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GROUP STUDY GUIDE

WEEK SIX

## GOOD WORKS & DEEDS

UNIQUE MISSION



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### GOAL FOR WEEK SIX

The goal of this week's group is to look closely at how our core identity of strengths and talents intersects with our passions, burdens, and the community's needs to shape our unique mission of good works and deeds. We will see how we are just the right person in just the right place and at just the right time to carry out the good works and deeds planned by God for our lives.

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# WEEK SIX: GOOD WORKS & DEEDS

$$\text{Secondary Calling} = \overset{\text{BE}}{\text{uI}} + \overset{\text{DO}}{\text{uM}} + \overset{\text{GO}}{\text{uP}}$$



## GETTING STARTED

**READ:** Select a person to read the real life story of Abe, a person carrying out this study just as you are doing now. He started where you started—learning that he is a child of God, who was gifted with his own sweet spot within a specific calling from God. In his small group he shared that he occasionally has feelings of restless discontent, but most often lives a fairly carefree life.

Weekdays Abe wakes, goes to work, comes home, enjoys a few TV shows or a soccer game, and then heads off to bed. Weekends he packs his schedule with sports—talking sports, playing sports, or watching sports. He and his wife often drive hundreds of miles to watch the kids play their sport. He’s a good Christian man, who loves his wife, spends time with his kids, goes to church, volunteers on a regular basis, reads his Bible, and is part of a small group. Until this study he hadn’t really questioned how he might live out his calling from day to day. He’d always assumed that he and his wife would do that after they retired from their 8-to-5 jobs.

In his vocation, Abe has worked more than 20 years as a social worker. He helps those who struggle to find

employment due to drug, mental, or emotional disorders. Many of his clients have been in trouble with the law as youths or grew up in home environments that have subjected them to criminal activity as youths. When added to their drug, mental, or emotional difficulties, he has seen that this factor increases the likelihood that they will not find permanent employment, which keeps them from successfully engaging as a functional member of society. Abe finds that most of his work is rewarding, but he wishes that he could help his clients, especially those who were at risk in their youth, before they stumbled into the difficulties that they now face. He is disheartened to witness generation after generation falling into the same patterns of hardship, unemployment, and often times, criminal or gang activity.

When Abe completed his A.P.E.S.T. assessment from Week 5 he discovered that most of his descriptive words (champions, connects, influences, inspires, and encourages ownership) fit into the Evangelist heading. After working through the process a bit, looking for strengths and talents that crossed all domains of his life, he came up with a two-word description: “sports connector”—even his wife and friends commented how perfectly the phrase fits him.

**ASK:** What parts of Abe’s story stand out to you?

## POINT 1

**EPHESIANS 2:10 SHOWS ME THAT GOD HAS PLANNED UNIQUE GOOD WORKS AND DEEDS FOR ME.**



**READ:** Ephesians 2:10. God equips us with a unique design and good works to have a meaningful role in His mission here on earth.

Consider If Ephesians 2:10 is true, and personal calling transcends all domains of our lives (even our vocation), why do we remain trapped in ill-fitting career paths, and many times, a nagging feeling of discontent?

**READ:** *More* addresses two possible reasons this may have come about. Read the first three paragraphs on page 167.

**ASK:** What aspects do you identify with? What parts do not ring true in your experience?

**READ:** Abe’s career has been rewarding, yet he is often frustrated in his role. He feels it’s too late to start over in his career now, but dreams of one day retiring. Then, finally he will have the time and resources to get more involved in a charity. Right now though, he feels he needs to focus on providing financially for his family and saving for retirement.

**ASK:** If retirement was not an option, and you were to work the rest of the days of your life, how would you live your life differently to experience the full measure of abundant living now (even in your vocation)?

## POINT 2

**MY UNIQUE IDENTITY PLUS MY PASSIONS, BURDENS, AND THE COMMUNITY’S NEEDS SHAPE MY UNIQUE MISSION.**



A “mission” reflects what a person or group is seeking to accomplish. Each of us has a unique mission that helps us play a role in God’s larger mission for the church.

**SHARE:** How you would currently describe your personal mission? Consider how do we discern our unique mission and the role we play? The author of *More* identifies four elements that help shape our unique mission of good works and deeds. These include:

**Unique Identity** (from last week): The combination of our gifts, talents, strengths, and experiences that make us uniquely different from all other people on the planet. Our unique identity overflows into and helps shape our unique mission or purpose.

**Passions** (also known as zeal): are a great energy or enthusiasm in pursuit of a cause or objective. They naturally give you energy and life—they energize the natural heartbeat of your soul. (Romans 12:11 and Galatians 4:18)

**Burdens** (also known as conviction): are a feeling that is difficult to deal with and that you cannot get rid of.” (2 Corinthians 5:1-10)

**Needs** are a condition requiring relief. We can be just the right person, in just the right place, at just the right time. Our unique mission finds

the intersection of needs with our unique equipping or design.

