



PURPOSE

CONVERSATION #5: THE GET IN THE GAME CHALLENGE

READ: FAN OR FOLLOWER

There's a big difference between watching a game and playing in it. When you're in the stands, you can cheer, critique, and complain. You notice every mistake. You have strong opinions about the strategy. But when the game ends, you walk away unchanged - because nothing was ever on the line for you. When you're on the field, it's different.

When you're in the game, your effort matters. Your presence matters. Your mistakes cost something - but so does your growth. You don't just *have opinions*; you have responsibility. That's what it means to have skin in the game. Early in spiritual growth, it's normal to observe, receive, and learn from others. But maturity happens when faith moves off the sidelines and onto the field. When belief costs time, energy, humility, and commitment, that's when we know we are growing.

This conversation is about moving from being invested emotionally to being invested personally - putting some skin in the game and discovering that faith grows fastest when something real is at stake.

READ EPHESIANS 2:10

THE CHALLENGE:

Scripture reminds us that following Jesus is not just about who we are becoming, but what we are being **prepared** for. Paul writes that we are God's workmanship - intentionally formed and placed - created in Christ Jesus to do good works that God planned and prepared for us.

So this week, we're going to practice stepping into that reality by putting some skin in the game, identifying where God has shaped us, noticing a real need in our local congregation, and choosing to walk into the good work He's already prepared. This isn't about proving spiritual maturity or filling a role out of guilt. It's about learning that growth accelerates when faith becomes active, and that clarity often comes *after* commitment, not before.

Challenge #7: THE GET IN THE GAME CHALLENGE - For your final **Milestone Challenge** you will identify one area where God has clearly shaped or gifted you - through your abilities, passions, experiences, or affirmed strengths - and one real area of need within your local congregation where that gift could be put to use (not where it would be easiest or most comfortable, but where it would be genuinely helpful). Then you will commit to serving in that role for a defined season (the remainder of the year or an agreed-upon timeframe), trusting that growth will come through participation, not observation.

TO HELP YOU PREPARE AND WORK ON THIS CHALLENGE:

Use the guide below to identify how God has shaped you and which ministry needs may be a good fit for you to serve. Work through each section with the help of your discipleship partner(s), taking notes along the way. When you're finished, review your answers together to see the bigger picture of how God has designed you to serve.

S.H.A.P.E. - STEP 1: SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- Which spiritual gifts do you see most clearly in your life?
- Where have others affirmed God's work through you?
- When have you sensed God using you beyond your natural ability?

S.H.A.P.E. - STEP 2: HEART

- What needs move you emotionally?
- What problems do you wish someone would fix?
- What group of people do you naturally notice or root for?
- What injustices or gaps bother you the most?

S.H.A.P.E. - STEP 3: ABILITIES

- What skills do you already use in work, school, or hobbies?
- What do people ask you for help with?
- What comes more easily to you than it does to others?

S.H.A.P.E. - STEP 4: PERSONALITY

- Do you gain energy from people or quiet?
- Do you prefer structure or flexibility?
- Do you lead from the front or support from behind the scenes?
- Are you more detail-focused or big-picture?

S.H.A.P.E. - STEP 5: EXPERIENCES

- What life experiences have deeply formed you?
- What hardships has God brought you through?
- What wins or failures have shaped your perspective?
- Where do you have credibility because you've "been there"?

CONSIDER THE NEEDS:

When it comes to serving, maturity means looking beyond what we prefer and paying attention to what is actually needed. It's easy to choose roles based on comfort, interest, or visibility, but Scripture consistently points us toward love that responds to real needs.

Serving isn't just about doing what we enjoy; it's about noticing where help is required and being willing to step in, even when it stretches us. Growth happens when we allow awareness of need - not personal preference - to guide our decision. Answer the questions below together to consider what needs your church may have right now:

- Where has our church been asking for help lately?
- Where have you seen growth that will require more people to step in?
- What need have you noticed that doesn't seem fully met right now?
- Which of these needs feels easy to ignore - but important to address?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER:

Now look for **overlap**, not perfection. As you review what you've written, pay attention to where two or more areas of your S.H.A.P.E. clearly intersect. Consider which ministry needs align with both your gifts and your current capacity and identify a next step that would stretch you without overwhelming you. Then capture your discernment by writing one or two sentences in the box below:

Based on how God has shaped me, I am best positioned to serve by...

CLOSING THOUGHTS:

Before you move forward, take a moment to recognize how far you've already come. The milestones you've completed so far represent real growth - learning to listen, reflect, examine beliefs, and take ownership of your faith. This challenge is not a reset or a test; it's simply the **next step** in that same direction. Spiritual maturity is built one faithful decision at a time, and this step invites you to turn awareness into action.

As you finish this worksheet, clarify your **next steps**. Name where you will serve, who you will follow up with, and when you will begin. Write it down, share it with your discipleship partner, and commit to a defined season of service. Progress is sustained when intention becomes action.

God does not give gifts so we can admire them. He gives gifts so His grace can move. Every step you take from observer to servant is a step toward spiritual maturity.