imperative but may be translated in the indicative as "But you are eagerly desiring the greater gifts" (MacArthur, 1995:264). This makes sense in the light of the context. The imperative translation contradicts what Paul has just been saying in 1Corinthians 12:1-30. Paul tells them that they must stop coveting the prominent gifts but must be happy with the gift(s) God has

given them. 1 Corinthians 12:31 speaks of a better way that Paul will show them. That is they must apply the gifts in love (cf. 1Cor. 13).

Eighthly, Warren affirms that spiritual gifts do not give the complete picture of our ministry (calling), but only one-fifth of the total picture. He says that these are often overemphasised to the neglect of the other equally important factors (i.e. heart, abilities, personality and experience) (Warren, 2005:300). The researcher believes that Warren is correct in his ninth point. Something became clear to the researcher when studying Ephesians 4:11-13. All five gifts mentioned there relate to the proclamation of the Bible; it is the teaching of the Bible that primarily that equips Christians to identify their calling. The researcher believes that the proclamation of the Bible itself is the primary method of equipping a Christian and defining their good works. Isaiah 55:11 confirms the efficacy of the word to fulfil God's purposes in our lives: "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it" (Is. 55:11; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). Spiritual gifts are often over-emphasised to the exclusion of other factors. The researcher agrees with Warren on this point for many commands of the Bible are not gift-specific. Verses like Matthew 28:18-20 command all Christians to 'make disciples' through teaching and baptising. Even Christian parents who do not have the gift of teaching are required by this verse to disciple (i.e. teach) their children with the Bible, and have them baptised upon profession of belief in Christ.

Ninthly, Warren believes that gifts are discovered through practical serving, rather than through reading through spiritual gift inventories or spiritual gift tests, because the Bible doesn't define the gifts, and tests are speculative and often have a denominational bias.

Confirmation from the Church while the gift is in use practically is the best test (Warren, 2005:300-301). Saying that the Bible doesn't define what Spiritual gifts are (Warren, 2005:300) leaves the door open to all kinds of misuse of the gifts because we don't know what they are! While it is true that the Bible doesn't give a list of definitions it often does explain how the gifts function practically in the Church, and their purposes. From the Bible it is possible therefore to derive practically useful definitions and protect the Church from the error of gift misuse. These definitions, imperfect as they may be will help protect the Church from the abuse of the gifts (now seen in many Churches such as was the case with 'The Toronto blessing'). Laughing and barking in the Spirit have neither Biblical foundation, nor precedent and should be rejected as unbiblical. The researcher believes Warren is incorrect in this assertion that none of the gifts are defined in the Bible. The NT mentions at least eighteen gifts in its various gift passages. These eighteen gifts are often divided into speaking gifts and serving gifts (O'Donovan, 1996:160-161). The researcher has listed and defined these gifts from the Bible, showing that it is indeed possible to define the gifts from the Bible.

The speaking gifts:

- Apostleship: In Greek simply means one who is sent). The gift of apostle thus could have a reference to every Christian, for Christ sends all Christians into the world (cf. John 13:16). But Ephesians 4:11 specifically states that Christ only gave this gift to 'some', so this cannot be the sense of meaning here. Missionaries are also apostles of Churches, for Churches send them out. Saul and Barnabus were sent out as missionaries from the Church at Antioch (cf. Acts 13:3). The last and most likely option is that Paul in Ephesians 4:11 is only referring to the twelve plus Paul, who were commissioned to the office of apostle by Him (cf. Luke 6:13;

1Cor. 15:8-9). As witnesses to the resurrected Christ, many of them wrote the Bible, which we have today in our NT. Apostles are listed first in the list that hints at their foundational nature (cf. Eph. 2:20). The researcher will assume that this gift has ceased, and that its only relevance is to the apostles teaching, which is passed along to us, as recorded in our NT. It was indeed a special office given to the twelve plus Paul (cf. Mark 3:14; Rom. 1:1). This gift imparted authority and ability to represent Christ by acting as a physical witness to his ministry and resurrection (cf. Acts 1:22), to reveal inspired truth from Christ (cf. John 16:13-14) and the Church was founded upon their ministries (cf. Eph. 2:20; Matt. 16:18). This gift brought with it an authenticating ability to do signs, wonders and miracles (cf. 2Cor. 12:12).

- Prophecy: Stott helps us understand this gift:

"A prophet was a mouthpiece or spokesman for God, a vehicle of his direct revelation. In this sense we must again insist that there are no prophets today. Nobody can presume to claim an inspiration comparable to the canonical prophets of the OT, or use their introductory formula 'Thus says the LORD'... As the foundation on which the Church is being built the prophets have no successors, any more than the apostles have, for the foundation was laid and finished centuries ago and we cannot tamper with it in any way today. But, as with apostles so with prophets, having first established the uniqueness of the original teachers of the Church, we then have to ask if there is a subsidiary gift of some kind... Some see it as a special gift of biblical exposition, an unusual gift of insight into the word of God, so that by the ministry of the Holy Spirit modern prophets hear and receive the word of God, not however as a new revelation but as a fresh understanding of the old. Others see it as a sensitive understanding of the

contemporary world, a reading of the signs of the times, together with an indignant denunciation of the social sins of the day and a perceptive application of the Bible to them... A third view concentrates on the effect which the ministry of the NT prophets had on their listeners, bringing to non Christians a conviction of sin, and to Christians 'upbuilding and encouragement and consolation' (1Cor. 14:3; Acts 15:32). In these three views the 'prophetic gift' is detected in the handling of the word of God, for one cannot think of God's prophets in isolation from the Bible. It is understood as a gift of insight into either the biblical text or the contemporary situation, or both, namely a powerful combination of accurate exposition and pertinent application" (Stott, 2004:161-162). It seems best to therefore to define prophecy as the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to preach a word from God, in season, 'bringing strengthening, encouragement and comfort' to the hearers (cf. Acts 21:10-11; 1Cor. 14:3).

- Teaching (cf. Rom. 12:7), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to communicate and pass along the truths of the Bible systematically (cf. 2Tim. 2:2), in a way that it may be clearly understood (Macarthur, 1995:115). This practically involves using the word for teaching, convincing, rebuking, exhorting, correcting and training in righteousness (cf. 2Tim. 3:16-17; 2Tim. 4:2)
- Encouraging others (cf. Rom.12:8), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to urge Christians to pursue proper conduct, or to console those undergoing trials (cf. Acts 9:27), bringing repentance, comfort and/or restoration (Peter Wagner, 1994:230).

- Words of wisdom (cf. 1Cor. 12:8) i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to practically and skillfully apply the truths of the Bible practically, in relevant life situations (MacArthur, 1995:113). This gift is difficult to define exactly.
- Words of knowledge (cf. 1Cor. 12:8), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to discover, understand, accumulate and clarify important truths from the Bible, at relevant times (MacArthur, 1995:111,116) (Peter Wagner, 1994:230). Also difficult to define.
- Tongues (cf. 1Cor. 12:10), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to proclaim a message from God in another language unknown to the speaker (Peter Wagner, 1994:231). From the Pentecost experience it is clear that the visitors to Jerusalem heard those speaking in tongues speaking their own languages, declaring the works of God in Christ (cf. Acts 2:7-11). The Greek word for tongue is glossa, which means among other meanings, a language (www.onlinebible.org.; Greek lexicon).
- Interpretation of tongues (cf. 1Cor. 12:10); i.e. it logically follows that this is the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to interpret the words spoken in a tongue, bringing edification to the body (cf. 1Cor. 14:5).
- Evangelists (cf. Eph. 4:11), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to present the Gospel with clarity to the unsaved (cf. Acts 21:8). This is often combined with a burden for the salvation of the lost (Peter Wagner, 1994:232). The gift of evangelism does not refer to the responsibility that all Christians have to evangelise and spread the Gospel; rather it refers to a specific gift of evangelism. The gift is only mentioned three times in the NT (cf. Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11; 2Tim. 4:5). Evangelists come in many moulds; some like preaching to crowds, others prefer one to one, still others use the media to bring across their message.

- Pastor-teachers (cf. Eph. 4:11), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to apply doctrine, to protect, administer the sacraments, and feed the flock (MacArthur, 1995:93). They have a burden for the welfare of the flock (Peter Wagner, 1994:232). An analysis of Ephesians 4:11 in the Greek reveals something interesting. Pastors and teachers are lumped together grammatically: " {and} {he} {gave} _____ {some} {apostles,} _____ {and some} {prophets,} _____ {and some} {evangelists,} _____ {and some} {shepherds} {and} {teachers}" (Eph. 4:11; www.onlinebible.org, Interlinear Greek NT, emphasis mine). Note the absence of the definite article (tous) underlined above, which should be applied to teachers as well, if teaching was a separate gift to pastor. Calvin saw these two gifts as separate; he saw pastors as administering the sacraments and discipline, as well as exhorting Christians (Stott, 2004:163). However, pastors cannot pastor effectively without feeding the flock with the Bible, and in my opinion they need to be teachers of the Bible to do this (cf. 1Peter 5:2). Note that the shepherding function of 1Peter 5:2 is addressed to teaching elders (cf. 1Pet. 5:1).

Stott confirms this point and writes: "Gift and office, divine enabling and ecclesiastical commissioning, belong together. It seems to me that Paul indicates this by numbering 'pastors and teachers' among Christ's gifts to his Church, since the work of ordained presbyters is precisely to shepherd and teach Christ's flock" (Stott, 2004,165-166).

It may not however be necessary to be a pastor in order to be a teacher, for some teachers seem to lack pastoral gifting, and may work best when in an academic, non-pastoral context. Teachers, who may not have the gift of pastor, will still be able

to systematically teach the Bible so that the congregation may understand and apply those truths.

The serving gifts include:

- Leadership (cf. Rom. 12:8; 1Cor.12:28), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to organize and administer the various ministries, bringing order in the Church (cf. Titus 1:5).
- Faith (cf. 1Cor. 12:9), i.e. the supernatural capacity given by the Holy Spirit to believe in God's ability to overcome obstacles that hinder his work. This kind of faith results in the activation of the blessings of God; (e.g. prayers of faith activate God's response-cf. Matt. 21:22), and the encouragement of the Church (Macarthur, 1995:148).
- Serving/helps (cf. 1Cor. 12:28), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to share the burdens of others, practically supporting and working alongside them, assisting them in their ministries (Macarthur, 1995:127).
- Giving (cf. Rom. 12:8), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to contribute their material resources of God's work with abundant generosity and cheerfulness (Peter Wagner, 1994:230).
- Mercy (cf. Rom. 12:8), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to show sympathy and compassion to the suffering, bringing relief (Macarthur, 1995:146-147).
- Distinguishing between spirits (cf. 1Cor. 12:10), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to discern the source of a teaching, whether it is from God or from another source (Macarthur, 1995:153).

- Healing (cf. 1Cor. 12:9), i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to heal organic diseases, not just symptomatic disorders (Macarthur, 1995:181-182). This was practically demonstrated by both Jesus and His apostles (cf. Matt. 10:8; 11:5).
- Miracles (1Cor. 12:28) i.e. the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to work an act of power that has no other explanation, natural or circumstantial, other than it was an 'act of God' (Macarthur, 1995:158). The casting out demons is the primary application of this gift (Macarthur, 1995:176). Again this was practically demonstrated by both Jesus and His apostles (cf. Matt. 10:8; 11:5).

Each of these lists is different and incomplete in itself, yet it is clear from the Bible that the majority of the gifts are clearly definable from the plain reading of the Bible about their practical application in the context of the early Church. There may be even more gifts than those listed above, e.g. the gifts of martyrdom (Warren, 2005:301), celibacy (cf. Matt. 19:10-11), voluntary poverty (Peter Wagner, 1994:232), hospitality (Peter Wagner, 1994:232), missionary (Peter Wagner, 1994:233), intercession (Peter Wagner, 1994:233) and exorcism (Peter Wagner, 1994:233) that could be added to them.

Lastly, spiritual gift analysis is primarily introspective in nature and finding ones gifts is often done through gift questionnaires, and not through Bible study of the functions of the gifts as performed above. Our ministry calling is more clearly seen in the commands of the Bible and in the practical functioning of the gifts than in gift questionnaires. The researcher sees Warren as being correct in doubting the effectiveness of such questionnaires. Practically speaking the Bible does not give a quick one-two-three guide on identifying your gift(s). O'Donovan in line with Warren's point nine above suggests a four-stage process: Firstly, study the gifts from all the gift passages mentioned above. Secondly, study how the gifts

were used practically in Acts. Thirdly, find out what you can do in your local Church, which God seems to use and bless for the good of the congregation. Fourthly, have your local gift confirmed by your local Church. O'Donovan agrees with Warren's ninth point, which deals with practical ways of determining one's gifting (O'Donovan, 1996:161). These four points make a lot of practical sense. There was no mention of gift questionnaires in Bible times; these may be helpful, so long as they are Biblically sound. They still remain a recent invention. The Bible is not specifically against them. The problem associated with them (according to the researcher's own opinion) is much like the problem associated with personality tests; the writers of such tests indulge in wishful thinking and choose the gifts or personalities that they like, rather than the gifts or personalities that they actually have. Such tests may come up with helpful results, but may end up becoming yet another representation of gift envy. The Bible really just encourages Christians to use the gifts they have. It assumes that they will just naturally exhibit their gift(s), and encourages them to use them appropriately (cf. Rom. 12:6-8).

The researcher concludes that Warren's nine points on spiritual gifts are generally Biblically valid and are practically helpful. It is really only Warren's suggestion that the gifts may not be defined that concerns the researcher. That is not a reasonable statement in the light of the definitions derived above using appropriate Bible references.

2.3.2 Heart

Many of Warren's nine points on **heart** represent pastoral wisdom and not direct Bible teachings in particular.

Firstly, Warren defines the heart as: desires, hopes, interests, ambitions, dreams and affections (in a word-passion) and as the centre of our motivations, what we love to do, and what we most care about (Warren, 2002:237; 2005:301). The Oxford dictionary confirms Warren's first point, for it defines 'heart' as "The centre of a person's emotions or affections or inmost thoughts...the ability to feel emotion" (Hawkins, 1979:292). From a Biblical grammar perspective when the Bible refers uses the word 'heart' the literal, grammatical, historical hermeneutic would accept the dictionary definition as a reasonable understanding of the word 'heart'. The Bible does speak of the 'heart' in many places, and they will be examined. 1Timothy 3:1: "Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone *sets his heart* on being an overseer, he *desires* a noble task" (1Tim. 3:1; www.onlinebible.org; NIV, *emphasis mine*). The desire or heart for a ministry is an important consideration in the Bible.

