

S.H.A.P.E.: A — Abilities

God gives each person unique abilities and entrusts us to utilize them for the work He has prepared.

Abilities are given by God to all people through creation or acquired through experience, can be used for many purposes including work, hobbies, and for the benefit of the Church, and are grown through practice, training, and discipline.

Matthew 25:14–30

One talent was the equivalent of twenty years wages for a laborer — a rough estimate is close to one million dollars of today's money!

To all three men an abundance of resources was given to fulfill the purposes of the master.

When the master returned, he received each of the first two men who utilized the resources given to them with "Well done, good and faithful servant... Enter into the joy of your master."

The last servant presents the 1 talent he was given back to the master, immediately making excuses for his laziness.

The master responds, "you wicked and slothful servant!" He never really knew his master at all. His master cared far more about faithful stewardship than the servants risking failure. The worst thing that the servant could do is nothing.

The final servant is taken of what he had, to be given to a faithful servant, and cast out of the presence of the master.

Responding to Christ's grace involves action!

There will be exponential returns on His investment through us.

Exodus 31:1–11

God gave Bezalel both the Spirit of God, but also natural ability, intelligence, knowledge and skill in craftsmanship.

God used people of varying levels of skill, but all with ability, to accomplish the sacred tasks set before them.

1. God sometimes gives very specific, and very strong abilities to people to be able to accomplish important tasks.
2. God gives us all abilities that He views with great value.
3. Using the abilities given to us by God for his Kingdom work will always produce a functional result, but will also often create a relational output as well.
4. In response to the grace and love offered to us by Christ, there is a privilege and expectation to use the abilities given to us.

Ephesians 2:8-10

Just as God creatively and intentionally used His great abilities and workmanship to create each one of us, we must live and walk in the good works, the use of our abilities, and the use of our SHAPE, that God has prepared for us.

As we go through this list of abilities, check the ones that resonate with you as God-given abilities. Consider this week if you are using the ones you checked to serve God and His Church. Also consider if there are any He's been developing in you over the past year and may be calling you to use!

God finds great joy when we can participate in the work of His Kingdom.

"When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left and could say, 'I used everything you gave me.'" - Erma Bombeck

May we also strive to stand before God one day, knowing we've used everything He's given us!

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