

# Discovering your Dreams

God hides treasures in unusual places:

- He hid a warrior inside a shepherd boy named David; even Goliath was surprised.
- He hid a deliverer of His people inside a fugitive murderer named Moses.
- He hid a queenly deliverer of His people inside an orphaned Jewish girl named Esther.
- He hid a King and Savior inside a manger.

What has God hidden inside of you?

*“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not us.”*  
2 Corinthians 4:7

**God has given you gifts in the past and present.**

To understand God’s future plans for you, it’s important to take an inventory of your victories, talents and gifts, both past and present.

The following exercise will help you think through what God might be saying to you about your accomplishments, your dreams and your purpose. The first chart will help you look back at the victories, events and friendships that have been significant to you and/or others.

Example:

| Past and Present Victories                     | Use of Talents and Gifts  | Relationships Built from these Experiences                               |
|--|---|--|
| Auditioned for drama and got a part in a play. | I used my drama skills in putting on productions in our church. | I met some lifelong friends by being a part of various drama teams.      |
| Joined and excelled on school debate team.     | Developed by skills of speaking in an audience.                 | Debate teach coach believed in me and encouraged my speaking gifts.      |
| Attended a topical Bible Study interested me.  | I was a co-leader and want to lead my own group now.            | I have maintained a relationship with my leader and women in that group. |

| Past and Present Victories | Use of Talents and Gifts | Relationships Built from these Experiences |
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What patterns do you notice about your gifts, talents, experiences and relationship? What trait, talents, or unique gift might be present in you for His glory?

Example: Being in public, speaking or leading others is one of my passions.  
 Example: I have faced my fears of different challenges and see helping others as a new challenge.

# Your Legacy: Gifts for Others

## *The Dash Poem*

by Linda Ellis

I read of a man who stood to speak  
At the funeral of a friend.  
He referred to the dates on her tombstone  
From the beginning to the end.

He noted that first came the date of her birth  
And spoke of the following date with tears,  
But he said what mattered most of all  
Was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time  
That she spent alive on earth  
And now only those who loved her  
Know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own,  
The cars, the house, the cash,  
What matters is how we live and love  
And how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard;  
Are there things you'd like to change?  
For you never know how much time is left  
That can still be rearranged.

If we could just slow down enough  
To consider what's true and real  
And always try to understand  
The way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger  
And show appreciation more  
And love the people in our lives  
Like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect  
And more often wear a smile,  
Remembering that this special dash  
Might only last a little while.

So when your eulogy is being read  
With your life's actions to rehash  
Would you be proud of the things they say  
About how you spent your dash?

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As you begin to think about your legacy to the many lives you have and will touch, think with me about a poem entitled, "The Dash" by Linda Ellis. It poses the question:

How will you live your dash?

It asks you to imagine your tombstone with your birth date – (dash) and then the date of your death. Only those who knew and loved you "know what that little line is worth."

What will be remembered is not how many material things you have amassed or your social status, but rather "how you lived and loved and how you spent your dash."

How will you finish what is left in your "dash?"

In light of the treasures God has created in you, what is the legacy He wants you to give to others? Ask Him what He has in mind for the remaining years you have on this earth.

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Draw a picture of what God might have you leave for others. Use words, pictures, symbols or whatever comes to mind as you listen to what God is speaking through His Holy Spirit to you.

Journal a brief description of what you have drawn.

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Personalize a prayer in your Journal in light of those gifts. Here's a prayer you can use as a template:

Lord,

Thank you for the talents, treasures and dreams You have created in me. You know how I began and when my life will end; my time is in Your hands. I want to make the most of the rest of my "dash" and with Your help, I want to leave a legacy that glorifies You. Open my heart for all You have for me that I might experience the abundant life You have promised. May my life of love for You and surrender to Your purpose be a source of blessing and a rich legacy for my family, my friends and my descendants.

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