Secondly, Warren says that the heart reveals the real you, not what others necessarily observe, nor what circumstances force you to be (cf. Prov. 27:19). It determines why you say the things you do (cf. Matt. 12:34), why you feel the way you do (cf. Ps. 37:4), and why you act the way you do (cf. Prov. 4:23)" (Warren, 2002:237-238). Warren is really quoting from Proverbs 27:19, which indeed confirms his second point; indeed our hearts, not our circumstances reflect the real person for Proverbs 27:19 states that "...a man's heart reflects the man" (Prov. 27:19; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). Again Warren quotes indirectly from Matthew 12:34 which confirms that our words do in fact flow from our hearts, for it states "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matt. 12:34; www.onlinebible.org, NKJV). Proverbs 4:23 also confirms Warren's second point; our actions do flow from our hearts for Proverbs 4:23 states that the heart "...is the wellspring of life" (Prov. 4:23; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). Psalm 37:4 also confirms that our feelings or

desires spring from our hearts, for it speaks of "...the desires of the heart" (Ps. 37:4; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV).

Thirdly, In the same way that each person has a unique heartbeat, so too we all have a unique emotional heartbeat. Instinctively we care about certain things and not about others. Our emotional heartbeat races when we encounter activities that interest us (Warren, 2002:238; 2005:301). Warren's third point is not clearly a Biblical teaching but it is seen in the Bible. It is proved true by common experience, for we all have specific interests and get excited about different things. For example, the researcher gets excited by BMW motorcycles but his wife has no interest in them at all and is rather excited by artistic home improvements (which do not specifically excite the researcher)! Experience goes beyond the scope of this research project but this can at least be practically demonstrated. In the Bible various characters had different interests and desires of the heart. For example Leah desired to be loved by Jacob (cf. Gen. 29:34) while Moses desired to be a deliverer of the Israelites who were enslaved by the Egyptians (cf. Acts 7:23-25).

Fourthly, oftentimes our interests have no logical explanation, other than that they were given to us by God. They therefore act as clues to our own particular callings. "Your God-given motivational bent serves as an internal guidance system for your life. It determines what interests you and what will bring you the most satisfaction and fulfilment. It also motivates you to pursue certain activities, subjects and environments" (Warren, 2005:301). Moses' heart was stirred by God to be the deliverer of the Israelites in slavery in Egypt, consider the following quote: "Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. And seeing one of *them* suffer wrong, he defended

and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand” (Acts 7:23-25; www.onlinebible.org.; NKJV). It is clear from this quote that Moses’ true calling to free the Israelites from slavery existed within his heart forty years before he actually lead them into freedom. Here Gods calling on his life to make him a ruler and deliverer was preceded by the heart desire (cf. Acts 7:35). This assumption of Warren’s is probably most clearly seen in Exodus 36 where the two artisans Bezalel and Aholiab were given a heart (i.e. a passion) for the work of constructing the tabernacle, a work which God wanted them to do. Consider the following quote: “Then Moses called Bezalel and Aholiab, and every gifted artisan *in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom, everyone whose heart was stirred*, to come and do the work” (Ex. 36:1; www.onlinebible.org., NKJV, *emphasis mine*). This principle is also seen in the Pastoral Epistles where a desire or heart for ministry is important. Consider 1Timothy 3:1 “Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task” (1Tim. 3:1; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV). Note here that the desire to be an elder is the first prerequisite in becoming an elder. Harvey helpfully states: “It is godly ambition that motivates a man to bring order and direction to life, and to use the gifts God has given him for that purpose” (Harvey, 2005:34). Again Proverbs 21:1 confirms the specific purpose of our hearts desire, for it states: “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases” (Prov. 21:1; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV). Thus God is at work in the hearts of men giving even non-Christians the desire to carry out his will. Proverbs 19:21 does caution against using one’s heart as an infallible guidance system for it states: “There are many plans in a man’s heart, nevertheless the LORD’S counsel that will stand” (Prov. 19:21; www.onlinebible.org.; NKJV). The unregenerate heart of the unbeliever and even the

disobedient heart of the Christian may oppose God's will, but God's will that will prevail. Our hearts desire may not reflect the purpose of God for our lives at any given point. The heart alone must not be trusted except when it is in harmony with the Bible. The heart however prone to evil, is still an indicator of God's calling in Christians lives, despite its fallibility.

Fifthly, God had a purpose in giving us our interests; we should therefore consider how we might use them to glorify God. We must serve God not merely dutifully, but passionately, for people rarely excel at tasks that they don't enjoy doing (Warren, 2002:238-239; 2005:301). God giving Christians a heart for ministry is seen in Philippians 2:13, which states: "It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose" (Phil. 2:13; onlinebible.org.; NIV). So, it is God who works in Christians both to will and to act according to His good purpose. This means that God plants within each Christian the will/desire to do his purpose, i.e. to do particular good works, as well as providing the ability to do them. Warren is correct in his assertion that our hearts desires must be used to glorify God. Indeed all things according to the Bible are to be done to the glory of God. This is confirmed by 1Corinthians 10:31: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1Cor. 10:31; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV).

Sixthly, When you serve God from your heart (cf. Deut.11:13), the telltale sign of enthusiasm will be evident, (perfectionism and success will usually accompany enthusiasm). Conversely, if you do works that are not your passion, you will become easily discouraged. High achievers are most often those who enjoy what they do (Warren, 2002:238-239; 2005:301). Warren's sixth point may not be clearly demonstrated by the Bible according to the literal, grammatical, historical method of hermeneutics. It is an

assumption Warren makes. It is probably experientially true for many people and seems not to oppose Biblical teaching. The researcher has experienced the same enthusiasm for his passions and achieves best in his area of interest. Unfortunately it falls outside of the scope of this research projects literal, grammatical, historical analysis of the Bible.

Seventhly, Warren states, "Don't settle for just achieving 'the good life', because the good life is not good enough...Aim instead for 'the better life'-serving God in a way that expresses your heart. Figure out what you love to do-What God gave you a heart to do-and then do it for his glory" (Warren, 2002:239). Philippians 2:13 quoted above under point five confirms that God has indeed given Christians a heart to serve Him in ministry.

Eighthly, The question to consider: "In what way can I see myself passionately serving others and loving it" (Warren, 2002:240). Again this may not be clearly verified by the Bible but nevertheless is experientially true for many people. His eighth statement is not antibiblical. It seems most reasonable but may not be verified as true by using the literal, grammatical, historical method of hermeneutics.

Ninthly, The danger is that we can use our passions for good or evil, for selfish reasons, or to serve God and others (Warren, 2005:301). This is unfortunately the testimony of the Bible. One of the main problems with human hearts desires is that they are corrupted by sin. Proverbs 24:2 states that the heart devises violence. Jeremiah warns us of the inherent evil of the human heart: "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9; www.onlinebible.org.; NKJV). Harvey gives this warning too: "Desires, of course are an expression of our hearts which, as Christians, are pliable to God

yet tainted with remaining sin. We can only trust our desires as far as we can trust our hearts, which is not far” (Harvey, 2005:39). Obviously the danger does not cancel out the importance of having a desire to serve God in a particular area. God is the one who gives Christians new hearts with new and right desires (cf. Ezek. 36:26). The flesh and the Spirit still do battle for the heart and mind of Christians and Christians are continually called to walk in the Spirit and to renew their minds (cf. Gal. 5:16; Rom. 12:2 respectively). The best solution will be to follow one's heart, and to seek confirmation from an outside source (e.g. the Bible and the confirmation of one's home Church). It would be wise to determine whether the desire to do a particular ministry is motivated by a godly motive (i.e. to serve God and other Christians) or an ungodly motive (i.e. self-glorification, i.e. to become rich, famous or powerful). If the motivation is pure (if that is possible to determine accurately), then it is a good desire, and should be allowed to continue. The more sanctified the heart and mind, the more reliable the desires of the heart will be. The less sanctified the heart and mind, the less reliable will be the desires of the heart. There lies in the searching of the heart a great possibility for good and great danger for selfishness. Although the heart serves as a guide it is a fallible guide. The primary guide for the Christian is the Bible for Jesus states in Matthew 4:4 that man lives by every word that comes from God's mouth. This is a point that Warren has not highlighted and represents to the researcher a serious omission in his treatment of heart.

2.3.3 Abilities

Firstly, Warren teaches they are natural talents you have from birth (e.g. speaking ability, musical ability, etc) (Warren, 2002:241-242; 2005:301-302). The Bible although not identifying the exact timing of the reception of abilities does however attribute the reception

of them from God. Romans 11:32 states: “For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen” (Rom. 11:32; www.onlinebible.org. ; NKJV). James 1:17 also attributes the reception of all good things as coming from God.

Secondly, Warren states that the best Scriptural example where natural abilities are linked to serving God is found in Exodus 31:3-5, where God gifted craftsmen with special abilities to make the Tabernacle and its furnishings (Warren, 2002:242; 2005:302). Let us consider the construction of the tabernacle in wilderness in Exodus 31:1-6, which Warren alludes to: “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘See I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of craftsmanship’. ‘Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, to help him. Also I have given skill to all the craftsmen to make everything I have commanded you’” (Ex. 31:1-6; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV). It is interesting to note in the above verses that God gave specific abilities/skills so that his work might be done. Note that the filling of the Holy Spirit is linked here with the abilities to do God's work (cf. Ex. 31:3). These abilities are not clearly the natural ones these men had from birth. It is possible that these abilities may be considered spiritual abilities (i.e. not natural abilities) or perhaps even a kind of spiritual gift!

Thirdly, Warren notes that “God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well” (Warren, 2002:242). Since abilities come from God they must be just as important as spiritual gifts, the only difference being that abilities are given at birth and spiritual gifts are given at conversion (Warren, 2002:242). Warren here uses Romans 12:6 in the New Living

Translation as a proof text about natural abilities. However spiritual gifts are referred to in Romans 12:6, not natural abilities, for the Greek word is 'charisma' meaning 'gifts' (Strong's word #5486; www.onlinebible.org; Interlinear Greek New Testament). He does this because he uses the New Living Translation, which is hazy on the distinction between gifts and abilities, being a loose paraphrase.

Considering again Exodus 31:1-6 it seems quite likely that certain abilities do not come only at birth, as Warren contends, but some may come through the reception of the Holy Spirit at conversion or during the filling of the Holy Spirit at special times. This is especially clear from Exodus 31:2-4: "See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. And I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to design artistic works, to work in gold, in silver, in bronze" (Ex. 31:2-4; www.onlinebible.org; NKJV). A shadow of doubt is certainly cast over Warren's supposition that all natural abilities come at birth. It is possible that these men exhibited spiritual gifts of workmanship (service) and that Warren has confused these with natural abilities, which come at birth. This is not such a far-fetched notion for even today it is possible to confuse the Biblical gifts of administration, wisdom, knowledge and service with the natural abilities to manage, display wisdom, display knowledge, and perform practical tasks, respectively. The gift of service may be confused with natural abilities many times. MacArthur defines the gift of service/helps as the special ability given by the Holy Spirit to share the burdens of others, practically supporting and working alongside them, assisting them in their ministries (MacArthur, 1995:127). Clearly the spiritual gift requires the action of the Holy Spirit while the natural gift does not require the action of the Holy Spirit. Exodus 31:1-6 represents Warren's most important passage on

natural abilities and their use in God's service but if they represent a spiritual gift of service then Warren has no ace to play. The researcher will however give Warren the benefit of the doubt in this case.

Blackaby warns us that if a Christian relies on their own strength and abilities then they will not be very useful to God (Blackaby, 2005:26-27). To rely on your own abilities without the empowering of the Holy Spirit will mean that you will fail to achieve what he calls the God-sized calling on your life. He believes rightly that God will not use a man or woman who is proud, for Isaiah 66:2 states: "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word" (Is. 66:2; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). This quote by Blackaby doesn't really contradict Warren's point but provides clarification. Warren says that abilities should be used alongside gifts. Blackaby's quote from Isaiah 66:2 certainly does state that God will not use those who have only confidence in themselves, in His service. 2Chronicles 16:9 makes the point that God looks for those whose hearts are 'loyal to Him', and thus dependant upon Him. 1 Samuel 16:7 makes the point that God doesn't even look at the outward appearances (which surely includes natural strengths/abilities), He is not moved by them, rather He looks at the heart. This of course does not mean that He doesn't make use of our natural talents, but these are at best secondary considerations.

It is worth considering Gideon here. He is probably the best example of a naturally weak man used mightily by God. He was not impressive, nor did he possess any special talents that we know of, yet God chose to use him. Consider the interesting conversation Gideon had with the Angel of the LORD: "The LORD turned to him and said, 'Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?' 'But Lord,' Gideon asked,

'how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family'. The LORD answered, 'I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together' " (Jud. 6:14-16; [www.onlinebible.org.](http://www.onlinebible.org;); NIV). It can be argued perhaps that Gideon did have some strength of his own, but not too much. God particularly chose Gideon to make sure that His ability to save Israel from the Midianites might not be confused with Gideon's own ability to deliver them. That is why God kept thinning out the army of Israel (cf. Jud. 7:2-6) from twenty-two thousand to only three hundred men, who were sent to fight one hundred and twenty thousand Midianites (Blackaby, 2005:43). This made a human solution to the Midianite problem impossibility.

An analysis of the Greek word 'dunamis' reveals that it may be translated as 'power', 'strength' or 'ability' (Strongs word #1411; www.onlinebible.org). This adds even more weight to the argument of John 15:5 that we can do nothing in our own strength. If abilities are indeed the same as human 'strengths', which is one of the natural renderings of the Greek word 'dunamis', then the Bible certainly does downplay them. The Bible encourages the use of spiritual gifts (cf. Romans 12:6-8) but the never directly and openly encourages the use of natural abilities, with the only possible exception of Exodus 31:1-6 (which still contains no clear directive on the use of natural abilities by Christians to serve God). Warren therefore must be wrong in his assertion that they are equally important as spiritual gifts. The most that may be said is that they are significant but less important than spiritual gifts. Even a concordance study on 'ability' and 'abilities' in the NT (NKJV) reveals only four verses containing the word 'ability' (Concordance search; [www.onlinebible.org.](http://www.onlinebible.org); NKJV). Two of these four verses do not even refer to natural abilities as such but to disposable money which people had to give to the suffering Jerusalem Church (i.e. they gave

according to their ability; cf. Acts 11:29 and 2Cor. 8:3). In fact only two verses clearly speak of natural ability (i.e. Matt. 25:15 and 1Pet. 4:11). The same concordance search on the word 'gift' and 'gifts' in the NT (NKJV) reveals twenty-three clear references to spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit (Concordance search, www.onlinebible.org., NKJV). This surely indicates that spiritual gifts are more important than natural abilities as the NT emphasizes gifts over natural abilities in a ratio of twenty-three to two! Warren cannot be right therefore in saying that abilities are just as important as spiritual gifts for the Bible emphasizes them very differently.

