

# CITYCHURCH



## DISCOVERING YOUR KEY LIFE EXPERIENCES

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.*  
2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (NIV)

*This is what the past is for! Every experience God gives us, every person He puts in our lives, is the perfect preparation for the future that only He can see. - Corrie Ten Boom*

*And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. Romans 8:28 (NLT)*

*You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good. Genesis 50:20*

*All things happen just as God decided long ago. Ephesians 1:11 (NLT)*

*The possibilities are almost limitless for your life achievements and experiences to become action steps for God. - Rick Rees, author of S.H.A.P.E.*

Some of your experiences were your choice, while many others were beyond your control. Think of your experiences that have uniquely shaped you in these general areas:

- Family and Relational Experiences. Our family of origin (parents and siblings), our friends, have had a tremendous influence on our lives.
- Educational Experiences. The schools, books, seminars, and training that we have gone through have also helped influence us.
- Spiritual Experiences. Meaningful times with God, times of failure, as well as times of commitment and challenge.
- Vocational Experiences. The places where we've worked, our supervisors, as well as our career choices.

***Before you begin reflecting and processing some of your story, take a moment or two to ask God to show you what He wants you to notice, remember, and learn from your experiences.***

Consider the events of your life that have helped shape the person you are today:

- Childhood joys and sadness
- Adolescent thrills and anguish
- Adulthood accomplishment and challenges

**What if you thought about your life achievements and experiences as limitless possibilities in becoming actions steps for God?**

**Reflect on God's continual presence with you throughout your life experiences, whether you were able to recognize Him or not at those times...**

# PERSONAL EXERCISE and PREPARATION

## STEP 1: RECALL your experiences

Below, jot down one-liner statements of your experiences in the categories

**Green Meadows:** Recall those **times/events** such as the awards, recognitions, achievements, satisfying relationships, successes, spiritual insights, that brought you joy and fulfillment.

**Dark Valleys:** Recall those **times** such as the following list of sample losses, when your pain threshold was tested and your endurance was stretched, perhaps even to the breaking point.

Divorce	Abuse
Death	Alcoholism
Cancer	Depression
Job loss	Bankruptcy
Eating disorders	Miscarriages
Suicide	Abortion
Affairs	Relational Loss

## PSALM 23

(NLT)

The LORD is my shepherd; I have all that I need.

<sup>2</sup> He lets me rest in *green meadows*; he leads me beside peaceful streams.

<sup>3</sup> He renews my strength.

He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name.

<sup>4</sup> Even when I walk through the *darkest valley*, I will not be afraid for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me.

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies.

You honor me by anointing my head with oil.

My cup overflows with blessings.

<sup>6</sup> Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the LORD forever.

Experience Category	Season of Life	<b><u>Green Meadows</u></b> Satisfying, fulfilling, successful, enjoyment	<b><u>Dark Valleys</u></b> Losses, defeat, failure, pain, suffering
<b>FAMILY &amp; Relational</b>	<b>Childhood</b>		
	<b>Adolescence</b>		
	<b>Adulthood</b>		
<b>EDUCATIONAL</b>	<b>Childhood</b>		
	<b>Adolescence</b>		
	<b>Adulthood</b>		

Experience Category	Season of Life	<u>Green Meadows</u>	<u>Dark Valleys</u>
VOCATIONAL	Childhood		
	Adolescence		
	Adulthood		
SPIRITUAL	Childhood		
	Adolescence		
	Adulthood		

**STEP 2: IDENTIFY the Recurring Themes in Your experiences.**

When you recall your past satisfying experiences, or notice how God has redeemed your pain, you can begin to see certain recurring themes and patterns, such as the following:

- how you learn or practice a skill
- how you evaluate whether to spend money on something
- how you decide to take a risk, set a goal or develop a strategy
- how you respond to hurting people and the needs of others
- how you handled your painful experiences—retreat or resilience, flare up or reflect
- how you worry or enjoy all the details of planning events
- how you engage in the activities you enjoy

**Ask yourself some questions!**

- Do others always ask for your help or invite you to join in?
- Are you careful to organize everything you do?
- Does it seem that you're always onstage or getting some kind of recognition?
- Are you a constant competitor, always keeping score?
- Do you like working with a team or group, or do you prefer the role as individualist?
- Do you like to be at the center of things and coordinate others?
- Has your pain made you more gentle and tender-hearted, or angry and isolated?

**STEP 3:** Take time now to **reflect** on the Green Meadows and Dark Valley experiences that you've recalled and jotted down. **Ask God to show you what He wants you to notice, remember, and understand from your experiences.**

As you attempt to identify some of the themes revealed in your experiences, look at your overall impression or picture of yourself...

- Notice how you respond to situations where needs present themselves
- Are you always organizing or coordinating? Often competing? Collaborating?
- Check out how you focus on logistics, tasks, people, or causes
- Notice what is most satisfying to you
- Notice the verbs (actions) and the nouns (topics) you've used

**STEP 4: Pull together a summary of your experience themes.**

**1. Through my family & relationship experiences God has put me together so that I**

Have become: (character)

Love to: (action)

Am best in the role of: (relationship to others you take on in your experiences)

**2. Through my educational experiences God has put me together so that I**

Have become:

Love to:

Am best in the role of:

**3. Through my vocational experiences God has put me together so that I**

Have become:

Love to:

Am best in the role of:

**4. Through my spiritual experiences God has put me together so that I**

Have become:

Love to:

Am best in the role of

**5. SUMMARY: All these themes of my story work together so that I can minister best...**

(This is your satisfying affirmation— when you fill the purpose for which you were shaped!  
Your **YES!**)

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Input your information to the “Experiences” section of your [DESIGN PROFILE](https://citychurchmpls.org/profile)  
<https://citychurchmpls.org/profile>