

S.H.A.P.E. P – Personality Psalm 139:13-17

As the sermon starts this morning, I wonder what are you looking/listening for? What are you hoping to receive in this portion of the worship service?

For some...

- You wish the time of singing/praise was longer & this portion shorter!
- You could have gone with one song & 15 more minutes for the sermon!
- You want me to pull up the stool & just tell some personal faith stories!
- You want me to just read the Scripture & exegete it – give its meaning!
- You're not even here b/c you're engaged in doing ministry somewhere!
- You are here but you're thinking "Why do we shut the blinds...?"
- You wish you could just push the "mute" button, b/c it's just too much!

My hope for today is not to try to convince you of which approach is right/wrong, but to help you identify your natural bent... & to appreciate that in yourself, as well as help you see how others may be wired differently & to appreciate that in them also!

For some, your primary pathway for connecting with God comes through worship... the intellect... relational connections... serving... activism... creation... contemplation...

If you want to discover your primary spiritual pathway(s), I ask you to fill out the survey for today. It will help identify your personality/how you are wired.

Why is this important? Because it will help you better understand yourself and how/why you connect with God & the things of faith the way you do. It will also reveal why certain things excite you & other things frustrate you!

For instance, the songs we sang this morning... besides the age/familiarity of the songs, what connected with you, & helped you connect with God?

- *Holy Forever* – All about the name of Jesus. He is worthy & we are to praise.
- *In Christ Alone* – Informative, instructive, comprehensive, gospel declaring.
- *God of Wonders* – Visual, revelation of God thru creation, transcendence.
- *Draw Me Close* – Feeling, relational, connection, closeness, immanence.

You see, even the songs we sing have a bent to them that helps/hinders us (with our personality type) in worshipping our Lord "in Spirit and in truth!"

Your/My personality type is not right or wrong, good or bad... It's who God has made us to be. It's a major part of our SHAPE! However, it does matter what we do with those personality traits in connection with God & others!

We can't just say,

- "Well, I connect with God best in creation so I'm skipping church today to connect with Him on the golf course!"
- "This song doesn't connect with my personality preference so I'm just not going to sing it... and I don't know why you would either!"
- "I feel God's presence most when I serve, so I'm just going to skip the sermon every Sunday and find a place where I can serve instead!"
- "I'm here only for the sermon, to stimulate my intellect, so I'll arrive late & leave after the sermon is over... fellowship & relationships not needed!"

There is great value in experiencing and engaging in forms of worship that don't come naturally to us, because there is value in all the pathways of connection with God. It's also unifying, without the expectation of uniformity!

We are uniquely made by God, & that's a beautiful thing! It is the diversity within the body that allows for it to flourish & be effective for the Kingdom!

Just consider who Jesus invited into his inner circle of 12... How different they were & how their unique personalities came out during His ministry:

<u>Simon Peter</u>	<u>Bold, Impulsive</u>	Walked on water, confessed/denied Christ
Andrew	Humble, Quiet, Relational	Brought people to Jesus
James	Zealous, Ambitious, Courageous	Son of Thunder, 1 st martyr
<u>John</u>	<u>Deeply Affectionate, Reflective</u>	The one Jesus loved, gospel
Philip	Practical, Analytical	Calculated costs, show the Father
Bartholomew	Honest, Sincere	Initially skeptical but quick to confess
<u>Matthew</u>	<u>Detail-Oriented, Organized</u>	Emphasizes prophecy & structure
Thomas	Cautious, Loyal	Willing to die with Jesus
James	Quiet, Faithful	Service doesn't require prominence
Thaddaeus	Curious, Thoughtful	Asked important questions
<u>Simon the Zealot</u>	<u>Passionate, Committed</u>	The cost was worth the cause
Judas Iscariot	Outwardly trustworthy	Managed the money bags

Totally different personalities, but Jesus brought them all together and used each one of them to accomplish His good, pleasing and perfect will!

Do you/we dare to believe that He is doing the same thing again today in us? Every kind of personality is needed b/c He made us so & brought us together!

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