Fourthly, Warren indicates that studies reveal that an average person possesses from 500-700 different skills and abilities (Warren, 2005:302). The exact number of skills that people possess is not Biblically verifiable but represents empirical studies that are beyond the scope of this research project. The fact that people have many different kinds of skills and abilities is demonstrable in the Bible. One could theoretically work through the Bible and list the many strengths and abilities that various men have had, but this would not likely add up to the 500-700 skills and abilities Warren refers to. It is clear from the Bible that men do possess many different skills for Jesus was Himself a carpenter (cf. Mark 6:3), Paul was a tentmaker (cf. Acts 18:3), Peter was a fisherman (cf. Matt. 4:18), etc.

Fifthly, Warren says: "Part of the Churches responsibility is to identify and release your abilities for serving God" (Warren, 2002:242). "The real problem is twofold: First, people need some process of skill identification. Most people are using abilities that they are unaware that they have. Secondly, they need a process to help them to match their abilities with the right ministry" (Warren, 2005:302). Every ability should be used to honour God (cf.

1Cor. 10:31). Surprisingly, even the ability to make money comes from God (cf. Deut. 8:18) (Warren, 2002:242-243; 2005:302). Regarding identifying and releasing abilities, there are no clear indications in the Bible that Christians or Churches should identify a Christian's natural abilities. Therefore no special process of skill identification is required. It seems strange that Warren is against spiritual gift surveys and then seems partial to natural ability surveys, this doesn't seem consistent unless he means that Church members should observe each other in practical ministries. Regarding using abilities to honour God, Warren cannot be faulted for 1Corinthians 10:31 is all-inclusive: "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or *whatever you do*, do all to the glory of God" (1Cor. 10:31, www.onlinebible.org., NKJV, *emphasis mine*). This verse clearly states that every part of our lives, including our abilities, must be used for God's glory.

Deuteronomy 8:18 referred to by Warren above concerns God giving people the ability to make money. This is the plain teaching of Deuteronomy 8:18, which states: "But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today " (Deut. 8:18; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV).

Sixthly, Warren points out that attention should be focused on what each person is good at (which God has gifted you at); the things we are not good at we should downplay (Warren, 2002:243-244). The above point is only clear in terms of spiritual gifts for Christians are commanded to use the gifts that they possess and not ones they do not possess (cf. 1Pet. 4:10). However, this does not extend as to the use of natural abilities. Warren makes common sense in his sixth point above, but not Biblical sense as he applies this to natural

abilities. John 15 makes the point that following natural strengths alone will lead to failure and speaks of the necessity of continuing to 'abide in Christ' in order to bear the fruit that God requires (i.e. one of the Christian's general callings in the Bible is bear fruit, i.e. to do good works, cf. Eph. 2:10). John 15:5 states that without abiding in Christ the Christian can "...do nothing" (John. 15:5; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). Thus without abiding in Christ a Christian will fail to do the works that God requires. Human abilities then are certainly not what Christians should be focused upon. God's calling on Christians' lives often requires more of them than they can do by their own strength/ability. Blackaby makes a good point here; the Gospels never mention Jesus' physical abilities or special talents but rather point to the work of the Holy Spirit in his life (Blackaby, 2005:31). It is also worth considering Jesus' own testimony in this regard: John 5:19 "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does" (John 5:19, www.onlinebible.org., NIV). If Jesus could do nothing to serve God in His own strength then He certainly was downplaying His own natural abilities and could not have held to a high view of natural abilities in God's service. Again Jesus states: "I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me" (John 8:28-29; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV). "Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work" (John 14:10; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV). These are not the words of someone who held natural abilities in high esteem, but He looked to God to provide His words, deeds and abilities. If anyone had abilities Jesus surely did, but He placed no emphasis upon them. Warren's statement that we should focusing on our abilities is then out of sync with Jesus' teachings and is then incorrect according to the literal, grammatical, historical method of Bible hermeneutics.

Seventhly, Warren says: "God will never ask you to dedicate your life to a task you have no talent for. On the other hand, the abilities you do have are a strong indication of what God wants you to do with your life. They are clues to knowing God's will for you...God doesn't waste abilities; He matches our calling and our capabilities. Your abilities were not just given to make a living; God gave them to you for your ministry. Peter said, 'God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God's many kinds of blessings' "(Warren, 2002:243-244; LB, 1Pet. 4:10). Warren is incorrect in quoting 1Peter 4:10 as referring to abilities; this is not Biblical for Peter refers here to spiritual gifts not natural abilities. The Greek word used here is 'charisma' meaning 'gift' not 'ability' (Strong's word #5486; Interlinear Greek New Testament; www.onlinebible.org). He does this because he uses the Living Bible, which is hazy on the distinction between gifts and abilities, being a paraphrase. Warren teaches that God only uses Christians in the area of natural abilities, surely, the very gifts of the Holy Spirit give the Christian a talent for the ministry God is calling him to do. Romans 12:6-8 is the passage which most closely resembles Warren's point on God using a Christian in their area of strength, but the only focus there is on the spiritual gifts. The text has nothing to say about natural abilities: "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 " (Rom. 12:6-8; www.onlinebible.org.; NKJV). Apart from very general verses such as 1Corinthians 10:31 (quoted above) and Colossians 3:23 (quoted below) there are no clear references to using natural abilities to serve God. Colossians 3:23 states: "Whatever you do, work at it

with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men” (Col. 3:23; www.onlinebible.org;
NIV).

Eighthly, Warren notes that at Saddleback their ministries include: repairing donated cars for the needy; landscaping; providing health care; composing songs; doing research for sermons; translating sermons; coaching sport teams; teaching music. New members are told, "Whatever you are good at, you should be doing for your Church" (Warren, 2002:244)! Some of the above categories may indeed fall under the category of spiritual gifts, especially the gifts of server/helps (i.e. this might even include helping fix cars, translating sermons, etc) and even the spiritual gift of teaching (i.e. doing research for sermons). Some of these tasks may in fact be exercising gifts of the Spirit, and others might just be the use of natural abilities. There is a danger that this kind of communal-help system may not build the Kingdom of God, but may be building a social club through the activity of its members who bring their diverse strengths to bear on the organisation. For example the researcher believes that Church sports teams falls outside of the scope of the Bible and falls into the category of entertainment. The researcher sees nothing wrong with this picture provided it does not detract from the main focus of a Church, which the researcher understands primarily as obedience to Christ's Great Commission, to proclaim the Gospel, equip Christians to become mature in the faith and do their own work of ministry (cf. Matt. 28:18-20; Eph. 4:7-16). It is quite possible that an elaborate system such as is seen at Saddleback may actually detract from this task by providing the perceived needs of people (i.e. 'physical' salvation) instead of their real needs (i.e. salvation of their souls). The members may become an audience coming to be entertained, or Church may become a place to drink coffee with friends and play pool, or even a place to come and have your car

fixed for free. The difference between a real Gospel provider (i.e. a Church focused on the person and work of Jesus, cf. Rom. 1:3) and a social Gospel provider is simply a change in focus from Christ to human needs. Saddleback may have crossed that line, this may especially be the danger when services become 'seeker-sensitive' and focused on meeting the perceived needs of the average Californian Churchgoer 'Saddleback Sam' (Warren, 2005:127, 191). Warren's quote: "Whatever you are good at, you should be doing for your Church"! (Warren, 2002:244) is not strictly Biblically correct, for everything should be done for the glory of God (cf. 1Cor. 10:31). Here the Church (Greek *ekklesia* meaning *assembly* of Christians) moves from the Biblical definition of the people of God to an institution in its own right which the members must now serve (Strong's word #1577; www.onlinebible.org; Interlinear Greek New Testament).

After considering Warren's views on natural abilities, it is clear that he lacks Biblical support for most of his eight points above. While natural abilities are certainly secondary to the working of the Holy Spirit through Christians and while there may be dangers associated with focusing on natural abilities; it is important not throw out the baby with the bath water. Natural abilities are God-given for God is the Creator of all mankind and mankind must use all their skills and abilities to bring God glory (cf. 1Cor. 10:31). It may be that Christians are even strengthened by God (i.e. by the Holy Spirit) for particular tasks, involving the use of 'natural abilities'. Warren does however go too far in his appraisal of abilities and goes well beyond the teaching of the Bible. The researcher therefore rejects most of his teachings on natural abilities as a guide for ministry.

2.3.4 Personality

Firstly, Warren states that there are an almost infinite number of genetic possibilities when it comes to human DNA (i.e. 10 to the power of 2.4 billion) that makes each human unique (Warren, 2002:244-245). This is not Biblically verifiable but represents empirical studies that are beyond the scope of this research project.

Secondly, God loves variety as can be seen in the varied personalities (e.g. introverts and extroverts; task people and people people; thinkers and feelers; individuals and team players) (Warren, 2002:245; 2005:302). This is also not Biblically verifiable but represents empirical studies that are beyond the scope of this research project. These personality traits are experientially true, but again this goes beyond the scope of this research project. The Bible can be used to illustrate various personality traits of many different people. For example extrovert traits may be seen in the apostle Peter who was rather bold and often spoke out and performed deeds that no shy introverted person would have done. Examples include rebuking Jesus for speaking of His death on the cross (cf. Matt. 16:22), inappropriately suggesting that three shelters should be built for Jesus, Moses and Elijah during the Transfiguration (cf. Matt. 17:4). He even attempted to walk on the water during a storm in the middle of the lake (cf. Matt. 14:29). The traits of introvert may be seen in Jacob who was shy. “The boys grew up, and Esau became a skilful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was a quiet man, staying among the tents” (Gen. 25:27; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV). It might be argued that Martha and Mary illustrate task people and people people respectively, for Martha was focused on preparing a meal for Jesus and the disciples (i.e. a task), while Mary was focused on the person of Jesus and not the task of preparing the meal (cf. Luke 10:38-42). Again the traits of individual versus team player

may be seen illustrated in the Bible. Elijah might be seen as an individual and as a loner for he did spend significant time on his own, at least three and a half years, though he was being pursued by Jezebel and was in hiding for that time (cf. 1Kings 17:1-6). He certainly viewed himself as the sole survivor of God's people and as alone: "So he said, 'I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life' " (1Kings 19:10; www.onlinebible.org.; NKJV). Timothy might be an example of a team player for he was like a son to the apostle Paul and worked as Paul's right hand man in his Gospel ministry. Philippians 2:22 illustrates this point: "But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the Gospel (Phil. 2:22; www.onlinebible.org.; NKJV). Again such illustrations cannot support Warren's philosophical personality model since the researcher is focusing only on clear Biblical teaching on the matter according to the literal, grammatical, historical method of Bible hermeneutics.

Many of Warren's personality traits mentioned above actually come from the Psychologist Carl Jung who identified introverted and the extraverted types, thinkers and feelers (Carmichael, 2008:http://www.sacredsandwich.com/warren_jung_chart.htm). This is potentially dangerous for the Bible does warn against following the philosophies of men: "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ (Col. 2:8, www.onlinebible.org., NKJV). Carmichael goes on to say: "Despite Warren's claim, the Bible never gives 'proof' of the classification of personalities; it is a purely pagan concoction. The four temperaments, as conceived by Hippocrates and later developed by

Galen, was a prevalent Greek philosophy during the time of Paul's apostolic ministry. Unlike Warren and Jung, however, Paul did not implement these Greeks ideas into his teachings. In fact, he categorically rejected them and 'determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified' " (Carmichael, 2008:http://www.sacredsandwich.com/warren_jung_chart.htm) (cf. 1Cor. 2:2).

The Bible does not even speak about personality but only of character. A concordance search on the word 'personality' in both the NKJV and NIV reveals no matching entries, showing that it is nowhere mentioned directly in the Bible (www.onlinebible.org). It is thus fair to say that personality is not a Biblical agenda. For the purposes of this research project such non Biblical sources must be rejected as insubstantial for they fall outside of the clear revelation of the Bible and thus are not verifiably correct according to the literal, grammatical, historical method of Bible hermeneutics. After all Warren is discussing a Christian's ministry here, which is an overtly Christian topic. There are such things as general truths, not contained in the Bible. An example would be arithmetic (e.g. the ten times table). The Bible does not contain the ten times table, but it is empirically provable and true. The Bible does however claim sufficiency in terms of its specific teachings: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2Tim. 3:16-17; www.onlinebible.org.; NKJV). Surely then it is wrong to attempt to add to its message, especially when the message (i.e. What is my ministry?) is overtly a Biblical topic!

Carmichael notes: "If Warren truly believes in the pre-eminence of God's revelation to understand man, then why does he rely so heavily on the 'useless wisdom' of psychology

instead of Scripture?" (Carmichael, 2008:http://www.sacredsandwich.com/warren_jung_chart.htm). He goes on to quote 1Corinthians 3:19-20 to back up this statement: "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God'. For it is written, 'He catches the wise in their *own* craftiness'; and again, The LORD knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile" (1Cor. 3:19-20; www.onlinebible.org.; NKJV). Carmichael makes a good point here. Human wisdom cannot be placed on a par with God's word, and SHAPE places all five categories on an equal footing.

Thirdly, Warren uses Hippocrates personality model (i.e. distinguishing between Choleric, Sanguines, Phlegmatics and Melancholics). He identifies Peter the Sanguine, Paul the Choleric and Jeremiah the Melancholic. (Abraham would be the classic example of a Phlegmatic, but he does not go this far) (Warren, 2002:245; 2005:302-303). The Bible does not refer to personality directly, but only to godly and ungodly character (cf. Gal. 5:19-22). It may seem like splitting hairs, by differentiating personality and character; but character refers more to one's morality (Hawkins, 1979:98), i.e. whether moral or immoral by nature. Warren refers to personality in secular psychological terms (i.e. whether introvert or extrovert; a people person or task person), not Biblically, and thus reflects the personality models of Hippocrates, Galen and Jung who each further developed this model of personality (2008:newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Personality?oldid=687305). Carmichael links Warren and Jung together and believes that Warren simply is using Jungian psychology in the P of SHAPE analysis (Carmichael, http://www.sacredsandwich.com/warren_jung_chart.htm). Few non-Christians would link personality and the Bible, especially since many popular secular personality models abound

(e.g. Hippocrates four humours, DISC personality analysis, Myers-Briggs personality tests, etc). Personality is defined by the Oxford Paperback Dictionary as ‘distinctive qualities’ (Hawkins, 1979:473) and not necessarily moral qualities. The kind of personality traits that Warren mentions are not right and wrong moral characteristics for Warren states that no personality is right or wrong (Warren, 2002:245-246). The Greek word used for character in the Bible is ‘dokime’ and can be translated as ‘proving’, ‘tried character’ or ‘a specimen of tried worth’ (Strong’s word #1382, www.onlinebible.org).