**CONSIDER:** Think about Abe's example that we read at the beginning. Apply these four elements of unique mission in his story by underlining Abe's unique identity, his passion, his burden and the need he seems to be drawn toward.

**DISCUSS:** What would the benefits be of Abe aligning the four elements in his life? What are the consequences of not aligning them?

**BRAINSTORM:** If switching careers or jobs simply is not possible for Abe right now, what other options does he have for engaging this unique mission?

**POINT 3**

**I HAVE A DRAFT EXPRESSION OF MY UNIQUE PASSIONS AND BURDENS, AND POTENTIAL COMMUNITY NEEDS THAT BRING THEM TO LIFE.**



**APPLY:** The diagram on the back outlines the four elements that shape your unique mission. Spend ten minutes filling in your answers for each of the four elements.

**POINT 4**

**I HAVE A DRAFT STATEMENT OF MY UNIQUE MISSION.**

Abe identified his own unique passions, burdens, and potential community needs. Here's what Abe discovered:



**Natural Talents & Abilities:** sports knowledge, athleticism, loves kids, loves sports, leads others, gets excited about team work, "sports connector"

**Passions:** sports, fun, challenges, competition, exercise, music

**Burdens:** at risk youth, inner city gangs, the mentally or emotionally disabled that get lost in the system, rehabilitation of prisoners

**Community Needs:** a local recreational league needs a coach, the church is running a summer soccer program for disadvantaged youths, a nearby family shelter has under-served kids, community rec center needs volunteers

**READ:** Abe's first draft: "My unique mission is to champion the needs and opportunities of at risk youth using sports as a means to build up kids for a more inclusive, self-supporting community."

**APPLY:** Similar to our unique identity, our unique mission is a clear statement shaping the theme of our unique good works and deeds, and is ideally reflected in less than a sentence. Use the four elements to write you own "unique mission" statement on the back cover.

**POINT 5**

**I CAN SEE THAT IT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY TO OWN AND USE WISELY THE UNIQUE MISSION GOD HAS GIVEN ME.**



**READ:** So, now you have a draft unique mission statement. Many of us have created, or dreamed of creating, mission statements. What makes this one any more likely to be successful? Three reasons...

1. Your calling isn't about money or prestige or pleasure. At the center of your calling is Jesus. It starts with Jesus, it is about Jesus, and is created to lead people to Jesus.

2. Your unique mission (DO) was God-created. You cannot separate God's unique calling for your life from your everyday life. Alongside your primary calling, it's all melded together and woven into the fabric of who you are.

3. Your calling is not just for you. You are part of a spiritual family and your calling is to be shared with others. Ephesians 4:11-16 tells us that our calling is given that we might play our part in fulfilling the church's mission. To not engage our unique mission is to hold the church back in accomplishing its mission. We are part of something bigger than ourselves.

It's not by mistake we find ourselves where we are, doing what we do.

**RANK:** Which of the following factors shape why you do what you currently do vocationally. Rank your top 3.

- \_\_\_ Finances, benefits, and security
  - \_\_\_ Expectations and/or desires of others, including family members
  - \_\_\_ Gifting and natural talents
  - \_\_\_ Passions and burdens/convictions
  - \_\_\_ Personal fulfillment and joy
  - \_\_\_ Sense of purpose or significance
  - \_\_\_ Legacy or impact
  - \_\_\_ Compatibility with vision, values, and beliefs
  - \_\_\_ Chance/fate
  - \_\_\_ Inheritance (e.g., continuing the family business)
  - \_\_\_ It's all that was available
  - \_\_\_ Sense of divine leading or intervention
- Add your unique factor that is not on this list:

**ASK:** Do you have any motives (good or bad) that are keeping you from living within your sweet spot?



**1-THING SHARE**



What is one thing that you heard, said, or thought tonight that you want to keep in the forefront of your mind all this week?