It is true that the Bible reports much information about people, so that we may deduce what kind of personality they possessed. For example personality books by La Haye such as ‘Understanding The Male Temperament’ refer to Paul the Choleric (La Haye, 1977:104) and Peter the Sanguine (La Haye, 1977:58), Moses the Melancholic (La Haye, 1977:109). Certain ministries such as elders and deacons are only authorised to those with godly characters. By a godly character here we are referring to qualities such as: being above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money, and one who manages his own family well so that his children obey him with proper respect (cf. 1Tim. 3:2-4). The researcher enjoys personality analysis but has to concede that such analyses are not Biblically derived, for the Bible does not mention personality types (though everyone had a personality in the Bible)! These too cannot be the guiding criteria for ministry for a sanctified choleric, sanguine, melancholic or phlegmatic could all qualify for eldership, regardless of their personality.

Fourthly, Warren states that there are no wrong personalities for ministry. The different personalities rather provide balance and flavour in the Church. Your personality affects how and where you use spiritual gifts (e.g. extrovert evangelists and an introvert evangelists will apply their gifts differently). Ministering out of character is foolish and creates tension and discomfort, requiring extra energy. It produces poor results. Ministries therefore cannot be mimicked exactly because we are all different personalities (Warren, 2002:245-246; 2005:303). Carmichael identifies a weakness in Warren's statement about personalities not being right or wrong for ministry. He states: "Worse yet, Warren is teaching that a person's 'no right or wrong' personality is somehow unaffected by the fall and is always beneficial for ministry. How, we ask, does a 'phlegmatic temperament' towards laziness and slothfulness serve God's purpose in ministry?" (Carmichael, 2008: http://www.sacredsandwich.com/warren_jung_chart.htm). He certainly makes an interesting point here. Even the categories of Choleric, Phlegmatic, Sanguine and Melancholic are presented in both their positive and negative traits. Negative traits cannot be right for ministry. See La Haye's 'The Four basic Temperaments' personality wheel (see Addendum, p106) to see the strengths and weaknesses listed for each temperament.

One of the major weaknesses that strikes the researcher in Warren's personality section, or perhaps in the whole SHAPE analysis, is that godly character does not seem to form a part of the SHAPE consideration. The researcher believes that Warren could have fitted 'godly character' into his personality section or perhaps even defined personality in terms of a Christian character, and not in terms of worldly Psychology. Christian character refers to the fruit of the Holy Spirit (i.e. love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control: cf. Gal. 5:22-23). People will say about a patient person, 'what

a patient person he is', referring to his character (and sometimes referring to personality as well). Assuming character and personality overlap (which they probably do, especially as the terms are commonly understood; it is fair to say that God changes characters, and enhances the more positive sides of people's personalities, reducing also the possible weaknesses. This happens especially as a person becomes more sanctified by the Holy Spirit. As a Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit their character is altered to reflect the character of Christ (cf. Rom. 8:29). The Holy Spirit does not give us a different personality at conversion they remain the same. However, our character changes markedly by the sanctifying work of the Spirit.

Most ministries will fail if the person operating them does not have a godly character. Indeed all Christians are called to be salt and light (cf. Matt. 5:13-16), which in its correct context of the sermon on the mounts introduction (i.e. the beatitudes-cf. Matt. 5:3-10), means that all Christians must possess various qualities. Jesus defines Christian character as being poor in spirit (i.e. humble because they understand their unworthiness and spiritually bankrupt before God); they must mourn over sin in their own lives and in the world; they must be meek (i.e. they put others interests before their own); they must hunger and thirst for righteousness; they must be merciful; they must be pure in heart (i.e. undivided in their devotion to God) and they must be peacemakers (i.e. bringing restoration of relationships). It is only as Christians are truly salt and light that God is glorified and a Christian's ministry can be effective. Obviously a Christian is not going to be perfect this side of glory, but surely these qualities must be serious considerations before a person is authorised into ministry. If a Christian had a great gifting but an unsanctified character this could be disastrous (as it has been in Churches where the minister has fallen into public sin

and disgrace). Likewise a person with a poor gifting in a particular area, even with a godly character will be a failure in the wrong ministry. Both gifting and character have to go hand in hand. Harvey points out that there needs to be four graces present in any candidate seeking to go into the 'ministry'. He identifies these as: firstly, grace in character; secondly, grace in capabilities (the S and A in SHAPE); thirdly, grace in conduct in the home; and fourthly grace in confirmation in the Church (the E in SHAPE) (Harvey, 2005:25). Strauch comments on godly character: "Desire alone is not enough; it must be matched by good character and spiritual capability" (Strauch quoted by Harvey, 2005:27). Blackaby comments on the importance of character, as even more important than gifts: "The assignments of God always depend on character, not 'gifts'. He'll bypass thousands of people with impressive 'gifts' to find one person whose heart is pure" (Blackaby, 2005:66). He may be underestimating the importance of gifts here, but the importance of godly character cannot be underestimated. 2Chronicles 16:9 confirms that God strengthens those who have an undivided heart before Him, no mention is made of their personality.

The researcher is aware that Warren deals with Christian character in his five purposes (i.e. worship, fellowship, *discipleship*, ministry and missions), particularly the purpose of discipleship, his 'second base', which is dealt with before bringing a person to 'third base' of ministry (i.e. SHAPE analysis). The researcher still believes that it is an essential element in ministry of any kind that it cannot be left out of SHAPE analysis. Character could even include the aspect of personality, but would focus on the godly character and how that particular godly personality suits a particular ministry.

Fifthly, Warren recommends using personality books and tools to aid in determining your personality (Warren, 2002:246). The Bible has nothing to say on this topic and this falls outside of the scope of this research project. Again it is rather odd that Warren opposes spiritual gift tests and yet promotes the use of such tests when it comes to abilities and personalities! If Warren rejected spiritual gift questionnaires because of denominational bias (Warren, 2005:300-301) then how much more should personality tests be rejected which are full of pagan Greek philosophical thought!

Sixthly, Warren believes that the different personalities bless the family of God with depth and variety (Warren, 2002:246; 2005:302-303). This is experientially true (when people exhibit the good sides of their personalities) and experientially not true (when people exhibit the dark sides of their personalities). This point is may not be confirmed by the Bible and is therefore outside of the scope of this research project and is thus rejected.

Seventhly, Warren states "When you minister in a manner consistent with the personality God gave you, you experience fulfilment, satisfaction, and fruitfulness" (Warren, 2002:246). Carmichael comments on this very point: "While Warren has rightly acknowledged God's sovereign purpose in creating us, he has mistakenly made God's divine purpose synonymous with our so-called 'shape' by advocating the Jungian idea of developing the personality to 'achieve wholeness'. This Jungian process, however, does not serve God, but serves the god within us. Scripture calls for an active, heartfelt obedience to God's will through the transforming power of the Spirit, not a misguided exploration of our natural psychological makeup to define our God-given purpose" (Carmichael, 2008: http://www.sacredsandwich.com/warren_jung_chart.htm). He goes on to quote two verses

which emphasise the importance of following God and not anything else, including our own natural wisdom: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths” (Prov. 3:5-6, www.onlinebible.org., NKJV). Again Carmichael quotes 1Corinthians 2:5: “Your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God” (1Cor. 2:5; www.onlinebible.org.; NKJV). Carmichael is absolutely right here. Relying on inner drives and wisdom of men is relying on man and not on God. Man rather lives by every word from the mouth of God (cf. Matt. 4:4).

2.3.5 Experience

Firstly, Warren teaches that five main kinds of experiences shape our lives:

- Educational (i.e. you had favourite subjects at school).
- Vocational (i.e. some jobs you were more effective in than others).
- Spiritual (i.e. significant times you spent with God).
- Ministry (i.e. how you served God in the past).
- Painful (i.e. the problems, hurts, thorns and trials you learned from). (Warren, 2002:246; 2005:303)

The above point represents an experiential truth, which is not Biblically verifiable according to the literal, grammatical, historical method of Bible hermeneutics. Elements of the above are illustrated in the lives of many servants of God, such as Moses and Paul who we will consider below.

Secondly, God intentionally uses painful experiences the most to prepare you for ministry. "God never wastes a hurt!...In fact, your greatest ministry will most likely come out of your greatest hurt" (Warren, 2002:246). The example he gives here is of parents of a Down

syndrome child, being able to minister to other parents with Down syndrome children (cf. 2Cor. 1:4). (Warren, 2002:246-247; 2005:303-304). The researcher believes Warren to be correct, God does intentionally submit his people to painful circumstances in order to humble them, grow their faith and do them good (cf. Rom. 8:28-29). Joseph is an interesting example of a man who was submitted to painful experiences (such as being sold into slavery), for the sake of the salvation of his whole family. Consider Genesis 50:20-21: "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children. And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them" (Gen. 50:20-21; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). Again the Israelites in the wilderness were put through times of testing (i.e. God withheld water and food from them) in order to test their hearts, humble them and help them see God as their provider. "Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD" (Deut. 8:2-3; www.onlinebible.org; NIV).

Thirdly, Warren states: "If you really desire to be used by God, you must understand a powerful truth: the very experiences that you have resented or regretted most in life-the ones you wanted to hide and forget are the experiences God wants to use to help others. They are your ministry!...People are always more encouraged when we share how God's grace helped us in our weakness than when we brag about our strengths" (Warren, 2002:247). Only shared experiences can help others.

The above three points cannot be directly proved by means of Bible quotes. However a character study of the life of Moses and the life of Paul does bear up some of Warren's three points above. Blackaby points out that Moses was well prepared experientially by God for his particular ministry (Blackaby, 2001:41). He certainly needed his Egyptian education, as literacy and wisdom would have been particularly useful in order to be able to converse with Pharaoh, in his own language, concerning Israel's freedom. Moses would most likely have been required to observe the correct Egyptian cultural etiquette when in Pharaoh's presence. Literacy and wisdom would have proved an essential ingredient in order to: lead the nation of Israel effectively to the Promised Land; compose the Pentateuch and compose his sermons effectively (e.g. Moses' three sermons in Deuteronomy 1:1-4:43; 4:44-26:19; and 27:1-34:12). His forty years in the desert as a shepherd prepared him for a further forty years in the wilderness shepherding Israel, God's sheep (cf. Ezek. 34:2). His slave heritage, his failures (i.e. his unsuccessful attempt to free Israel from slavery by killing the Egyptian), and the forty years in the wilderness gave him humility ('more than any other man alive at the time'-cf. Num. 12:3), so that God could work with him. A proud man would not have obeyed God like Moses did; the rebellious 'stiff-necked' Israelites are proof of that fact (cf. Ex. 32:9). Indeed, "God can use adversity to build certain qualities deep within one's character that could not be fully developed in any other way" (Blackaby, 2001:42).

The researcher believes that it was true in Moses' case that his greatest ministry came from his greatest hurt. The researcher believes that he must have been plagued by his own inability to free the Israelites, which culminated in the killing of the Egyptian. The freeing of the Israelites was his greatest failure initially, something he most likely must have given up

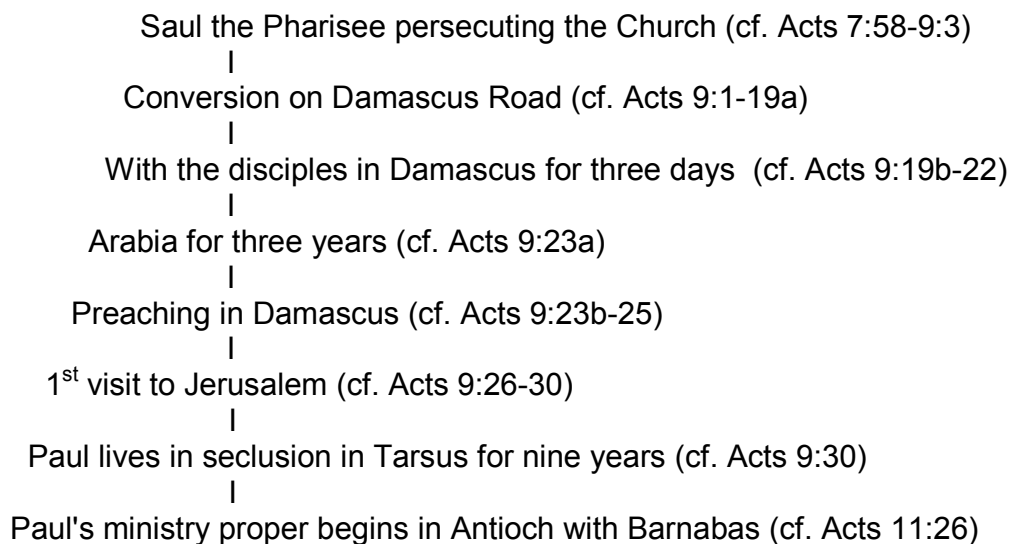
on when he resigned himself to being a shepherd in the wilderness for forty years, and yet it became his primary ministry for the last forty years of his life.

When considering the value of experience in developing a person for ministry, from a Biblical perspective one immediately thinks of Romans 8:28: "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). Blackaby commenting on this verse states: "When God directs a life for His purposes, all of life is a school. No experience, good or bad, is ever wasted (Rom. 8:28). God doesn't squander people's time. He doesn't ignore their pain. He brings not only healing but growth out of even the worst circumstances. Every relationship can be God's instrument to mature a person's character" (Blackaby, 2001:43). Although the primary purpose of God's workings is to conform us into the image of Christ according to Romans 8:29, being in the image of Christ means that we are now prepared for ministry, for that is what Christ the true 'image-bearer' (cf. Col. 1:15) spent his time doing.

The apostle Paul also is a classic Biblical example of how God shapes people for their ministry, through their experiences. For Paul to be an effective apostle, missionary, preacher, debater, and writer of many Epistles, he needed to be literate and to have a thorough knowledge of the OT, the Bible of his time. In his day, becoming a Pharisee and a disciple of Gamaliel was probably the best way anyone could become literate and well trained in the knowledge of the OT (cf. Acts 22:3). He ended up being arguably the greatest of the apostles precisely because of his experiences and upbringing. All the sufferings Paul went through taught him to trust in God and in His strength alone (cf. 2Cor. 12:9-10). Paul,

like Jesus learned obedience from what He suffered (cf. Heb. 5:8); that is how he learned to trust God in everything and become great (cf. Phil. 4:12-13). Sometimes people assume that Paul was converted on the road to Damascus and then immediately began his apostolic ministry. This is simply not true; God took approximately fourteen years to prepare him properly for his official fifteen-year apostolic ministry (cf. Gal. 2:1). After all, he did not get to spend three years with Jesus being disciplined by Him, as the other eleven apostles did. He didn't go to any Christian Bible college after his conversion, nor did he frequent the Churches of Judea in order to be trained by the apostles there (cf. Gal. 1:22; 2:1). He was an outsider for almost fourteen years after his conversion, that is, until Barnabas brought him to the Church at Antioch (cf. Acts 9:26). Looking at a time line of Paul's early Christian years we see the following:

A Timeline of Paul's Early Christian Life from Acts:



(Stott, 2004b:31-41)

Initially Paul was an enemy of the Church and was zealous for the traditions of the Pharisees (cf. Gal.1:13-14), he persecuted the Church and was advancing up the ranks as

a Pharisee (Acts 8:1-9:3). Sometime later he was converted on the road to Damascus (cf. Acts 9:1-19). Paul was set apart, called and Christ was revealed to him (cf. Gal. 1:15). God's plans for his life were now taking effect. Christ was revealed to him as an external revelation, blinding him, and as an internal revelation shining into his heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ (cf. 2Cor. 4:6). This was all done to prepare him for his apostolic ministry. He then went to Damascus to the house of Judas on Straight Street, where Ananias came to restore his sight. For approximately three days he stayed with the disciples there, probably with Ananias (cf. Acts 9:19). He did preach in the synagogues (cf. Gal. 1:18; Acts 9:20), and he had already received the Gospel by this stage, at least in its basic form. Instead of going to Jerusalem, Paul went instead to Arabia for up to three years (cf. Gal. 1:18). We are not exactly sure what happened to Paul in Arabia. Bishop Lightfoot states: "A veil of thick darkness hangs over St, Paul's visit to Arabia" (as quoted by Stott, 2004b:34). He most probably meditated on the OT scriptures and on Jesus Christ as Messiah and received revelations from Jesus while there. Stott points out that this may have been a time of personal discipleship between himself and the Lord, to make up for the three years he missed (Stott, 2004b:34). He then traveled through Damascus on his way to Jerusalem. Only after he had received his Gospel did he visit Peter and James in Jerusalem and only for a period of fifteen days to get acquainted with them (cf. Gal. 1:18-20). For safety reasons he went to Syria and Cilicia to his hometown of Tarsus for nine years, far away from Jerusalem, where he remained unknown to the Judean Churches (cf. Gal. 1:21-22; Acts 9:30). All the Church knew of him at that time was his reputation, that the man who persecuted the Church now preached the faith, and they glorified God (cf. Gal. 1:22-24).

Paul's argument in Galatians 1:10-24 was that God had ordained him before he was even born to be an apostle to the Gentiles. Once saved Paul had no contact with the Jerusalem apostles or Judean Churches before his Gospel was fully established. As with the other apostles in Jerusalem, his message had its origin in God alone and in no man. God had prepared Paul in the same way that He prepared the other apostles (i.e. experientially). All in all God spent some fourteen years preparing him for fifteen years of official ministry (cf. Gal. 2:1). Again in the case of Paul (as with Moses) his greatest hurt became his greatest ministry. Consider the words of 1Corinthians 15:9-10: "For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me" (1Cor. 15:9-10; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). One can detect the sorrow in those words. It was an area of pain in Paul's life. In 1Timothy 1:16 Paul refers to himself as 'the worst of sinners'. We can see that he reflected upon his murderous days of persecution of the Church with pain. Like Moses, Paul's greatest failure (i.e. destroying the Church) became his primary field of ministry (i.e. building up the Church). Warren is in the researcher's opinion correct in his third point above; God often uses our area of greatest pain as our area of greatest ministry effectiveness (once we have put our faith in God's strength and not in our own). Secondly, the researcher partly agrees with Warren that experiences need to be shared in order to help others. For example it was through the sharing of Paul's failures and successes that many millions of Christians have been encouraged to persevere in their struggle as a Christian (cf. 2Cor. 11:23-12:10). Not all experiences need to be shared to be helpful though. Sometimes our own personal experiences shape our own life powerfully. Some experiences are so personal that we may never share them with others, this does not

make them useless. Consider Paul's vision of the third heaven (cf. 2Cor.12:2-4), he was not permitted to tell what he experienced and yet his life was powerfully affected and his ministry encouraged. Experience then is not a foolproof guide to determining one's ministry and not everyone goes through the great failures and successes of Moses and Paul. One's experiences in ministry need to be compared with the Bible primarily (cf. Matt. 4:4) to be sure we are not self-deceived. It is also safer to have experiences confirmed by the Church, because it is possible to be fooled into thinking that one is gifted at a certain ministry, by your own experiences, wrongly interpreted, when in fact one may not be gifted in that area at all. For example one may think of oneself as gifted singer, and thoroughly enjoy making a joyful noise, when all the time one is a terrible singer. Harvey makes an important statement with reference to the confirmation of the ministry of Paul by the Church: "The life of Paul, of course, exemplifies this process of an internal call, followed by preparation, followed by an external confirmation. First, Paul encounters Christ in a spectacular way on the road to Damascus, and God speaks to him about his call and future (Acts 9:6, 15-16). Yet we don't see Paul sent out until four chapters later, when considerable time has passed (Acts 13:1-3). When Paul is confirmed into ministry, it is by the Holy Spirit at work through the local eldership to which Paul was submitted" (Harvey, 2005:31). In his critique of experience Harvey concludes: "Experience, of course, can be a fallible guide, subject to the same limited perspective and sinful propensities as all our motivations. Yet without some confirming experiences, a man won't seriously embrace the challenge of ministry" (Harvey, 2005:42).

2.4 Conclusion

Concerning spiritual gifts (i.e. the S of SHAPE) the researcher concludes that Warren's nine points on spiritual gifts are generally valid and practically useful according to the literal, grammatical, historical hermeneutic. The main objection the researcher has concerns Warren's suggestion that the gifts may not be defined.

When it comes to the H of SHAPE the researcher has many more reservations. The desires of the heart while being pliable are unfortunately tainted with sin. Unfortunately as Harvey noted we can only trust our desires as far as we can trust our hearts, which is not far (Harvey, 2005:39). Obviously the danger does not cancel out the importance of having a desire to serve God in a particular area. God is the one who gives Christians new hearts with new and right desires in order to serve Him faithfully with their minds and hearts (cf. Ezek. 36:26). The flesh and the Spirit still do battle for the heart and mind of Christians and Christians are continually called to walk in the Spirit and to renew their minds continuously (cf. Gal. 5:16; and Rom. 12:2 respectively). The only solution the researcher believes is to submit one's heart to the Bible and bring it inline with the Bible and then give its desires more credence. Ultimately the desires of the heart have to be assessed according to motive (i.e. whether godly or selfish). The more sanctified the heart and mind, the more reliable the desires of the heart will be. The less sanctified the heart and mind are the less reliable will be the desires of the heart. It is fair to say that the heart serves as a guide, but it is a fallible guide. The only infallible and primary guide for the Christian is the Bible (cf. Matt. 4:4). After considering Warren's views on natural abilities (i.e. the A of SHAPE), it is clear that he lacks Biblical support for most of his eight points. It is reasonable to say that natural abilities are God-given for God is the Creator of all mankind and mankind must use all their skills and

abilities to bring God glory (cf. 1Cor. 10:31). It also seems reasonable to say that Christians are even strengthened by God in the area of their natural abilities and thus natural abilities should not be discounted. Warren does however go too far in his appraisal of abilities and goes well beyond the teaching of the Bible. The Bible warns against the trusting of human strengths and denies the effectiveness of man's abilities without Christ's strengthening (cf. John 15:5). The researcher therefore rejects most of his teachings on natural abilities as a guide for ministry.

Concerning personality (i.e. the P of SHAPE) the researcher believes that Warren has no Biblical support and rejects that category outright. Personality and character do overlap in terms of their meanings and if Warren had defined personality in terms of godly character (from a Biblical perspective), and not in terms of worldly Psychology (from Hippocrates, Galen and Jung) then the researcher would have agreed with him wholeheartedly. Christian character (cf. Gal. 5:22-23) has much Biblical support but secular Psychology totally lacks Biblical precedent.

Experience, (i.e. the E of SHAPE) is a fallible guide, subject to the same limited perspective and sinful propensities as all our motivations. Warren does make many helpful insights regarding experience as can be demonstrated in the lives of many Bible characters such as Moses, Joseph and Paul. The researcher believes Warren has a valid point, that experiences are valuable indicators for ministry, but again must be submitted to the Bible for clarification and ideally to the scrutiny of the local Church for confirmation.

The researchers main objection to SHAPE lies in the equal weighting of all five categories of SHAPE. They can not all be on a par (i.e. especially not personality as defined by Warren). It can be argued that spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, character (not personality) and experiences have a place in equipping Christians for ministry, but each category Warren develops needs more clarification and perhaps grading in terms of its importance. The primacy and sufficiency of the words of the Bible over SHAPE categories is not sufficiently highlighted in the researcher's opinion. Yes, Warren does use the Bible to highlight the importance of each SHAPE category, but the reader is not left with a sense of its overriding supremacy and sufficiency. The reader of *The Purpose Driven Life*, especially the section on SHAPE will most probably end up spending far more time in introspection than in searching the Bible for clear instruction (this was the researcher's experience when reading SHAPE for the first time). The researcher was driven to spend many hours in introspection consulting spiritual gift questionnaires and doing personality courses (i.e. especially DISC and Myers-Briggs analysis). Here lies SHAPE's greatest flaw.

In the next chapter the focus will change to how Saddleback applies SHAPE practically in their discipling process. The researcher will compare their method of equipping with the Bible's clearly revealed method of equipping, to see whether they follow a Biblical pattern or not (according to the researcher's hermeneutic).

Chapter 3.

3.1 Introduction

The whole Purpose Driven Church model is practically applied at Saddleback Church by means of four classes which together are referred to as 'The Life Development Process'

(Warren, 2005:105). This process is divided into four classes: Class 101 (Discover Saddleback Membership), Class 201 (Discover Spiritual Maturity), Class 301 (Discover My Ministry) and Class 401 (Discover My Life Mission) (Warren, 2005:105). After each class the members, who are obliged to attend the classes have to sign four covenants, the Membership Covenant, Maturity Covenant, Ministry Covenant and Mission Covenant (Warren, 2005:105). The SHAPE paradigm is our focus and this is applied in Class 301 named Discover My Ministry, and this class is followed by the signing of a Ministry Covenant (Warren, 2005:105). In this chapter we will consider the SHAPE process in terms of its practical application and consider whether this is in keeping with the equipping process referred to in the Bible (cf. Eph. 4; 2Tim. 3-4), as understood in terms of the literal, grammatical, historical method of Bible hermeneutics.

3.2 Practical Application

It is all very well to come up with a theory for determining one's calling to a particular ministry; but a theory is useless while it is not applied. To his credit Warren certainly has come up with a working model and is applying his SHAPE paradigm effectively and he is applying it to many thousands of members. Not only is this the case but also through his books 'The Purpose Driven Life' and especially 'The Purpose Driven Church' he has made this model widely known.

Warren correctly points out the problem in many Churches today: "Unfortunately very little actual ministry takes place in many Churches. Instead, much of the time is taken up by meetings. Faithfulness is often defined in terms of attendance rather than service and members just sit, soak and sour" (Warren, 2005:70). This is sadly the case in many

Churches; the researcher has sadly noted in various Churches he has attended and joined as member that only a core group of members usually effectively perform their 'ministries'. Often the bulk of a congregation are spectators, who shake a few hands, stand up, sing, sit down, close eyes, open eyes, give money, listen, drink tea and drive home till the next service. The researcher has noted that many Christians equate mere attendance at two Sunday services and a mid-week Bible study as fulfilling your Christian duty. In order to combat this problem Saddleback have a four stage equipping process: firstly, Membership (i.e. bringing people into Church membership); secondly, Discipleship (i.e. building them up to maturity); thirdly, Ministry (i.e. training them for ministry); and fourthly, Missions (i.e. sending them out on mission) (Warren, 2005:74). This four-stage process has been identified as 'The Life Development Process', which Warren describe as a baseball diamond with four bases (see Addendum, p107). In order to progress to the next base, each previous base must be completed, involving attendance of four classes and the signing of four covenants.

Firstly, to get to first base, Membership, it is necessary to complete Class 101 Discover Saddleback Membership; the signing of the Membership Covenant follows this class. When signing the Membership Covenant (first base) members agree to serve in a ministry, by discovering their gifts and talents, by being equipped to serve by their pastors, and by developing a servant's heart et al. (Warren, 2005:29, 257).

Secondly, to reach second base, Maturity, it is necessary to complete Class 201 Discover Spiritual Maturity; the signing of the Maturity Covenant follows this class.

Thirdly, to reach third base, Ministry, it is necessary to complete Class 301 Discover My Ministry; the signing of the Ministry Covenant follows this class (see Ministry Covenant Card, Addendum, p108).

Fourthly, to reach fourth base, Missions, it is necessary to complete Class 401 Discover My Life Mission, the signing of the Mission Covenant follows this class.

Saddleback also makes use of various groups to support each base on their baseball diamond. We will only focus attention here on third base for that is the Ministry (SHAPE) base. They have Service groups (Warren, 2005:107), which are support groups for particular kinds of ministries. For example Saddleback have a prison ministry support group for all who do prison ministry and a divorce recovery ministry group for those who have gone through a divorce (Warren, 2005:107). Staff members, referred to as base coaches (Warren, 2005:269) are assigned to teach each base. Added to this, both part-time volunteers and full-time paid staff help run classes. For example a ministry director teaches Class 301, interviews people for ministry placement and supervises the lay ministries of the core members (Warren, 2005:107). Thus a ministry team is formed, whose task it is to turn members into ministers by helping them discover their SHAPE for ministry and help guide them to find either an existing place for ministry or a new ministry. This 300-level Class team operates the Ministry Development Centre, runs the Class 301 monthly as well as the monthly SALT class (Saddleback Advanced Leadership Training), which is a report back session for all of Saddleback's 79 lay ministries (Warren, 2005:103,109, 305). Each person attending Class 301 signs the Saddleback Ministry Covenant, fills out a SHAPE profile, has a personal interview with a ministry consultant to identify three or four possible areas of

ministry and meets with the staff person or lay leader who oversees the ministry they are interested in. Then they are publicly commissioned as a lay minister of the Church at a SALT meeting. Later on they attend the monthly SALT meetings each month (Warren, 2005:96, 309). See Ministry Covenant Card (see Addendum, p108). In addition to Class 301 many other 300-level classes are offered, which relate to ministry such as Class 302 'So You Want to Be a Small-Group Leader' (Warren, 2005:311). Other courses include Youth Ministry, Children's Ministry, Music Ministry, Counselling Ministry, Lay Pastoring, to name a few (Warren, 2005:311). The congregation is usually asked to commit to a ministry for one year, but this is not enforced if that ministry does not suit them. They are given the freedom to experiment. There is even a Lay Ministry Month during which the congregation is encouraged to try a new ministry if they are unsatisfied where they are currently serving (Warren, 2005:314). Saddleback also designate particular months of the year to the various bases and during that month they preach on those purposes and even hold ministry fairs to recruit people for ministry (Warren, 2005:110). Feedback from the congregation is continually sought to fine-tune the effectiveness of each of the four stages (Warren, 2005:111).