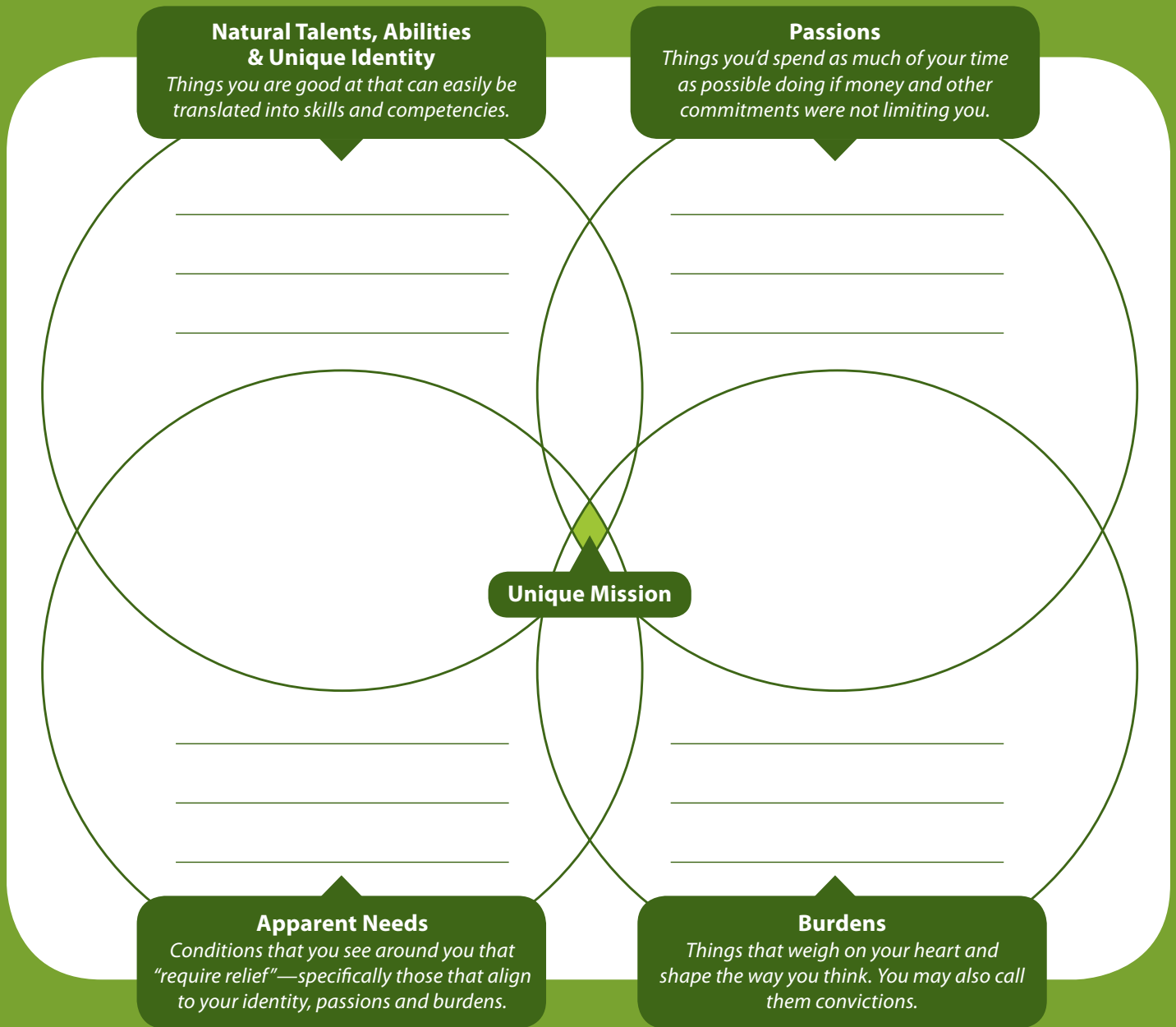


**TAKING MORE HOME**

This week you processed a lot of information. Spend this week digesting what you've learned. Here are some ideas:

- IDEA 1:** Pray about what you've discovered
- IDEA 2:** Journal about your thoughts from tonight
- IDEA 3:** Meet someone for coffee and process out loud
- IDEA 4:** Dedicate more time "looking for clues"
- IDEA 5:** Take another stab at your unique mission statement
- IDEA 6:** Reflect on what might be holding you back

When our strengths and talents and our passions and burdens intersect we are perfectly aligned to address the specific needs where we are uniquely positioned, which allows us to carry the fullness of Jesus into our unique corners of society. Our unique mission is real and personal—and it can bring about a shout-from-the-mountain-top excitement! As a bonus, that excitement can also inspire others to take action.



As you continue to think through these elements of your unique mission (DO), look for core themes and patterns. Remember, you are assembling the puzzle pieces, one at a time, and your understanding of your unique mission will continue to evolve and clarify over time. Don't worry about choosing the perfect phrase initially. For now, use the clues you've discovered to write one sentence—a statement of your unique mission. It might be the sentence from Point 3 or it might be pulled from other clues that you've collected in previous weeks.

**MY UNIQUE MISSION IS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Don't worry if your first attempt feels vague or too general. You can trust that this process, when revisited over time, will become increasingly more specific as you discover and gather more clues.*