In order to kick-start the process Saddleback uses a Welcome card (see below), which encourages people to take their Christianity one step further. See Welcome Card (Addendum, p109).

Warren emphasises the importance of teaching the biblical basis for every member ministry (through sermons, Bible studies, seminars, etc) for: "People always need to know 'why' before you teach them 'how' " (Warren, 2005:297). The first part of the above quote is fair, for Christians do need to know 'why' they need to minister, but the Bible also instructs the

Christian on 'how' to minister. Consider the example of teacher, 2Timothy 3:16-17 tells the teacher 'why' to minister, "So that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2Tim. 3:17; www.onlinebible.org; NKJV). The bible doesn't stop there for the preceding verse, verse 16 tells the teacher 'how' to minister: "All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2Tim. 3:16; www.onlinebible.org; NKJV). Note therefore that the teacher is informed on how to teach, i.e. teach doctrine from the text, rebuke, correct and instruct in the way of righteousness. Warren's quote above suggests that a separate class is needed to explain 'how' to apply a gift practically and that the Bible really only tells one 'why' to minister.

Warren stresses ministry in this way: "At Saddleback, we teach that every Christian has been created for ministry (see Eph. 2:10), saved for ministry (see 2Tim. 1:9), called into ministry (see 1Peter 2:9-10), gifted for ministry (see 1Peter 4:10), authorized for ministry (see Matt. 28:18-20), commanded to minister (see Matt. 20:26-28), to be prepared for ministry (see Eph 4:11-12), needed for ministry (see 1Cor. 12:27), accountable for ministry, and will be rewarded according to his or her ministry (see Col. 3:23-24)" (Warren, 2005:297-298). The researcher believes this to be a good Biblical summary of ministry, and a good motivation to Christians to become involved in ministry.

The researcher at first glance is quite taken with Warren's 300-Class SHAPE applications for it is a well-developed, well thought out, practically working system that helps Christians to specialise in different ministries. However, just because something works well doesn't mean it is right or that it should be applied in the Churches. This is pragmatic but not right.

Let's consider whether such a complex system is necessary from a Biblical perspective. Although Warren does promote the preaching of the Biblical basis for lay ministry (Warren, 2005:297), he seems to insinuate from his quote: "People always need to know 'why' before you teach them 'how' " (Warren, 2005:297), that Biblical teaching is insufficient and that practical SHAPE ministry classes are needed to teach people 'how' to minister. Warren clearly states that the system he has set up equips, empowers and releases members for ministry (Warren, 2005:297). Firstly, in responding to this, it is worth noting that the Bible does not recommend or even mention elaborate systems to teach practical ministry. Secondly, the Bible claims in 2Timothy 3:16-17 that the teaching of the Bible (i.e. the inspired OT and NT Scriptures), especially the teaching of doctrine from the whole Bible, the rebuking of the disobedient from the whole Bible, the correcting those who go astray from the whole Bible, and training in the life of righteousness from the whole Bible is sufficient to make the Christian complete, and even thoroughly equipped for every good work. Nothing will be lacking from the Christian who receives this kind of training. It is true that this kind of thorough Bible ministry does not happen effectively enough in many Churches (i.e. this is the researcher's experience). Many Churches hardly even preach from the OT, and practically ignore various NT books. For example the book of Revelation is very neglected and yet it contains many ministry applications in its seven letters to the seven Churches of Asia Minor. Should the failure of the Church in preaching and teaching the word effectively be compensated for by developing SHAPE paradigms and many special classes? No, the Bible should rather be taught effectively and then Christians will become complete and thoroughly equipped for ministry! Another clear directive from the Pastoral Epistles makes it clear that teaching the word is the primary method of equipping, not through extra-Biblical classes and SHAPE paradigms. 2Timothy 4:2-4 again stresses

the one method required to equip: “Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables” (2Tim. 4:2-4; onlinebible.org.; NKJV). It is interesting to note in the above verse that people get bored with the Bible and are more interested in hearing something new, even ‘fables’, rather than submit to systematic and thorough Bible teaching. This research project has already identified the P of SHAPE as non-Biblical and in fact a worldly theory of personality, by a Greek Philosopher. It might be said then that SHAPE could be considered a fable that distracts people from Bible study. SHAPE does encourage a lot more introspection than Bible study. By introspection the researcher refers to “The examination of one’s own thoughts and feelings” (Hawkins, 1979:334). The truth lies in the Bible (cf. John 17:17), not normally within man, unless the Bible truths have been assimilated first. There is nothing wrong with the development of a music class or with a special study of Spiritual Gifts, etc. The problem comes when this becomes the replacement for a thorough teaching of the Bible then a line has been crossed. If the teaching of the Bible remains the prime method of equipping then such special classes are not prohibited by the Bible. The difficulty the researcher has with Warren’s SHAPE paradigm and 300-Classes is that they might take the place of the Bible as the primary method of equipping, and worse they take the attention off the Bible and replace it with introspection.

3.3 Conclusion

While Warren's 300-Class SHAPE applications are well-developed, well thought out, practically working this doesn't mean it is Biblically right or that it should be applied in the Churches. Warren bases his classes on a pragmatic worldview, it is working in his Church and therefore he sees it as suitable for other Churches to apply. This is really the purpose of 'The Purpose Driven Church', Warren desires that his working model be applied in other Churches. Warren does insinuate that Biblical teaching is insufficient and that practical SHAPE ministry classes are needed to teach people how to minister. He clearly states that the system he has set up equips, empowers and releases members for ministry (Warren, 2005:297). The Bible, while not directly condemning special systems to equip members for ministry does not recommend or even mention them. Rather the Bible claims to be totally sufficient to equip the Christian for ministry (cf. 2Tim. 3:16-17). Simple teaching doctrine, rebuking, correcting and training in the life of righteousness from the whole Bible is sufficient to thoroughly equip the Christian for every good work (cf. 2Tim. 3:16-17). While such ministries are often not found in many Churches this should not be compensated for by developing SHAPE paradigms and many special classes. Rather, the Bible should be taught faithfully. The time has indeed come when men do not endure sound doctrine, but turn away from the truth, to fables (cf. 2Tim. 4:2-4), the P of SHAPE being a case in point. The greatest danger is that SHAPE distracts people from Bible study and replaces the study of the Bible with introspection. Truth lies in the Bible (cf. John 17:17), Christians are instructed to live by every word of it (cf. Matt. 4:4), and not by the word of man. Isaiah 2:22 warns Christians to stop trusting in man, for he is of no account. The teaching of the Bible, not introspection, nor classes that encourage introspection must remain the method of equipping. The Bible does not prohibit special classes so long as they do not deviate from

Bible teachings. SHAPE has been shown according to the literal, grammatical, historical method of hermeneutics to indeed deviate from the plain teachings of the Bible.

Chapter 4 .

4.1 Introduction

There is no doubt that Warren derives his SHAPE paradigm mostly using the Bible as a source. The P of SHAPE is the only real exception to this rule. The first main problem the researcher has with the SHAPE paradigm lies with Warren's hermeneutic. The second main problem the researcher has lies with the introspective, subjective nature of SHAPE analysis. It tends to take the main focus off of the Bible and makes at the very least human passions, abilities, personalities and experiences the primary determining factors of a Christian's calling. These four categories account for four fifths of Warren's method of determining a Christian's ministry calling. This is highly subjective! The objective Bible truth is thus only really consulted one fifth of the time, assuming spiritual gifts are determined by focusing on the Bible, when Christians follow the SHAPE method. The researcher remembers doing 40 days of purpose with his cell group, during his own SHAPE analysis he did not find it necessary to consult the Bible except for the category of spiritual gifts. All the other categories only really required introspection, the P of SHAPE required further reading of personality models such as 'DISC' analysis and 'Myers-Briggs' testing. From a theological perspective the researcher questions Warren's understanding of the sufficiency of the Bible for equipping Christians for their ministry calling. As helpful as spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality and experiences may be, they are not (according to the Bible) to be the primary focus of the Christian who wants to discover their ministry calling (cf. 2Tim. 3:16-17; 4:2). Man is to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (cf. Matt.

4:4). The objective revealed word of God must surely remain the primary determining factor for the Christian. The Bible is true and commands many things from the Christian whether they desire such commands or not, and whether they have had experiences in that area or not, favourable or otherwise. In the next section, 4.2, Warren's method of proof-texting, his pragmatism and the primarily introspective nature of SHAPE analysis will be considered.

4.2 An Evaluation of SHAPE Analysis

When considering Warren's hermeneutic the researcher has noted that Warren proof-texts and this he often does using paraphrase translations which are not very accurate when it comes to the original texts grammar. Proof-texting is dangerous for texts can be wrenched out of their original context and may appear to say something that they are not saying at all. The grammar of the original texts has also been translated incorrectly by certain translations from time to time, especially by paraphrase translations like the Message Bible, Living Bible and New Living Translation (NLT) (cf. Rom. 12:6; NLT). These translations are often used by Warren in order to use contemporary English that may be easily understood (Warren, 2005:234). Unfortunately the truth is compromised at times by such translations. The best example of proof-texting using texts with incorrect grammar was shown under the heading 2.3.3 on page 48 where Warren discusses each Christian's abilities as coming from God, in order to do certain things well. He mentions Romans 12:6 (NLT) in this section as a proof-text. However, Romans 12:6, which he quotes in the New Living Translation to back up his third point on abilities does not even refer to abilities in the original Greek text. Here the NLT paraphrase replaces the original Greek word that refers to 'spiritual gifts' and replaces it with the word 'abilities' instead. The Greek word translated as 'abilities' (NLT) in the original is 'charisma' meaning 'gifts', not abilities (Strong's word #5486;

www.onlinebible.org.; Interlinear Greek New Testament). He thus uses proof-texts with grammatical inaccuracies to build his SHAPE paradigm. The concern remains that if the foundation of the SHAPE house is built on sand, at least in part, that does cause doubt as to the Biblical reliability of the whole SHAPE structure. From a literal, grammatical, historical perspective this leads to major concerns. Warren is also accused of using a pragmatic approach, as he believes that if something is working, then God is blessing it and it must be right and should not be questioned (Warren, 2005:116). Warren actually inadvertently confesses to be a pragmatist when he states “Never criticize any method that God is blessing” (Warren, 2005:116)! In his defense Warren states in the context of this quote that your methods must be ethical, but he does not go as far as saying they must be specifically Biblical (Warren, 2005:116). God’s Blessing in this context in chapter three of ‘The Purpose Driven Church’ refers to reaching out to one’s community (i.e. to as many of them as is possible). As noble a goal as this is, even if the entire community started coming to Church this would not necessarily indicate God’s blessing. Consider the fact that many opposing religions gather large numbers of followers, God cannot be blessing groups that oppose Him and Jesus Christ (cf. John. 3:35-36)! Numbers do not necessarily indicate God’s blessing. Again Warren’s pragmatic hermeneutical approach is highlighted. On page 13, under the section 1.4 Methodology, it was noted that Warren said, “The audience, not the message is sovereign” (Barna, 1988:145). If the audience and not the Bible text determines what is practiced and taught in the Church context then Christians will certainly lose their way and deviate from the Bible’s clear principles. If the people enjoy a particular system be it SHAPE or a particular style of music then Warren it seems is not averse to going with the flow. Even the SHAPE paradigm is pragmatic in its very name for the categories SHA and E have Biblical support but P does not. SHAE does not make a good acrostic but SHAPE

does because people can be said to be shaped for ministry not 'SHAEd' for ministry. This is pragmatism at its very core. SHAPE works well because it is catchy and interesting, but not totally Biblically sound. Ironically, SHAPE could be a wholly Biblically derived acrostic if Warren had explained personality in terms of having a Biblical character! The literal, grammatical, historical method of hermeneutics is a safer method to follow because it considers the plain understanding of the Bible, the original grammar and the historical context. Any book whether the Bible or a novel should be understood in like manner. This is a reasonable method of interpretation for any book. This method is safest because it helps prevent verses from being understood in an unnatural way, mistranslated from the original language(s) and taken out of context.

When each of Warren's SHAPE categories was analyzed in chapter two using this hermeneutic interesting results came to light. The Biblical basis of the S of SHAPE (i.e. spiritual gifts) is mostly sound according to the researcher's hermeneutic. The researcher only objected to Warren's idea that the gifts may not be defined. This belief is dangerous for then the gifts may be practiced in an unbiblical manner according to human whims and fanciful thinking. If Christians have to practice the gifts according to Biblical precedent, which in itself represents a working definition in practice, then order is maintained in the Churches. If Christians can just pick and choose how they think a gift should operate then chaos will most likely be the result. Though the Bible does not give a list of definitions of gifts as such, there are many verses that speak of how the gifts functioned practically and the Bible actually mentions the functions of many gifts. For example 1Corinthians14:3 speaks of prophecy as being a speaking gift that brings edification, exhortation and comfort to Christians. A working definition of the gift of prophecy could thus begin to be formed and

could be supplemented by many other texts until an accurate definition is formed. In the same way the researcher believes a working definition can be derived for most of the gifts.

The H of SHAPE though supported by the Bible is a very subjective category and is thus prone to misinterpretation, especially when our hearts are tainted with sinful desires as well as godly desires. Sinful desires are obviously not the will of God and do not represent God's calling on our lives but rather our sinful natures call on our lives. The more sanctified a heart the clearer will be the hearts guidance on the Christian's life. God stirs human hearts but human sinful natures also stirs human hearts. Should the desires of the heart be ignored then? Absolutely not, but the Bible must be consulted as the primary authority and the heart as merely a supportive category. The desires of the heart would have to be compared with the Bible to determine their authenticity.

The A of SHAPE (i.e. Abilities) largely lacks Biblical support but has some Biblical backing. God did indeed use men's abilities in His service and even strengthened men like Bezalel by filling him with the Spirit of God in order that he might serve God with special abilities and skills (cf. Ex. 31:1-6). There is a question here as to whether this was indeed a natural ability or a supernatural gift of the Holy Spirit but it is only fair to give Warren the benefit of the doubt here. God should be glorified in all things and through the use of our natural abilities as well (cf. 1Cor. 10:31). On a more cautionary note the Bible does warn against trusting in human abilities and strength. It is only as the Christian is strengthened by Christ that they may perform any meaningful ministry for God (cf. John. 15:5).

The P of SHAPE has no Biblical support at all for it is based on the personality theory of Hippocrates, Galen and Jung. Had Warren defined P in terms of a Biblical personality or character then P may have been a valid category but sadly he does not do this. While interesting and oftentimes experientially true, the P of SHAPE should be ignored as a Biblical category by anyone who holds the researcher's hermeneutic dear, when determining a ministry calling. Many people with different personalities can perform similar ministries. Consider the ministry calling of pastor, some pastors are choleric and others are phlegmatic, etc. God uses all kinds of different personalities in the same kinds of ministry and their ministries are blest as they maintain a Biblical character and preach the word faithfully.

The E of SHAPE (i.e. experience) like the heart is a fallible guide and is subject to error. It is still a guide though to God's ministry through the life of any believer. The Church often confirms ministries when they see fruits of a Christian's ministry. Without even attempting a ministry it is hard to know if that ministry is God's calling on your life. There is a hidden danger involved in this method. Consider Moses who saw himself as a deliverer of the Israelites in Egypt (cf. Acts 7:23-25). He killed an Egyptian while defending and avenging a mistreated Israelite slave. When confronted by an Israelite some time later he fled and for forty years he was a shepherd in the wilderness. When God eventually commissioned him to that exact same ministry those forty years later he thought God had made a mistake and told God to rather send someone else (cf. Ex. 4:13). It is most likely that his previous experiences, i.e. his failure to deliver the Israelites, actually put him off of his ministry calling! Experiences then are subjective and fallible but still valid. Again as with the other

SHAPE categories, our experience must be submitted to the plain teachings of the Bible before a ministry decision is made.

When the practical application of SHAPE at Saddleback Church was considered in chapter three more interesting discoveries were made. The 300-classes at Saddleback are well planned and from a pragmatic point of view work well. Most people would consider them a great success but from the perspective of the researcher's hermeneutic they appear unnecessary. The issue of the sufficiency of the Bible properly taught certainly comes into the spotlight. In principle it is likely that Warren would agree that the Bible is sufficient to equip the Christian for every good work through the faithful teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (cf. 2Tim. 3:16-17). However in practice he seems to believe differently. If one considers the very existence of P in the SHAPE paradigm, this is not supported by the Bible, but represents additional information which Warren considers an essential consideration that all his Church members must work through. Thus Warren sees the need to supplement the straightforward teaching of the Bible with non-Biblical personality paradigms in order to help a Christian discover their ministry calling. His 300-level SHAPE ministry classes are compulsory for all of Saddleback's members, showing the value he places on extrabiblical material in their discipleship process.

The researcher's main objection to SHAPE analysis is that its central authority lies outside of the Bible and is largely based on introspection. Four fifths of the SHAPE categories are primarily subjective meditations (i.e. the HAPE of SHAPE). Introspection refers to looking within oneself for answers, subjectively, instead of looking for truth from an external objective source. Introspection is concerned with feelings and desires, anything that is

within man. Warren certainly has equated subjective truth to the level of objective truth in his SHAPE paradigm. Christians are told by Warren to look within themselves to answer the SHAPE question (Warren, 2005:300-304). The commands of the Bible are most applicable to the Christian's good works. Consider the example of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20. Regardless of a Christian's heart or passion for this command, or experiences they are to be involved in the 'disciple-making process'. The Bible makes its own claims, it claims to be the primary authority in terms of guidance. A consideration of the following verses demonstrates this:

- "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4; www.onlinebible.org; NIV).
- "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Ps. 119:105; www.onlinebible.org; NIV).

The Bible is most certainly the primary means of guidance for both life and ministry. 2Timothy 3:16-17 teaches that the Scriptures contain everything necessary to 'thoroughly equip the Christian for every good work'. Thus the Bible was indeed given for the dual purpose of making us wise for salvation (cf. 2Tim.3:15) and in order to equip us for good works that we might be complete and not lacking anything (cf. 2Tim.3:17). 2Timothy 3:16-17 does insist that the Bible needs to be used appropriately by teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness in order to achieve this goal! In saying this, the researcher is not saying SHAPE analysis is valueless or unhelpful for the Bible does refer to the SHA and E of SHAPE. The SHA and E are indeed worthy considerations. In the same way that a commentary may be helpful in assisting a teacher to unlock the mysteries of the Bible so to Warren's SHAPE analysis may be used to give a well-rounded view of

Christian calling. On its own without the Bible as primary tool SHAPE is incomplete, and remains only a secondary consideration to the Bible.

The danger of introspection is very much the same danger as was discussed under the heading heart. That is, hearts are strongly influenced by the sinful nature, so that many inward desires may not be godly. The less sanctified a Christian is, the more likely it is that they will come up with a wrong conclusion when conducting introspective SHAPE analysis. Romans 12:2 states: “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is his good, pleasing and perfect will” (Rom.12:2; www.onlinebible.org.; NIV). Paul teaches that until our minds are transformed by the Bible we will not clearly know what God’s will is-His good, pleasing and perfect will. Isaiah 55:10-11 speaks of the ability of God’s word to achieve His purposes: “As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it” (Is. 55:10-11; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). God’s purposes in the world and in our lives are achieved primarily through the influence of His word going out into all the earth. The researcher has found it to be the case many times that the Bible has inspired a good work and has given direction. Oftentimes a fitting verse comes to mind at an opportune time motivating a specific good work. For example when confronted by false teaching, Jude 3 comes to mind and spurs me to action, to oppose such teaching and to teach the truth. Jude 3 states “Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was

once for all entrusted to the saints” (Jude 3; www.onlinebible.org; NIV). The Holy Spirit is the driving force bringing the Bible to remembrance and giving life to the word of God hidden in the heart and proclaimed from the pulpit (cf. John. 14:26). Some may view this as another form of introspection as the Christian is listening to their own heart and mind. Perhaps there is truth in that. The important difference though relates to the source of inward meditation. If the introspection is based on the Bible hidden in the heart then it is valid and a good guide. If the introspection merely focuses upon one’s own desires and ambitions, without any Biblical support then it is probably just as fallible as meditating upon a personality analysis questionnaire. Although SHAPE is introspective, there is still a degree of validity to it, for the Holy Spirit writes the word of God on our hearts and minds (cf. Jer. 31:33). Only in terms of the Bible written on the heart and mind, does that introspection have value for man is called to live by every word that proceeds from God (cf. Matt. 4:4), whether on printed page or written upon the heart and mind. The researcher has noticed that the Holy Spirit does specifically apply verses relevant to his good works and his SHAPE (i.e. largely teaching), and does not often apply verses that differ with the researcher’s SHAPE.

Lastly, the scope of SHAPE is too limited to be comprehensive. If a Christian’s ministry is a life of good works prepared in advance for them to do (cf. Eph. 2:10), and this is the assumption of the researcher, then the Christian’s calling is far more multifaceted than SHAPE is. At this point it is worth considering the hypothetical example of the researcher to illustrate the insufficiency of SHAPE analysis. The researcher is a teacher (in terms of spiritual gifts), has a passion for his wife, his family, the Bible and motorcycles, etc (in terms of his heart). He is good at memorising Bible verses (in terms of his natural abilities). He is

phlegmatic (in terms of his personality) and has good and bad experiences in many different activities (in terms of his experiences). If the researcher were to build a ministry picture using only the above categories then he would come up with an incomplete concept of his ministry calling. Perhaps he would see himself as called to teach the Bible to his family and other bikers using his good memory of the Bible, in a relational way (being a phlegmatic), and to only teach in a way that he has succeeded in before experientially. The researcher would be neglecting other very important areas of calling such as being a preacher and teacher of the Bible in Church, being a God-honouring worker in his place of employment (cf. Col. 3:23-24), a loving husband (cf. Eph. 5:25), a righteous man (cf. Matt. 6:33), an obedient citizen of his country (cf. Rom. 13:1), etc. Now Warren does believe in the teaching of the entire Bible and loves preaching doctrine (Warren, 2005:234). The purpose of this research project is to evaluate SHAPE as a method of equipping Christians to identify their callings effectively. The conclusion has to therefore be that SHAPE is helpful but incomplete and unable to perform this task sufficiently on its own.

4.3 Conclusion

While Warren bases his SHAPE paradigm on the Bible certain objections remain. The first main problem the researcher has with the SHAPE paradigm lies with Warren's hermeneutic; he prooftexts using paraphrase translations which are unreliable from the perspective of the researcher's hermeneutic. He also tends to judge his SHAPE equipping process by its results; if it is working then it is assumed that God is blessing it and it should not be criticised (Warren, 2005:116). The second main problem the researcher has lies with the introspective, subjective nature of SHAPE analysis. It tends to take the main focus off of the Bible and makes at the very least human passions, abilities, personalities and

experiences the primary determining factors of a Christian's calling. Four fifths of the SHAPE categories are highly subjective and prone to misinterpretation. The researcher also has questioned Warren's understanding of the sufficiency of the Bible for equipping Christians for their ministry calling. SHAPE categories are helpful but should not be the only considerations a Christian considers when seeking out their Christian ministry. The Bible must be the primary focus of the Christian who wants to discover their ministry calling (cf. 2Tim. 3:16-17; 4:2). Man is to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God (cf. Matt. 4:4). The objective revealed word of God remains the primary focus. The Bible remains the only infallible guide provided it is interpreted according to the literal, grammatical, historical method of hermeneutics. Heart desires, abilities, personalities and experiences are all fallible guides to Christian ministry for there are times when we don't desire to do the good works God requires of us (cf. Eph. 2:10). There are times when our abilities don't seem to match the tasks God sets for us in both type and degree. There are even times when our personalities seem to be unmatched to the ministry God has called us to. Our experiences likewise can be deceptive and if Christians have an initial bad experience in their area of calling they might assume that it is not a ministry for them. Moses is the classic example of a man whose initial experiences put him off his obvious calling from God to be a ruler and deliverer of Israel (cf. Ex. 4:13; Acts 7:23-25, 35). The Bible gives an objective perspective regardless how Christians may feel about Biblical good works. Taken together the objective commands of the Bible, together with the subjective internal leading of the Holy Spirit combined with the desires of the Christian's regenerate heart will be the best combination of considerations in the researcher's opinion. Where there is doubt though the plain, straightforward understanding of the Bible, understood according to the original grammar, in its original context, must prevail over perceived

human gifts, feelings, fears, abilities, personalities and experiences. There is nothing stopping a Church group from running courses on for example spiritual gifts so long as the Bible is the source of the teaching. Many Churches are failing to equip their members for ministry and it appears that a new system must be developed to fix the problem. SHAPE is fun, quick and only has five categories making it simple to understand and apply. The Bible doesn't come in such a simple acrostic form so it tends to intimidate Christians into inactivity and Biblical laziness. The researcher believes the SHA and E of SHAPE could be used to supplement Bible study and encourage Christians to earnestly seek God's plan for their lives. The researcher was certainly inspired by all the categories of SHAPE and has benefited from considering all of them, but especially when the P is understood to be Biblical character. SHAPE is a helpful ministry identification tool but it is incomplete in itself to equip Christians to identify their good works on its own. The plain teaching of the Bible is required to fill in the missing details that SHAPE does not consider. The teaching of the Bible is primary and SHAPE is secondary.

Chapter 5.

5.1 Introduction

The importance of a Christian's ministry calling has been highlighted and SHAPE has been considered as a possible solution to the equipping problem experienced by many Churches. The practical application of SHAPE has been considered in terms of its practical application at Saddleback Church. Church leaderships have failed to equip individual Christians as fully as the Bible demands (cf. Matt. 28:20), and individual Christians have failed to perform their ministries effectively for Christians fail to obey the commands of God fully. What then is the conclusion to SHAPE as a method of equipping a believer to identify

his/her calling? Is it valuable and effective or not? This chapter will seek to give the final conclusion to the SHAPE question.

5.2 Conclusion

A Christians calling is not just a call to believe the Gospel, nor is it merely a call to pastoral ministry or to the mission field; rather it is a call to live the Christian life in the world, from the beginning of faith in the Gospel till one's death. We are not just called to a general obedience to the Bible but to specific good works, which Warren contends are influenced by the way God has 'shaped' you (Warren:2002:235-236). The researcher believes that one's ministry is one's calling and that all Christians are called to specific good works and hence they all have a ministry calling (cf. Eph. 2:10). So often people see a 'call' only as the one call to salvation (cf. Rom. 8:30); but the researcher understands that a calling is a very broad concept encompassing a ministry calling as well (i.e. including all the good works that God has called us to do, cf. Eph. 2:10). Warren's SHAPE analysis is a useful tool to supplement the teachings of the Bible in order to help equip Christians by identifying their callings. Although SHAPE is introspective, there is still a degree of validity to it, for the Holy Spirit writes the word of God on our hearts and minds (cf. Jer. 31:33). Only in terms of the Bible written on the heart and mind, does that introspection have value for man is called to live by every word that proceeds from God (cf. Matt. 4:4), whether on printed page or written upon the heart and mind. All other introspective considerations be they spiritual gift related, heart related, natural ability related, personality related, or experience related must be measured against the Bible according to the literal, grammatical, historical hermeneutic to be confirmed as valid or not (according to the researcher's view). Thus the researcher contends that the Bible must remain the only authority in determining Christian ministry (cf. John. 17:17). The Bible is an objective truth printed on paper with ink and yet that same

word is written subjectively by the Spirit of God on hearts and minds (cf. Jer. 31:33). The Bible is valid in both places but the printed version understood in the literal sense, according to the original grammar and understood in its correct historical context is surely the only safe method to be used (especially when doubts arise). The researcher believes that Church leaders could incorporate the S,H,A and E categories of SHAPE into their equipping process and thus help bring clarity to those who battle to discern their call to specific good works. SHAPE analysis is unfortunately incomplete for the two elements of the systematic and plain 'teaching of all of the Bible' and 'godly character' have been sidelined by SHAPE analysis and need to be included to gain a comprehensive idea of a Christian's ministry calling. Without these two factors included SHAPE analysis is not an effective tool on its own. Christians are instructed by 1Thessalonians 5:21 in the Bible to 'test everything' and to 'hold on to what is good'. Therefore applying this verse to SHAPE it is unreasonable to throw out SHAPE altogether but rather accept what is good (i.e. SHA and E of SHAPE) and reject what is unbiblical (i.e. the P of SHAPE and the primary introspective focus of SHAPE analysis). The researcher believes that SHAPE may be used in all its categories if the *P* is understood as referring to Biblical personality or character, and then by all means use SHAPE. While the Bible is the primary method of guidance and is sufficient for identifying a Christian's calling, this does not prevent the use of other helpful tools such as SHAPE analysis, even practically applied in special ministry classes at Church. Although SHAPE is useful it may be discarded so long as the Bible is faithfully taught and applied to the life of the Christian by the teacher and by the Holy Spirit. All of the Bible needs to be correctly applied in the Christian's life for the Bible is sufficient to equip every Christian for good works, even without SHAPE analysis being considered (cf. 2Tim.3:16-17). Unfortunately many Christians do not devote themselves to a study of the

Bible and so they lack the ability to rightly divide the word (cf. 2Tim. 2:15), and therefore lack direction when it comes to ministry. Such Christians therefore need all the help they can get, including SHAPE analysis. The researcher has benefited from simple acrostics like SHAPE, and rightly understood, they do make ministry decisions easier to make. The simple acrostic ACTS (i.e. Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and Supplication) has helped the researcher in his prayer life to pray properly, and not to forget important prayer categories. Such teaching aids should not be automatically dismissed as unnecessary (nor should they be enforced upon all) but should be verified against the Bible and improved upon if possible, and used as supplemental teaching aids where appropriate. Warren has made a helpful contribution to the ministry question. He rightly summarises the benefits of mobilising members for ministry like this: "We are made for ministry! The Church that understands this and makes it possible for every member to express his or her shape in ministry will experience amazing vitality, health and growth. The sleeping giant will be awakened, and it will be unstoppable" (Warren, 2005:318). The researcher believes that the sleeping giant needs to be awakened by equipping its members thoroughly even by using SHAPE analysis. Warren goes on to say: "The task of bringing people to Christ and into membership in his family, developing them into mature disciples, empowering and equipping them for personal ministry, and sending them out to fulfil their life mission is the greatest purpose on earth. I have no doubt that it is worth living and dying for" (Warren, 2005:321). The researcher agrees with the importance Warren places on equipping Christians for this is the plain understanding of the Great Commission command in Matthew 28:18-20. Let Church leaders and ordinary Christians then do their utmost to equip others and themselves to fulfil their ministry calling by using the Bible and even SHAPE analysis.

Reference List

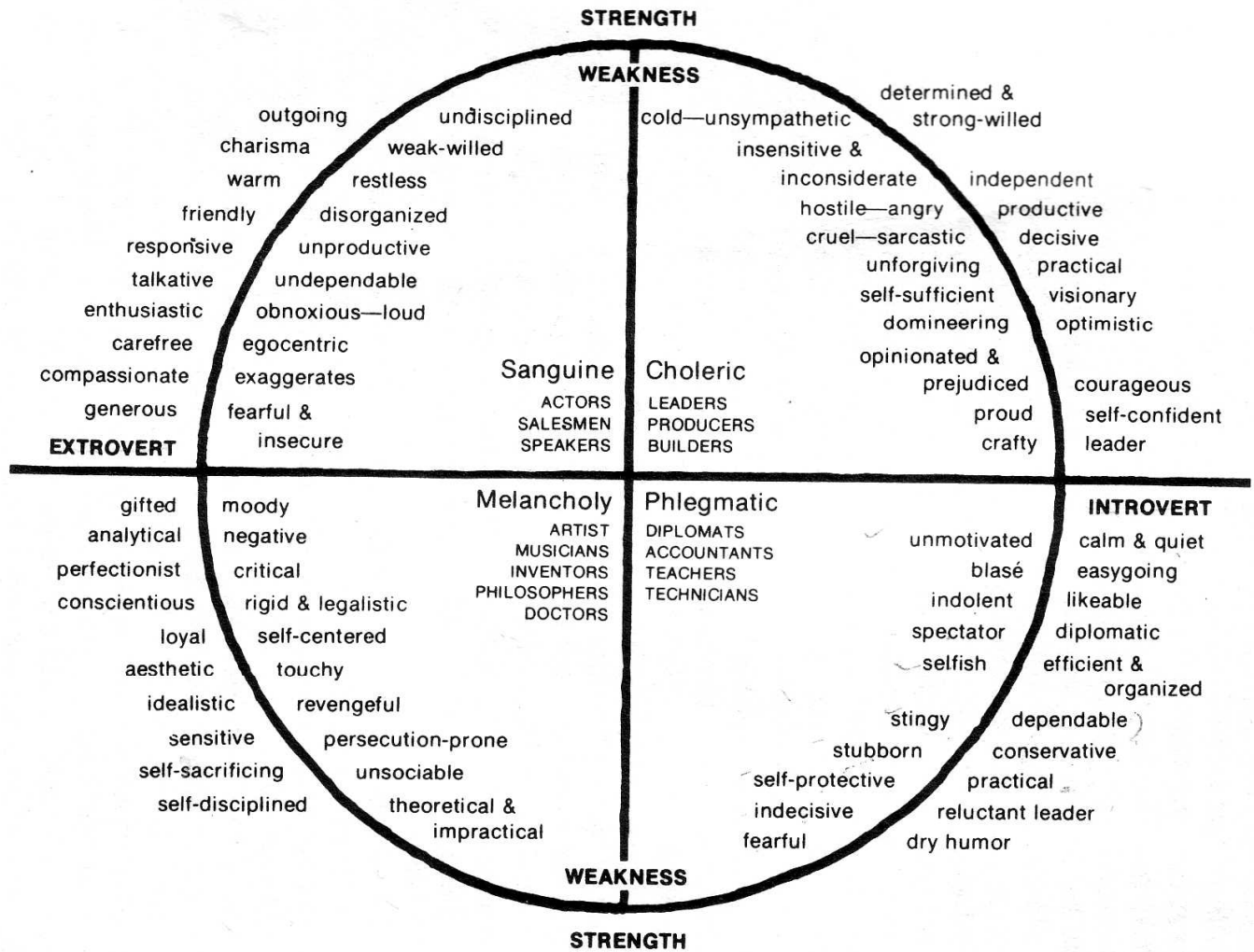
1. Barna, G 1988. *Marketing The Church*. Colorado Springs: NavPress.
2. Blackaby, H & M 2005. *What's So Spiritual About Your Spiritual Gifts?* Vereeniging: Christian Art Publishers.
3. Blackaby, H & R 2001. *Spiritual Leadership-Moving People On To God's Agenda*. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman Publishers.
4. Carmichael, C 2008. Charting The Paganism Of Galen And Jung. From The Sacred Sandwich.com. 2008. Downloaded 17/09/2008 from: Carmichael, http://www.sacredsandwich.com/warren_jung_chart.htm
5. Fether, P 2003. *Literal/Historical/Grammatical Hermeneutic*. From: Words of a Fether, July 2003. Downloaded 12/08/2008 from: <http://www.fether.net/literalhistoricalgrammatical-hermeneutic>.
6. Harvey, D 2005. *Am I Called? Discerning The Summons To Ministry*. Issue Number 3, April 2005. Downloaded 06/08/2006 from: <http://www.SovereignGraceMinistries.org>.
7. Hawkins, J M 1979. *The Oxford Paperback Dictionary*. New York, Toronto, Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

8. La Haye, T 1977. *Understanding The Male Temperament*. New Jersey: Fleming H Revell Company.
9. Macarthur, J 1995. *Spiritual Gifts: 1 Corinthians 12*. Chicago: Moody Press.
10. Murray, J 1980. *The New International Commentary On The New Testament: The Epistle To The Romans*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing CO.
11. New World Encyclopedia. *Personality*. From New World Encyclopedia article on Personality, April 2008. Downloaded 17/09/2008 from: <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Personality?oldid=687305>.
12. O'Donovan, W 1996. *Biblical Christianity In African Perspective*. Carlisle, UK: The Paternoster Press.
13. Online Bible 2003-2007. [© 2003-2007 The Online Bible Foundation (UK) an initiative of Larry Pierce] Canada: Timnathserah, Inc. and Dordrecht: Importantia. Downloaded 05/03/2004 from <http://www.onlinebible.org>.
14. Paul Stevens, R 2006. *Spiritual Gifts-8 Studies For Individuals Or Groups* (LifeBuilder Bible Studies). Worcester: London & Goodmanbayliss: The Trinity Press.
15. Peter Wagner, C 1994. *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow: How To Find Your Gifts & Use Them To Bless Others*. Ventura, California: Regal Books.

16. Stott, J 2004. *The Message Of Ephesians*. The Bible Speaks Today Series, Leicester: IVP.
17. Stott, J 2004b. *The Message Of Galatians*. The Bible Speaks Today Series, Leicester: IVP
18. Veith, W 2004. *Total Onslaught DVD Series*. www.amazingfacts.org
19. Warren, R 2002. *The Purpose Driven Life-What On Earth Am I Here For?* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.
20. Warren, R 2005. *The Purpose Driven Church: Growth Without Compromising Your Message & Mission*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.
21. Wilkinson, B 2005. *The Seven Laws Of The Learner*. Colorado Springs: Multnomah.

Addendum

The Four Basic Temperaments Personality Wheel

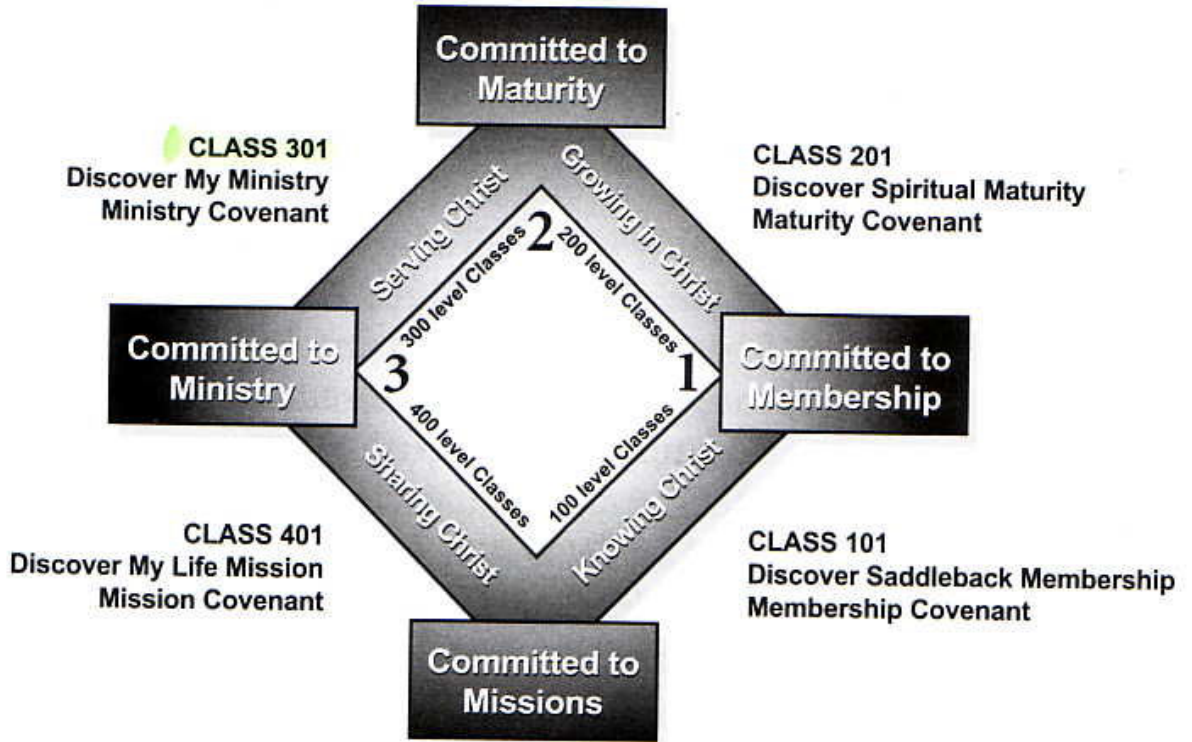


THE FOUR BASIC TEMPERAMENTS

(La Haye, 1977:56)

The Life Development Process

The Life Development Process



An Overview of the Life Development Institute

100 Level Classes
To lead people to Christ and church membership.

200 Level Classes
To grow people to spiritual maturity.

300 Level Classes
To equip people with the skills they need for ministry.

400 Level Classes
To enlist people in the worldwide mission of sharing Christ.

(Warren, 2005:105)

Ministry Covenant Card

Having committed myself to membership and the habits essential for spiritual maturity and agreeing with Saddleback's Ministry Statement, I commit to ...

Discover my unique Shape for ministry and serve in the area that best expresses what God made me to be.	Prepare for ministry by participating in S.A.L.T. and C.L.A.S.S.	Demonstrate a servant's heart by serving in secondary ministries as the Body needs me.	Co-operate with other ministries and place the greater good of the whole Body over the needs of my ministry.
---	--	--	--

Signed

Date


This certifies that

is a commissioned minister of Jesus Christ through
Saddleback Valley Community Church
and is entrusted with the related responsibilities
and privileges

Rick Warren, Pastor

(Warren, 2005:281)

Welcome Card

	Welcome!		Date _____
	Mr/Mrs/Miss _____		<input type="checkbox"/> New Address
Address _____			
City _____		State _____	Zip _____
Phone (____) _____		Wk Phone (____) _____	
Is this your ... <input type="checkbox"/> 1st time? <input type="checkbox"/> 2nd time? <input type="checkbox"/> 3rd time?			
I am an: <input type="checkbox"/> Attender <input type="checkbox"/> Member			
I came as a quest of _____			
Current School Grade		OR	
Your Age Group			
K	1	2	3
4	5	6	18-22
7	8	9	23-30
10	11	12	31-35
COLLEGE			36-40
			41-45
			46-50
			51-60
			61-70
			71+
Please Indicate: <input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married			
Names of children living at home & birthdates: _____			

<p>My Decision Today:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I'm committing my life to Christ</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I want to be baptized</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I'm renewing my commitment to Christ</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Enroll me in the next ...</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Discovering Saddleback Membership, Class #101</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Discovering Spiritual Maturity, Class #201</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Discovering My Ministry, Class #301</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I'm willing to help where needed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I'd like to talk to a staff minister</p> <p>I'd like Information On:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> How to Begin a Relationship with Christ</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> How to Join this Church Family</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Building Program</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adult Small Groups</p>	<p>I'd Like Information On, Con't:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Business & Professional Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Single Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Single Parent Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Women's Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Men's Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Counseling Referrals</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Recreation Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Music Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Young Adult Activities (18-30)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Senior High Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Junior High Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Children's Activities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Children's Ministry Volunteer</p>
<p>Comments, Requests or Prayer Needs: <input type="checkbox"/> For Prayer Team <input type="checkbox"/> Confidential</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	

(Warren, 2005:204).

